

## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**5 OCTOBER 2017**

### **TACKLING RACISM IN MEDWAY**

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#### **Summary**

At the meeting of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 30 May 2017, Members considered a report, prepared by the Medway Youth Parliament (MYP) now Medway Youth Council (MYC), which detailed the findings and outcomes from the MYP Annual Youth Conference held in November 2016, which was entitled 'Race, Religion and You(th): United in Tackling Racism and Religious Discrimination'. Members have asked for a follow-up report on the ways in which racism could be tackled more actively across Medway.

#### **1. Budget and Policy Framework**

- 1.1 Racial discrimination is outlawed under Article 14 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, to which all European states are signatories.
- 1.2 Since 2002 all schools must have a written Race Equality Policy to comply with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. As part of the general duty of this legislation schools are required to comply with Local Authority (SCE) procedures (Appendix 1) for recording, reporting and responding to racist incidents
- 1.3 The purpose of these guidelines is to give schools in Medway practical support and advice on overcoming racism by:
  - outlining the legal requirements for every school
  - giving advice on policy development and curriculum issues
  - using data to monitor achievement

- giving advice on dealing with racist incidents and
- professional development and support for teachers.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 In a forever changing society with many different cultures, our goal is to reduce all forms of racism and discrimination, break down social barriers and promote social inclusion. Through some of the universal and targeted programmes we deliver, we have generic sessions (example at youth centres) that will do work around this topic.
- 2.2 We deliver work/ support to young people that are designed to challenge people's perceptions. We want our young people to understand that their worldview is just one way of seeing the world. With this approach we aim to stimulate the growth of cultural awareness and the adoption and development of crucial traits such as openness, cultural empathy, curiosity and tolerance.
- 2.3 Equipping children with these tools will empower them to challenge prejudice. We also train staff in understanding the different cultures we support here in Medway.
- 2.4 Through the Community Safety Partnership (CSP), immediate action is taken to remove racist graffiti. Clearly the CSP has a much greater role to play and again, this needs to be pulled into a strategy where an action plan can be agreed.
- 2.5 At the more extreme end of dealing with racism is where hate crime is reported. This is a crime which is committed against someone because of their disability, gender-identity, race, religion, belief, or sexual orientation. For example, a person or group of people could have threatened or hurt you, stolen from you and damaged something you own, encouraged others to commit hate crime or bullied you, for example spat at you or called you names. To make a police report you can call or go into your nearest police station. There is advice that exists on supporting victims of hate crime, where you can speak to your local Community Liaison Officer. If individuals would prefer to speak to someone else about what's happened, they can:
- go online to the [True Vision online reporting website](#)
  - call Victim Support on **0300 303 0156**
- 2.6 In discussions with colleagues and young people, they don't understand that this exists and most wouldn't use it, so we need to create space for them to raise issues particularly at School and in their community (through youth centre provision etc).
- 2.7 We need to address pathways for support for young people and their community to access and make these uncomplicated. This could be an action agreed through CSP and Medway Youth Council.

### **3. Wider Context**

- 3.1 Each school should have a written racial equality policy (either a separate policy or a distinct section within a broader equal opportunities policy), which encompasses the following:
- The policy commits the school to work towards racial equality and to combat racial discrimination and racial harassment.
  - Clear procedures should be in place which ensure that racist incidents, racial discrimination and racial harassment are dealt with promptly, firmly and consistently.
  - In the PSHE and Citizenship curriculum, pupils in Key Stages 1-4 have opportunities to examine and understand issues such as identity, culture and anti-social behaviour.

### **4. Advice and analysis**

- 4.1 After discussion with the Chair of MYC, it is clear some young people were clearly unhappy with the police or their perception of the police, so it was good for them to be able to air their concerns with them.
- 4.2 MYC are keen to keep up their involvement with Kent Police and are interested to be involved in the new Youth IPAG and to see the Youth Liaison Officers next year which we feel is a really positive development in trying to improve the relationship between young people and the police. The IPAG has now been set up, and the Youth PCSOs are about to start post, and they will attend the MYC conference in November.
- 4.3 The Council can and should do more with its partners, to address the concerns raised at the Medway Youth Parliament Conference 2016. An action plan needs to be completed and focus on some key work streams:
- Strategy
  - School guidelines
  - Partnership involvement
  - Pathways for support
- 4.4 Medway Youth Council raise a very important issue and with Medway changing society, this is a key work stream where we need to ensure Young People feel safe and understand where to raise their concerns if faced with racism in their school, home and community.
- 4.5 It is clear, that not all schools understand:
- The legal requirements of schools to tackle racism
  - Advice on policy development and curriculum issues
  - Advice on dealing with racist incidents
  - Professional development and support for teachers

## **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 Further work need to take place with partners to better understand this issue and the Community Safety Partnership need to play a key role in this agenda item.

## **6. Financial implications**

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## **7. Legal implications**

- 7.1 There are no legal implications, but we are not currently meeting best practice through clear legislation given.

## **8. Recommendations**

- 8.1 The Committee are asked to note that:

- a) The Council will develop an action plan with Medway Youth Council, in conjunction with its partners, to address the concerns raised at the Medway Youth Parliament Conference 2016
- b) The Council will work with Medway Youth Council to deliver workshops on the issues of social media and support for young people
- c) The Council will review guidance within schools around the following areas:
  - The legal requirements of schools to tackle racism
  - Advice on policy development and curriculum issues
  - Advice on dealing with racist incidents
  - Professional development and support for teachers

### **Lead officer contact**

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### **Background papers**

None

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Government Guidance on Racist Incident Reporting