

Tackling Racism Taskforce

A public summary of the Tackling Racism Taskforce's meeting held on 6 November 2020.

The Tackling Racism Taskforce held its ninth meeting on 6 November 2020 with a focus on **independent and state schools (education)**.

The Taskforce considered a report of the Strategic Education & Skills Director and heard from representatives from the City of London School, the City of London School for Boys and the City of London Freeman's School on the work they were doing to tackle racism and where there were still issues that required the help of the Taskforce.

Members of the Taskforce then discussed how important it was for everyone to understand the mental health burden on students on tackling racism. The Co-Chairs also asked for more detail on data and particularly on what success would look like for the schools. A Member of the Taskforce also suggested that each governing body had a lead Member responsible for diversity and inclusion.

The Taskforce and external guests then discussed this topic further in breakout rooms and fed back the following points:-

- The key area that the Taskforce should focus on is recruitment and retention of a diverse range of staff and governors, as well as career progression. Consideration should be given to the introduction of teacher apprenticeships.
- It was important that the curriculum did not portray black and minority ethnic people as 'victims' but tell a positive story.
- The Taskforce could encourage more joined up partnership working, e.g. between the City of London Police and the family of schools
- One group felt that bursaries at the independent schools could be advertised to academies and change the conversation, so it was less about 'class' or 'race' and more about education itself.
- It was also felt important to ensure that equality and inclusion training, as well as difficult conversations training, was rolled out to all staff.
- There should be a focus on work experience placements and consider not always giving the most 'capable' student a placement, but those where there would be most impact.

In the final wrap up discussions, it was underlined again how important it was to recognise that coming from a BAME background did not automatically mean you would be disadvantaged in the education world, and it was important that social mobility work was not ignored as part of this work.

There was also a brief conversation about the importance of having these sorts of conversations about race, even though they can sometimes feel uncomfortable.

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