

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 JUNE 2019

TACKLING RACISM IN MEDWAY

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Summary

This report provides an update for the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the topic of tackling racism against young people in 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. The content of this report falls within the remit of this committee and supports the following priorities identified in the Council Plan:
- Medway: A place to be proud of
 - Supporting Medway's people to realise their potential

2. Background

- 2.1 At the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 30 May 2017, Members considered a report, prepared by the Medway Youth Council (previously known as Medway Youth Parliament - MYP), 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'.
- 2.2 Members previously asked for a follow-up report on the ways in which racism could be tackled more actively across Medway. The areas for action were:
- 2.2.1 The Council should do more with its partners, to address the concerns raised at the Medway Youth Parliament Conference.
- 2.2.2 Young People should feel safe and understand where to raise their concerns if faced with racism in their School, home and community.

3. Current position:

- 3.1 Medway Youth Council (MYC) has been working closely with the Youth Police Advisory Group (YPAG – see appendix 1), who inform/share their findings from their board meetings, conferences and key items they will tackle over the coming 12 months. The Chair of YPAG has been invited to attend the meeting.
- 3.2 YPAG have worked with Kent Police to set up the Hate Crime Hubs, and are working with Mid Kent College (and Schools) to tackle discrimination across Medway. They are responding to issues that are raised by young people and Kent Police around hate crime. This work is important as YPAG is helping to change the perception of the Police in relation to working with young people.
- 3.3 The question of the media fuelling racism is regularly addressed as part of generic youth work and any concern would be tackled in youth centres and projects. Youth sessions often look at media stories and discuss how the story has been written, any obvious bias that might be present, or how the style of reporting can have an influence on the reader and the wider community.
- 3.4 A member of Medway Youth Council wrote a report around how reporting of racism impacts on young people and this appeared in the local press.
- 3.5 The Youth Service is proactive in supporting young people around safe social media use. Youth centres have posters and wall displays that explain how to use social media in a safe way. Youth workers are there to encourage young people to share their thoughts and comments. Discussions regularly take place to tackle this topic.
- 3.6 Delivery of work around stereotypes, acceptable language and hidden discrimination is also undertaken in Schools and Medway Youth Service has supported some of this work.
- 3.7 All schools were offered the support pack from the 2017 conference, which gave them examples of the workshops and suggested work that could be done in school to tackle racism. There was very little take up from Schools.
- 3.8 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. 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.
- 3.9 As part of an agreement under the Community Safety Partnership (see appendix 2), immediate action is taken to remove racist graffiti. At the more extreme/more serious end of dealing with racism is where hate crime is reported. This is where a crime is typically one involving violence that is motivated by prejudice on the basis of race, religion, sexual orientation, or other grounds.
- 3.10 From the Police, advice is available concerning supporting victims of hate crime, with the involvement of the local Community Liaison Officer. If

individuals would prefer to speak to someone else about what's happened, they can call Victim Support on **0300 303 0156**.

3.11 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.
- 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.

Outcome achieved:

3.12 Medway YPAG has been influential in improving relationships with the Police and they have worked with partners around this key agenda item and will continue to do so.

3.13 Young people feel better informed in where to get advice and guidance from schools, youth centres and appropriate social media platforms (this was confirmed during discussions at the 2018 conference). We still have more to do and the community safety partners, the youth service, MYC and YPAG will do more this year to build improved relationships and understanding.

4. Next steps

4.1 YPAG to review guidelines in Schools under their arrangements and highlight a report to CSP if concerns arise. A youth participation and engagement task and finish group is working on the detail of this..

5. Risk management

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Best practice	Need to implement a formal process or commitment to ensure Medway and its partnership is meeting standards and best practice.	YPAG and MYC are working with CSP and the Police.	Low
Financial	Some financial implications in the resources that may be directed towards tackling racism if concerns increase.	Currently no data, themes to suggest additional resources needed	Low

Schools/ Academies	Expenditure that could be incurred from litigation that may arise out of not meeting best practice.	Schools notified and aware.	Low
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6. Financial implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from the report. The risk register identifies an area for consideration.

7. Legal implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report. The risk register identifies an area for consideration.

8. Implications for Looked After Children

- 8.1 We need to review and ensure young people in care also understand what provision exists and how they can access support.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 The Committee are asked to note the update report.
- 9.2 The Committee is asked to note the further work of the youth participation and engagement task group around strengthening guidelines in schools.

Lead officer contact

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Background papers

None

Appendices

1. Information on YPAG.
2. Community Safety Partnership information sheet.



Medway YPAG

188 Tweets



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The Youth Police Advisory Group #YPAG is a group of young volunteers who aim to be a voice for young people in #Medway and to improve #policeengagement.

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Medway YPAG @MedwayYpag · May 22, 2018

If you could please take a few minutes to fill out our survey on crime in your area and then retweet.

We need YOUR opinions!

app.easyquest.com/q/Ez68L

Community Safety Partnership

Medway's Community Safety Partnership (CSP) was formed in 1998 in response to the [Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#) which places a duty on the council, the police and other public agencies to form a crime and disorder partnership.

Medway CSP works to make Medway a safer place. Partners work together to develop and implement strategies to protect communities of Medway from a range of issues including anti-social behaviour, drug or alcohol abuse and re-offending.

The partnership consists of:

- Medway Council
- [Kent Police](#)
- [Kent, Surrey and Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company](#)
- [Medway Clinical Commissioning Group](#)
- [Kent Fire and Rescue Service](#)
- other key stakeholders and community groups such as PACTs

For further information you can also read the full [Community Safety Plan 2016-20](#) and the [Kent Police and Crime Plan](#)

Community Safety Plan 2016-20:

https://www.medway.gov.uk/downloads/file/2546/medway_community_safety_partnership_plan_2016

Kent Police and Crime Plan:

<https://www.kent-pcc.gov.uk/what-we-do/safer-in-kent-plan/>