



Wales Centre for Public Policy
Canolfan Polisi Cyhoeddus Cymru

Improving Race Equality in Education

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Summary

- This report is one of a series of six that provides independent evidence to inform the development of the Welsh Government's Race Equality Action Plan.
 - It focuses on improving racial equality in primary and secondary education in terms of workforce, students' experiences of racism in schools, and student outcomes.
 - This report covers ten key areas relating to race inequality in education: workforce recruitment; training and development; student interventions and programmes; exclusions; school policies; school inspection regimes; data collection, monitoring and reporting; further and higher education; early years; and national policy making.
 - The report analyses academic research and policy reports to identify actions that experts recommend to tackle racial inequality. The evidence about the effectiveness of many of these actions is limited, but our analysis points to some key actions that we recommend the Welsh Government considers.
 - The evidence shows that commitment from leaders and additional resource at both local and national levels will be needed to advance racial equality in schools.
- This could include investment in anti-racist training for the education workforce, alongside a concerted effort to recruit and develop minority ethnic teachers.
- Student support programmes and interventions should be scrutinised in relation to their impact on racial and ethnic minority students.
 - School exclusion policies should be re-evaluated and need to provide routes back into learning. Experts advocate a range of interventions, possibly including restorative justice, to reduce the disproportionate number of Black, Asian and minority ethnic students who are excluded.
 - The development of education policy must be collaborative and include the voice of equality organisations, as well as 'experts by experience'.
 - It is important that intersectionality and the impacts of different racial and ethnic minority groups are considered as far as possible when any actions are taken, and/or data collected.
 - Race equality must be mainstreamed through continuous review and evaluation of progress of the whole system. This is key to the effective implementation of the actions recommended in this report.

Background

The Welsh Government has made a commitment to publish a Race Equality Action Plan designed to tackle structural racial inequalities in Wales (Welsh Government, 2020). This report is one of six produced by the Wales Centre for Public Policy to provide independent evidence to inform the development of the Action Plan (see Annex 1). It focuses on evidence and recommendations for action related to race equality in education.

Introduction

The education system privileges and disadvantages particular racial and ethnic minority groups in Wales (e.g. Show Racism the Red Card, 2020a); and race and ethnicity intersect with other types of inequality (Ogbonna, 2020). A number of actions have already been taken to tackle race inequality in the Welsh education system, including steps outlined in *Our National Mission* to reduce the attainment gap and deliver a fairer education system (Welsh Government, 2020b). Most notably, this includes the introduction of the Curriculum for Wales 2022, in consultation with the *Communities, contributions and cynefin: BAME experiences and the new curriculum advisory group* (Welsh Government, 2020c). However, it is recognised that there is still much work to be done (Ogbonna, 2020).

This report identifies actions to tackle racial inequality in education which feature strongly in academic studies and policy reports. They include actions to more effectively embed racial and ethnic diversity and inclusion within:

1. Workforce recruitment;
2. Workforce training and professional development;
3. Support programmes for minority ethnic students;
4. Reducing permanent and temporary exclusions;
5. School policies;
6. School inspection regimes;
7. Data collection, monitoring and reporting;
8. Further and higher education;
9. Early years; and
10. National education policy.

These actions were identified through four phases of analysis:

- First, we analysed the best available evidence, policy reports and reviews which make recommendations for reducing race inequality in Wales and the UK to identify recurring recommendations or ‘types’ of interventions (see Annex 2).
- We then tested and refined these with academic experts.
- Next, we conducted a further review of academic and grey literature evidence related to each of these interventions with the aim of establishing which of these recommendations are likely to have the greatest impact if they are included in the Race Equality Action Plan.
- Finally, the report was peer reviewed by three experts in the field: Dr Victoria Showunmi (University College London), Dr Ada Hui (Nottingham University) and Professor Charlotte Williams (Bangor University).

The causes, consequences and solutions to race inequality are interconnected and so require change across a range of policy areas and public services and beyond the public sector. So this report should be read in conjunction with five related reports that focus on **leadership and representation, employment and income, health and social care, crime and justice** and **housing and accommodation** (see Annex 1), and an overarching report (forthcoming) which pulls together cross-cutting findings and recommendations.

Box 1: Terminology

In writing our review we actively avoid using the acronyms/terms ‘BAME’ or ‘BME’, except where this describes the name of an organisation or network, as we recognise that these are contested terms and can be experienced as stigmatising, depersonalising and ‘othering’. As such we seek to refer to specific people and communities of people wherever possible. Where this is not possible, and while any overarching category will be imperfect, we use the term ‘Black, Asian and minority ethnic’.

