

CHILDREN'S SERVICES REVIEW COMMITTEE

9th October 2008

Tackling Racism amongst children and young children people

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES Lead Author Head of Standards

1. Why has this report come to the Committee?

- 1.1 To update members of Children's Services Review Committee on the work of the Tackling Racism Group, following a verbal report earlier in the year.
- 1.2 Members are asked to comment on progress to date.

2. Background

- 2.1 In the 2007 Joint Area Review inspectors reported 'some BME children and young people say they are experiencing high levels of racism'. The Children's Services Leadership Team subsequently identified this as a priority action and established a Tackling Racism group. This group has met regularly over the past year. Membership includes officers from Children's Services, the Council's Community Cohesion Team, Thornhill School and SAFC Foundation.
- 2.2 At an early stage, the group noted that a significant amount of activity was already taking place and that the group should concentrate on harnessing the energies of the various partners and maximising the impact of existing and planned initiatives.
- 2.3 The group has identified a series of key objectives and these will be set out in a draft priority action plan. In support of this officers are currently considering the most appropriate way to monitor, evaluate and report on progress as well as the way in which we can engage with the BME Community, particularly children and young people.
- 2.4 Schools now have a duty to promote community cohesion and the Tackling Racism Group is also considering how this can be reflected and included in the work it undertakes.

3. Current position

- 3.1 Most of the work to date has focussed on two key areas.

3.2 Production of Teaching and Learning materials

A pack of learning materials addressing Race, Culture and Community Cohesion has been produced by staff at Thornhill Business and Enterprise School. The school's good practice in this area has been recognised both nationally and locally. This pack has been made available to all schools in Sunderland. A copy will be available for members to view at the meeting. It includes lesson plans, photographic stimuli, examples of pupils' work and specific sections on the relationship of sport and music to racism.

These materials are linked to the work and mission of THE WORD, a rap and hip-hop group based at Thornhill Business and Enterprise School, which aims to inform young people about cultural, ethnic, racial and religious diversity; to promote community cohesion; to warn about the problems of discrimination, bullying and racism; to inspire young people to follow their dreams and highest aspirations; and to develop respect for difference in all its forms.

A representative from THE WORD will attend the meeting to provide further information.

3.3 Sunderland AFC Foundation Anti Racism Campaign

Although the target audience for this campaign is all-age, the Tackling Racism Group has provided the Chief Executive of the Foundation with the opportunity to focus upon the message to children and young people. Examples of campaign materials will be available at Children's Services Review Committee. The campaign is supported by the Sunderland Partnership and builds upon the campaign of the Safer Sunderland Partnership and the power of football:

- Racism – not in our City
- Different colours, one team, winning together

Although the purpose of the campaign at this stage is to raise awareness discussions regarding the longer term potential and focus of the campaign is underway.

A representative from SAFC Foundation will attend the meeting to provide further information.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The Tackling Racism Group has identified the key strands of activity that should feature in the plan to tackle racism and this report to Children's Services Review Committee concentrates on two of these – materials for schools and a media campaign.

5 Recommendation

- 5.1 Members are asked to note the progress with regard to materials for schools and the media campaign.

6. Background Papers
Joint Area Review 2007

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