Workforce recruitment

Recommendations

- Additional time and funding should be dedicated to diversity and inclusion in recruitment.
- Steps should be taken to improve racial literacy within recruitment and communication campaigns that promote teaching (e.g. Discover Teaching).
- Steps should be taken to ensure that recruitment and selection panels are diverse and representative.
- Partnership and relationship-based recruitment measures should be considered, such as early recruitment or 'grow-your own' initiatives.
- Mentoring and social support should be offered to all teachers from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Diversity measures should form part of success criteria in areas of teacher recruitment, selection, promotion, development, succession planning, and retention.

The benefits of a diverse education workforce are well-documented (e.g. Goldhaber, Theobald and Tien, 2015). However, Black people in particular remain underrepresented in the teaching profession in Wales. The proportion of teachers who are Black has remained at 0.2% since 2016, during which time the proportion of White teachers has increased from 88 to 91% (Education Workforce Council, 2020).

The first obstacle to increasing the diversity of the workforce is at the recruitment stage. Evidence suggests that to be successful, efforts to ensure diversity in recruitment requires it to be prioritised, and for there to be specific resources and efforts directed towards achieving it (Bireda and Chait, 2011). Steps to ensure a diverse representation in recruitment and selection panels have been recommended (Carter Andrews et al., 2018), whilst research implicating fear of racism and poor perception of the profession (Basit et al., 2006) points to a need for improved racial literacy within recruitment, and communication campaigns, such as the Discover Teaching campaign. For example, recruitment adverts, campaigns and associated materials should feature people from a range of racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Whilst most of the evidence is grounded in US studies, equitable approaches to recruitment, such as preparation programmes, have received widespread empirical

support (e.g. Carter Andrews et al., 2018; Martin, 2011). This includes those that focus on early recruitment (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond and Carver-Thomas, 2016), which involve building relationships with students in higher education well in advance of initial teacher education, and with prospective graduates ahead of jobs being advertised, as well as ‘grow your own’ programmes involving partnerships between schools and educational institutions (Valenzuela, 2017).

Whilst recruitment is an essential first step to diversifying the education workforce, retention is also key. UK research indicates that a higher proportion of Black, Asian and minority ethnic teachers have considered leaving the profession than White teachers (Basit et al., 2018). This may be addressed through mentoring and social support for Black, Asian and minority ethnic teachers (Lau, Dandy and Hoffman, 2007), which is associated with improved satisfaction and retention (Partree, 2014). Miller (2014) reports that unfair treatment is associated with a lack of career progression by Black, Asian and minority ethnic teachers, which points to a need to ensure that opportunities for career development are seen to be available to them.

In its National Workforce Development Plan (2019), the Welsh Government recognises that diversity measures are part of success criteria for teacher recruitment processes. It may be useful to extend these markers to areas such as selection, promotion, development, succession planning, and retention, to position race equality at each stage of the teacher workforce pipeline.

Workforce training and professional development

Recommendations

- Teacher training should include awareness and reflection on race-based prejudices and stereotypes; and their impact on attitudes, behaviour, and expectations.
- Training should take an anti-racist approach and facilitate effective understanding of whiteness, in a way that supports self-reflection and challenge.
- Training should support teachers in communicating positive and high expectations for Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils in the classroom, and in undertaking pastoral and disciplinary actions.

- Racial equality practices should form part of teachers' annual professional development; teachers should attend relevant training and be regularly assessed against anti-racist principles.
- Training should equip teachers to challenge and de-escalate racist incidents and effectively support pupils targeted by racism and hate crimes.

In its National Workforce Development Plan (2019-21), the Welsh Government recognises that the education system 'cannot exceed the quality of its teachers' (2019, p.6). In order to meet the needs of pupils from all backgrounds, this means that as well as diversifying the education workforce, professional training must foster racially literate teachers who can deliver culturally responsive pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 2014).

Diversity and inclusion experts suggest that anti-racist¹ teacher training is an effective instrument for developing racial literacy and competence among teachers (Arday, 2020; Joseph-Salisbury, 2020). Brentnall (2017) highlights how racial awareness training can address personal prejudices and negative stereotypes, as well as the need to raise expectations of Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils and counteract myths and stereotypes. Brentnall also notes the harmful impact of colour-blindness (2017). An alternative approach could include critical whiteness pedagogy (i.e. strategies for studying and understanding white privilege) to break down whiteness ideology and encourage self-reflection and change (Matias and Mackey, 2016). Evidence also suggests implementing a human rights approach in schools can result in a reduction in prejudice and discriminatory attitudes, as well as reductions in racist incidents, provided teachers are trained and given sufficient time and resource to do so (Culhane and McGeough, 2020).

According to the National Education Union (2020), tackling racial inequality requires a whole-school approach that takes into account leadership, teaching and learning, power and voice, wellbeing and belonging. In line with this, training could be integrated into wider school systems, with anti-racist practice included in initial teacher training (Show Racism the Red Card, n.d.) as well as forming a continual part of teachers' annual professional development and being embedded more fully across the school curriculum. To effectively prevent or address hate crime, relevant training should equip teachers to challenge all forms of racist incidents as well as to be able to support pupils targeted by racism. In Wales, embedding anti-racist practice

¹ Anti-racism moves beyond reducing bias and increasing cultural competence to explicitly encompass action taken to resist and tackle racism (Hatch et al., 2020).

in the curriculum is being considered by the *Communities, contributions and cynefin: BAME experiences and the new curriculum* advisory group, focusing particularly on understanding how racism manifests in the national story of Wales. The implementation of the advisory group's recommendations will be key to ensuring that the Welsh curriculum is more representative of racial and ethnic minority histories and experiences.

Support programmes for minority ethnic students

Recommendations

- Any student support programmes or interventions should be outcomes-focused and based on a thorough assessment of the evidence base.
- The design and delivery of mentoring programmes should take account of mentor characteristics and shared interests. They need to be culturally tailored and seek to engage students' families.
- Intersectional factors (e.g. gender, sexual orientation) should be considered alongside race when delivering interventions.
- Programmes and interventions for minority ethnic students should include adequate mentor training or accreditation.
- Further impact evaluations should be conducted to investigate the efficacy of programmes and interventions within distinct ethnic minority subgroups, including non-Black boys and minority ethnic girls.

The benefits of support programmes and interventions focusing on educational experiences and outcomes for minority ethnic students has been well-documented, particularly among Black males who are disproportionately affected by exclusion from school and are most likely to find themselves in the school-to-prison 'pipeline' (Graham, 2016). Restorative justice approaches appear to be associated with positive outcomes among Black and Mixed ethnicity students in Wales (Brentnall, 2017), although they have not been independently evaluated.

Student mentoring programmes are also often recommended in the literature (Timpson, 2019), and there is some evidence for their effectiveness in schools, especially with young Black men (Sanchez et al., 2017; Mentoring and Befriending

Foundation, 2011). Although its analysis does not assess outcomes for racial and ethnic minority students specifically, analysis by the Education Endowment Foundation finds some evidence of positive outcomes on non-academic outcomes, and for disadvantaged students, but concludes that overall mentoring has little or no impact on academic outcomes.

Sanchez et al. (2017) highlight the following potential moderating factors to mentoring effectiveness:

- Parental participation;
- Mentor training;
- Cultural tailoring of the programmes; and
- Mentor characteristics, such as gender and race.

Although their systematic review is of studies in the US, they echo the need identified in Wales by Brentnall (2017) to involve families in interventions with Black and Mixed ethnicity students, and consider the dimensions of race and identity.

Qualitative evidence from the UK also highlights the importance of mentors who have shared life experiences with mentees, noting that racial and ethnic identity is an important factor (Garraway and Pistrang, 2010). Several other student-mentor evaluations highlight the importance of building high quality relationships (Halkiopoulos and Delargy, 2019; Jekielek et al., 2002).

Much of the focus has been on Black males, and there appears to be a lack of overall evidence regarding programmes and interventions for non-Black minority ethnic students and girls from all minority ethnic backgrounds. Further research is therefore required to ensure programmes for minority ethnic students in Wales are appropriately responsive.

In addition, any investment in ethnic minority student support programmes or interventions should consider what outcomes are being sought (academic and/or non-academic), and how strong the evidence is for particular approaches. For example, the following interventions have been identified within the Education Endowment Foundation Teaching and Learning Toolkit² highlights as resulting in over five months' additional student progress:

- Student feedback;

² Available at: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/>

- Reading comprehension strategies: and
- Metacognition and self-regulation (involving students reflecting on their own learning process and developing and evaluating learning strategies).

The evidence for these interventions applies to all pupils and new interventions could therefore be considered on a whole-school basis.

Reducing permanent and temporary exclusions

Recommendations

- Real time data on exclusion that tracks each child, distinguished by ethnic subgroup, are needed to identify and address potential patterns of discrimination.
- Appropriate data sharing should take place with Local Safeguarding Children Boards, Safeguarding Partners, and other stakeholders, to ensure appropriate support.
- Local authorities should have a responsibility to work closely with schools to review information and trends, taking action where necessary, and providing alternatives.
- As part of defensible decision-making around exclusions, children should be offered alternatives such as a 'right to return' period.
- Restorative justice approaches should be considered as a possible way to manage challenging behaviour and conflict, and to reduce exclusions.

Reducing temporary and permanent exclusions of Black, Asian and Minority ethnic children and young people from mainstream education settings must be a high priority in Wales, given observed racial disproportionality in exclusions (Brentnall, 2017). Gathering real time data on exclusion and ethnic breakdown is essential to monitoring potential patterns of discrimination (Brentnall, 2017), and it is important to disaggregate data by different ethnic subgroups.

Implementing targeted changes that strengthen accountability and prevent the disproportionate use of exclusion with Black, Asian and minority ethnic children and young people should be a central priority for the Welsh Government. The Welsh

Government should consider any possible unintended consequences of exclusions through analysis of statistical evidence to develop a national picture, and mitigate against the need for schools to resort to removing children from compulsory education (Timpson, 2019). This should include: reviewing a ‘right to return’ period, where children could return from home education to their previous school, and ensuring that the decision to exclude is always made in the child’s best developmental and holistic interests. The role of governors and how this links to and could strengthen accountability should also be considered.

Many of the key recommendations for reducing racial disproportionality in school exclusions come from the Timpson Review (2019). It is based on evidence from England, and therefore may not wholly applicable to Wales. However, several of its recommendations warrant attention in the Welsh context. For example, monitoring processes that involve systematically tracking to which school or institution children move when excluded, and why, to enable understanding of potential sources of discrimination. Local authorities should have a responsibility for working with schools to review this information, taking action where necessary, and ensuring children are provided with suitable alternatives to continue their education. Sharing relevant data with Local Safeguarding Children Boards and Safeguarding Partners ensures that, if exclusions are unavoidable, agencies can assess and address any safeguarding concerns, such as involvement in crime, and the impact on overall educational outcomes.

There is evidence that restorative justice approaches, which allow victims to share the impact of the harm they have suffered and agree an approach to put things right in the future, could be an effective way of managing challenging behaviour and conflict within schools. Evidence from the UK suggests that this may reduce the number of exclusions in schools. It has not been possible to establish a causal relationship, and fixed-term exclusions were not considered (Youth Justice Board, 2004). However, some experts and stakeholders argue that restorative justice approaches are associated with reduced exclusions among Black and Mixed ethnicity students (Brentnall, 2017; Race Council Cymry, 2018; see also box 2).

Care will need to be taken to ensure that any restorative approaches are carefully managed and implemented. There is evidence from the US that they can lead to lower student assessment of teachers’ classroom management, even though the teachers in the same study believed that their classroom management had improved (Augustine et. al., 2018). This may impact on learning, and the same study suggests an adverse impact on learning outcomes in schools where African American students predominated — although this finding should not be generalised to the UK without further research (Augustine et. al., 2018). Restorative approaches may therefore

work best in tandem with other measures outlined above, and any programmes that are introduced would need to be evaluated to determine their effectiveness.

Box 2: Good Practice

Restorative Justice in Monmouth Comprehensive School

For Monmouth Comprehensive School, application of a restorative justice model and subsequent accreditation by the Restorative Justice Council as a Centre of Excellence yielded an 84% reduction in fixed-term exclusions; a 48% drop in antisocial behaviour; a reduction in referrals to Youth Offending Services; and a record 96% attendance over the same period. The approach is characterised by the remodelling of relationships that exist between young people and the organisations and institutions, with principles including respect, accessibility, and neutrality, that foster non-discriminatory practice. However, it should be noted that this evidence is based on school reported data rather than an independent evaluation, and there is no breakdown by ethnicity.

(Monmouthshire, 2014)

School policies

Recommendations

- As well as developing and implementing a specific racial and ethnic diversity and inclusion policy, race equality should be a golden thread running through all school policies so that it becomes ‘mainstream’.
- Regular reviews of all school policies and strategies should be conducted to ensure alignment with the objective of race equality.
- Students and parents/carers should be involved in co-creating, reviewing, and implementing diversity and inclusion policies.
- Schools should ensure that robust systems are in place for managing racist incidents and that these are accessible and communicated to parents and carers.
- Welsh Government should commission a review of complaints processes in schools, with a particular focus on managing racist incidents and preventing or addressing hate crime.

- Restorative justice approaches should be considered when seeking resolution and/or repair for racist incidents and hate crimes, with school policies and processes centring the experience and welfare of the victim or target.
- The Welsh Government and Regional Consortia should ensure that schools have the necessary guidance and resources to support them to develop and implement effective policies.

Compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty and specific duties for Wales (PSED) is a legal requirement under the Equality Act 2010, and schools must meet these statutory duties. They should have strategic equality plans and policy frameworks that are reflexive (Hancock, 2007; Parken, 2010), and subject to regular evaluation and review. This is essential in fostering systems, institutions, and environments that promote race equality. These documents play a significant role in how schools operate and should therefore ensure that race equality is embedded and normalised within them (Alexander, Weekes-Bernard and Arday, 2015; Gillborn, 2008). Evidence indicating a high prevalence of racism in schools in Wales, particularly at secondary level (Show Racism the Red Card, 2020a), demonstrates the importance of these duties and associated plans and policies, which should address the experiences of ethnic minority staff, as well as students.

In line with anti-discrimination law and the Equality Act (2010), schools have a statutory duty to prevent discrimination, harassment, and victimisation. Schools should demonstrate to pupils, parents and teachers a readiness to challenge all racist incidents or behaviours which may escalate to hate crime. In instances where parents feel schools have not met these responsibilities, there are measures parents can take in accordance with guidelines set out by Welsh Government. Positive action on the part of schools should include completing a school or Local Authority racial incident report form and forwarding it to the equalities lead and/or head teacher. Follow-up actions by parents or carers in response to a lack of positive action might include contacting individuals or bodies such as Estyn, the Local Authority Director of Education, or the Local Authority's Safeguarding Officer.³ Whilst there is a lack of evidence around effective complaints procedures, and what mechanisms would allow parents to hold schools to account for effectively managing and responding to racist incidents, ensuring that parents/carers are aware of the various options available to them and the different pathways would be a useful first step.

³ See: <https://www.theredcard.org/s/A-Guide-for-parents-for-reporting-suspected-racist-incidents-in-school.pdf>

Whilst perpetration of racist incidents may qualify as a hate crime, criminalisation of children should be considered a last resort. In order to meaningfully challenge and address racist incidents and hate crimes, restorative justice approaches should be applied as a means of resolution and repair (see Box 2 for a case study). School policies and processes should centre the experience of the victim and provide appropriate support and follow-up.

To avoid tokenism, it is important that racial equality is a 'golden thread' running through all school policies, and that these documents truly reflect local need. As such, school policies should be developed in partnership with students, parents, and other stakeholders, through involvement and bottom-up consultation, giving a voice in particular to 'experts by experience' (Parken, 2010), alongside top-down approaches. To ensure integration into school culture and practice, commitment and responsibility from both governors and senior leaders is essential. Ultimately, a whole-school approach to racial equality is required, whereby policy both informs and is informed by leadership, teaching, and learning; power and voice; and wellbeing and belonging (National Education Union, 2020). There are a range of resources available to support schools with this, and the Welsh Government and Regional Consortia play a pivotal role in disseminating the most effective ones to schools.

School inspection regimes

Recommendations

- School inspection frameworks must assess for racial diversity and inclusion as a priority alongside academic attainment, for example by successfully implementing the ESTYN Strategic Equality Plan, 2020-24.
- These inspections must distinguish between the experience and outcomes of ethnic minority subgroups, as well as between racial and ethnic minority students and White British students.
- School inspections should aim to identify and communicate good practice in a way that facilitates and supports its uptake more broadly.

School inspection regimes, frameworks, and practices are an important way of holding schools to account for reaching required standards, including in relation to tackling race inequalities. As such, it is an important way of implementing the other recommendations in this report. Targeted and relevant training of school inspectors (Brentnall, 2020), and evaluation of current and future frameworks, can both be used

to improve how school inspection regimes address inequalities. Estyn's Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24 includes an objective to evaluate equality and diversity issues during inspections (Estyn, 2020), and Estyn (2017) have released guidance on how and what to evaluate. This could provide a measure of accountability and advice for schools to comply with legal duties and advance racial equality. It will, however, be important for this to be seen as a mainstream part of the inspection process, rather than as an additional or optional element (Osler and Morrison, 2002).

It is important to distinguish between ethnic subgroups, particularly given that Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils often experience greater disadvantage (Brentnall, 2017), to ensure that school inspections and subsequent recommendations are relevant, specific, and responsive to need. Good practice identified through inspections can also be a helpful means of guiding schools (Brentnall, 2020) and supporting positive practice.

Data collection, monitoring and reporting

Recommendation

- A review of ethnicity data collection in education will help to identify any key gaps – such as racist incidents – and priorities for future data collection and reporting.
- Data collection should allow for disaggregation by particular ethnic minority identities, as well as by other protected characteristics, to allow for exploration of intersecting disadvantage in education.
- A range of qualitative and quantitative methods should be used to collect data to support meaningful evaluation.

The need for race equality strategies to be targeted and data-driven has been frequently articulated in review recommendations (e.g. Brentnall, 2017), strategy (e.g. Department for Education, 2018a; Welsh Government, 2019), and the wider literature (e.g. Carter Andrews et al., 2018).

The Welsh Government regularly collects and reports ethnicity data related to several key indicators, such as national assessment outcomes. However, there remain key indicators for which ethnicity data is not regularly collected or reported, such as

absenteeism, number of pupils educated other than at school, and numbers of racist incidents (Show Racism the Red Card, 2020b). It has also been suggested that education data collection and reporting could better reflect diversity of experience among different ethnic minority groups, as well as by other protected characteristics; and should be improved to aid more effective prioritisation and attention to critical issues of race inequality in education, and thus its solutions (Brentnall, 2017).

In addition to more stringent categorisation ('what'), there is also a need for regular monitoring ('when') of data (Department for Education, 2018b), using a range of qualitative and quantitative methods ('how') to support meaningful evaluation (Parken et al., 2019; Welsh Government, 2019).

While key to tackling race inequalities, data collection can be costly and onerous for the education system as a whole, as well as the staff involved in collecting data on the frontline, who are managing competing priorities. As such, a review of what ethnicity data are and are not regularly collected and reported, which identifies and prioritises any key gaps, will likely be necessary before ascertaining how practice in this area should be improved.

Further and higher education

Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Racial equality should be pursued through all areas of access, retention, progress, and achievement, rather than being limited to access to higher education institutions.• Data should be considered in accordance with ethnic subgroups and other relevant intersectional variables.• The Welsh Government should work to address possible factors limiting the achievement of Black, Asian and minority ethnic students, including teaching and learning practice and racial harassment.

People from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds are more likely to attend university than people from White backgrounds, but people from White backgrounds are more likely to attend high-tariff universities and are more likely to receive first-class degrees than all other ethnic groups (Centre for Social Justice, 2020).⁴ The reason for this disparity remains unexplained, although teaching and assessment practices may play a role (Centre for Social Justice, 2020).

There is a need to collect better and more disaggregated data, particularly as the data that we do have suggest differences within and between ethnic groups (Centre for Social Justice, 2020). Generally speaking, broad groupings of Black, Asian and minority ethnic students have been utilised when analysing the progress of providers in addressing access, widening participation and outcome gaps for students. This has traditionally enabled a comparison across groups of students, particularly where student numbers may be small, and where further disaggregation would result in less robust data. However, this has resulted in certain minority ethnic groups, which are significantly underrepresented in Further and Higher education, such as Gypsy, Roma and Traveller students, not always being visible in official statistics due to small numbers and the presentation of data using broad ethnicity categories (Arday and Mirza, 2018). Disaggregating ethnicity data and considering other relevant variables would allow for better targeting of interventions, which should include a focus on increasing retention, success, and progression, in addition to access (Stevenson et al., 2019).

A whole-system approach would ensure that strategies to support better access and outcomes for Black, Asian and minority ethnic students are integrated across all aspects of further and higher education, and not limited to access or to particular departments or specific areas of policy and strategy (Stevenson et al., 2019).

Given the significant shifts taking place as Wales takes steps to address race disparities, there may be a need to discern the support institutions need in implementing large-scale change. By asking '*How can we help?*', the Welsh Government can catalyse such changes within institutions, whilst still recognising that teaching and learning practices could negatively impact the achievement of Black, Asian and minority ethnic students' achievements, which continues to require further understanding and action. Actions for change should also be targeted towards reducing racial harassment at universities. Recent enquiries have found this to be a

⁴ Studies reach different conclusions about whether there is still a gap in admissions once factors such as socio-economic background, prior attainment and school characteristics are taken into consideration (Centre for Social Justice, 2020). There may be a small gap remaining, but some research suggests that people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds are more likely to attain a place at Russell Group universities.

prevalent issue, and that university staff have lacked confidence in challenging such incidents (EHRC, 2019; Universities UK, 2020).

Early years

Recommendations

- The Welsh Government should commission research and invest in anti-racist training for early years practitioners.
- Early years providers should be encouraged to share best practice regarding tackling race inequalities in the sector.
- Black, Asian and minority ethnic early years teachers should be supported to progress within the profession.

Early years education provision continues to be a work-in-progress with regards to access and outcomes for Black, Asian and minority ethnic children and families, and Black pupils in particular, who show lower attainment than White British pupils during early years education (EHRC, 2018). There is, however, very limited evidence as to the causes of this disparity or how they may be addressed.

Research from the United States suggests that there may be differential outcomes for children of immigrants compared to non-immigrant children, and that first-generation immigrant children have themselves an advantage over second-generation immigrant children, particularly in terms of social skills (De Feyter and Winsler, 2009). The authors propose various suggested reasons for this disparity, and although these (or the findings themselves) might not translate to a UK context exactly, they do suggest that the intersection of race with immigration status may be particularly important at early years level.

Developing more positive outcomes is dependent upon several factors, including those that apply at other educational stages. These include ethnic diversity amongst practitioners, and the knowledge and training required to become culturally and racially literate when working with learners (Lander, 2011). Additional research and investment into educational training provision could support early years teachers to become aware of the potential barriers to successful educational outcomes for Black, Asian and minority ethnic early years learners and the impact that racially illiterate educators can have on this context. This could support the effective implementation of the Welsh Government aim that all early years students should be treated with

respect and have their racial and cultural identity recognised (Welsh Government, 2015).

Early years education can also contribute towards eliminating racial bias by ensuring that cultural or communicative cues that may reinforce ideas of some groups as 'other' are minimised or addressed within an inclusive curriculum (Jozwiak, 2019). Age-appropriate forms of inclusion can help reduce negative racial attitudes in children (Jozwiak, 2019).

Some general principles will also apply to the early years area, as with other stages. Working closely with parents and educators in other key stages within the Welsh teaching collegiate is also essential in disseminating and sharing best practice, as well as harnessing the benefits of parent-teacher relationships, which have been associated with positive educational outcomes (Hughes and Kwok, 2007). Additionally, working with local authorities will be important, given the particular needs of early years learners across different parts of Wales.

National education policy

Recommendations

- Policy makers should work reflexively and collaboratively with academic experts, equality organisations, and 'experts by lived experience'.
- Data collection to inform policy making should allow for interrogation of intersectional barriers and distinctions between ethnic subgroups.
- Education policy makers should work collaboratively with policy makers in other intersecting and priority areas (e.g. housing, health and social care) to develop accessible, inclusive, financially sustainable, inclusive, and adaptable policies.
- Policy makers should identify markers of success that can be evaluated post-implementation through ongoing review.
- Policy evaluation should include both qualitative and quantitative measures.

In order to create *A More Equal Wales*, mainstreaming an equalities perspective into all policy making is essential (Parken, 2018). The Welsh Government has already taken strides in this direction, particularly with regards to gender, but there is further scope for embedding anti-racism within education policy (Show Racism the Red Card, 2020b). As noted by Parken and colleagues (2019), policies that fail to examine unacknowledged assumptions embedded in policy frameworks can

reinforce social and economic divisions. A reflexive process that involves policy makers, academics, equality organisations and ‘experts by experience’ (as the Welsh Government is doing through its Race Equality Action Plan Steering Group) will help to address this and support the mainstreaming of equality in policy and practice (Parken et al., 2019). Working with Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals is therefore imperative in order to understand their lived experience of institutional racism.

The way in which inequalities intersect is complex, but understanding this is also essential for successful policy and programme delivery (Parken et al., 2019; Ogbonna, 2020; Chwarae Teg, 2018). This is a key reason for collecting data that interrogates intersectional barriers and distinguishes between ethnic subgroups.

Mainstreaming race equality across all policy making aligns with a systems approach to closing the race inequality gap within education in Wales (Parken et al., 2019). This is about more than simply the absence of racism and social injustice, but encouraging behaviours and approaches that are associated with positive educational outcomes. These factors include social inclusion and cohesion (Raffo et al., 2007), which reflect wellbeing goals within the Strategic Equality Objectives for 2020-2024 (Welsh Government, 2019). Taking a whole-system, integrated approach to promoting racial equality requires targeted investment to enhance the capacities of key social welfare institutions and bridge social and cultural capital.

Policy makers should work collaboratively to ensure that goals and strategies enhance and compound positive effects, as well as ensuring policies are accessible, financially sustainable, inclusive, and adaptable. This also models the holistic approach that schools and institutions are encouraged to take; understanding that race equality policies and actions cannot exist in silo.

Recognising that progressive policy making involves iterative, cyclical policy design and implementation, it is important that policy makers identify robust markers of success at the development stage – for example, related to closing the exclusion gap, or ensuring the workforce is representative of the local population. This ensures policies can be readily evaluated and tracked post-implementation, and in the longer term. Whilst quantitative research is often valued for its objectivity, qualitative methods also yield rich data that facilitate greater understanding of what can or needs to be done to drive meaningful change (Parken et al., 2019).

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Annex 1:

References to the report series

This is one report of six, each focusing on a particular policy area to inform the Race Equality Action Plan. The series of report includes:

Arday, J. (2020). **Improving Race Equality in Education**. Cardiff: Wales Centre for Public Policy.

Hatch, S., Woodhead, C., Moriarty, J., Rhead, R., and Connor, L. (2020). **Improving Race Equality in Health and Social Care**. Cardiff: Wales Centre for Public Policy.

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Showunmi, V., and Price, J. (2020). **Improving Race Equality in Leadership and Representation**. Cardiff: Wales Centre for Public Policy.

Annex 2:

Recurring recommendations

Recurring recommendation	Area of focus
Teacher and education workforce recruitment to ensure greater levels of diversity and representation	What works to improve diversity among the education workforce?
Education workforce training and continuing professional development to create a skilled, committed, and effective anti-racist workforce	Does anti-racist teacher training work? What models of effective anti-racist teacher training exist?
Collecting and monitoring data to improve education experiences and outcomes for Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities	What changes to school data collection, monitoring and reporting regarding race and ethnicity would be most impactful?
School inspection regimes, frameworks and practices	How far can altering inspection regimes improve school approaches to working with Black, Asian, and minority ethnic students? If so, what alterations to, or features of, inspection regimes are most effective?
Curriculum and education resource review to reflect more diverse histories, cultures, and interests	Not applicable as this is already underway through Professor Charlotte Williams' curriculum review.
Support programmes and interventions for Black, Asian, and minority ethnic students to improve their outcomes and experiences	What (specialist) programmes and interventions are most effective for improving the outcomes and experiences of Black, Asian, and minority ethnic students?
School policies relating to race, ethnicity and diversity	How far does requiring schools to develop and implement specific policies and strategies related to race, ethnicity and diversity help to promote race

Recurring recommendation	Area of focus
	equality and positive outcomes for Black, Asian, and minority ethnic children and young people? What kinds of policies are likely to be most effective?
Setting and streaming of pupils (to classes or schools) by attainment level and ability	How far does setting and streaming students by ability negatively impact upon Black, Asian, and minority ethnic students? How can students be assigned to classes or schools to the benefit of Black, Asian, and minority ethnic pupils?
Reducing temporary and permanent exclusions of Black, Asian, and minority ethnic children and young people from mainstream education settings	What works to reduce the number and disproportionality of school exclusions among Black, Asian, and minority ethnic children and young people?
Provision of material and/or financial resources (e.g. pupil grants or laptops) to Black, Asian, and minority ethnic students and/or their families	How far does the provision of material and/or financial resources to Black, Asian, and minority ethnic students improve their educational access, experience, or outcomes? What models are effective?
Careers advice, information and guidance for Black, Asian, and minority ethnic young people	What works to provide Black, Asian, and minority ethnic young people with effective careers information, advice and guidance (IAG)? What models of careers AIG are most effective with Black, Asian, and minority ethnic young people?
Further and higher education provision, access, and outcomes for Black, Asian, and minority ethnic people	What works to promote the access to and outcomes of Black, Asian, and minority ethnic young people and adults in further and higher education?

Recurring recommendation	Area of focus
Early years education provision, access, and outcomes for Black, Asian, and minority ethnic children and families	What works to promote the access to and outcomes of Black, Asian, and minority ethnic children in early years education?
National education communication campaigns to establish and message the Welsh education system as anti-racist and inclusive	How far are national (education) communication campaigns effective in promoting anti-racist and progressive attitudes and values? What models are likely to be effective?
National education policy making to ensure it takes account of race equalities, and the views and interests of Black, Asian, and minority ethnic children, young people, and families	What mechanisms are most effective in ensuring racially inclusive and progressive policy making?

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