

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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TACKLING RACISM IN SCHOOLS

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Summary

This report follows previous discussions held at Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the issue of tackling racism. The scope of the report aims to provide information and updates from various services and teams within Education and SEND on how they are tackling issues of racism, promoting diversity and/or addressing equality.

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 values and priorities identified in the Council Plan:

- Working together to empower communities
- Child-friendly
- All children achieving their potential in education

2. Background

2.1. The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report from Medway Youth Council (MYC) in May 2017, which outlined the findings and outcomes of their Annual Youth Conference 2016, which was entitled 'Race, Religion and You(th): United in Tackling Racism and Religious Discrimination'.

- 2.2. Following this report, this committee received reports in October 2017 and June 2019, which provided updates on the areas of actions which were identified by MYC.
- 2.3. This report is intended to provide an overview of services and teams within Education and SEND and how they are tackling issues of racism and/or promoting diversity and equality within their service plans and delivery.
- 2.4. The majority of information recorded in relation to Education, SEND, Schools, Post-16 participation and Children's Social Care includes ethnicity and enables cohort breakdowns by ethnicity. The recording of ethnicity is the responsibility of the relevant practitioners and is non-compulsory for the client. However, where high levels of "ethnicity not recorded" are identified services are challenged to improve recording. All statutory returns include ethnicity as mandatory fields.
- 2.5. The school census enables the LA to maintain an accurate picture of the ethnic breakdown of the school population. See Appendix 1

3. Pupil Education Achievement by Ethnicity

- 3.1. The group of ethnicities that are reported on in the following achievement and performance overview, are learners who identify through the census as, Black Caribbean, Black African, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Other Asian, Chinese, and Any Other. Collectively these learners are identified as Non-White British.
- 3.2. In 2022, within Key Stages 2 and 4, the Non-White British learners tended to perform better than White British learners in Medway. Non-White British learners in Medway also exceeded national performance of all learners and national performance of the same ethnicity group.
- 3.3. Whilst the performance of Non-White British learners was better than White British learners across all key measures, this reduced between Key Stage 2 and 5. In 2019, the Key Stage 5 Non-White British cohort did not achieve as well as White British learners in Medway and nationally across all key measures. (2022 KS5 data is yet to be published for ethnicity groups.)

Key Stage 2

- 3.4. In Key Stage 2, Medway's Non-White British learners tend to achieve better than White British learners over time. In 2022, Non-White British learners, achieved in line with their national, Non-White British peers in reading and maths and exceeded their performance in the combined measure, achieving 70%, 8% above their Non-White British peers nationally. Within the Non-White British learner group in Medway, Chinese, Indian, Bangladeshi and Black African learners perform better than those who identify as, Other Asian, Pakistani and Black Caribbean.

Key Stage 4

- 3.5. In Key Stage 4, Non-White British learners continue to achieve better than White British learners over time. In 2022, Non-White British learners achieved better than their national peers, a trend that they have sustained for several years. In the Attainment 8 (Overall) measure, they scored 5.8 points, against their national peers at 5.1. The proportion of learners in this cohort who secured both English and Maths at Grade 4 was higher than national too, 83% in Medway, compared to 72% nationally.
- 3.6. Within the Non-White British group of learners in Medway, Chinese, Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, Black African and Other Asian performed better than all learners nationally. The performance of Black Caribbean learners at the end of Key Stage 4 was lower than that of Medway White British learners.

Key Stage 5

- 3.7. In 2019*, Medway's Non-White British learners performed below their national Non-White British peers achieving less average points and a lower percentage of learners who achieved the higher A*-C grades. The current 16+ review of provision that is underway, may offer an insight into the reasons of this lower achievement.
- 3.8. Amongst the Non-White British group in Medway, there are achievement variations. Chinese, Bangladeshi and Any Other learners continued to outperform all learners nationally in A* to C grades, whilst Black Afro-Caribbean, Pakistani and Other Asian learners achieved below all learners nationally in the same measure.

*2022 strategic national monitoring data is not currently available. 2019 data has been used as a comparison, which avoids the Centre Assessed Grades (teacher assessment) inflation during the pandemic.

4. Curriculum Diversity

- 4.1. The Medway Education Cultural Partnership (MCEP) is a regional group of leaders across the arts, culture and education sectors. The Cultural Programming subgroup of the MCEP is currently considering 'Medway's Heroes in Time' as content for a pilot project with schools. Medway's Heroes in Time is a project led by the School Effectiveness service, and co-produced by schools, diverse cultural groups, local history associations and the general public in Medway. The intention of this list was inspired by the Curriculum Diversity group that Cllr Potter chaired and has been reported on more fully within the Curriculum Diversity report.
- 4.2. Its aim remains, to support schools in promoting curriculum resources that teach local history and important role models, with a specific focus on supporting positive diverse ethnicities in young people's learning. The premise being that knowledge and understanding of the past will directly inform behaviours, attitudes and beliefs of our current generation of learners.

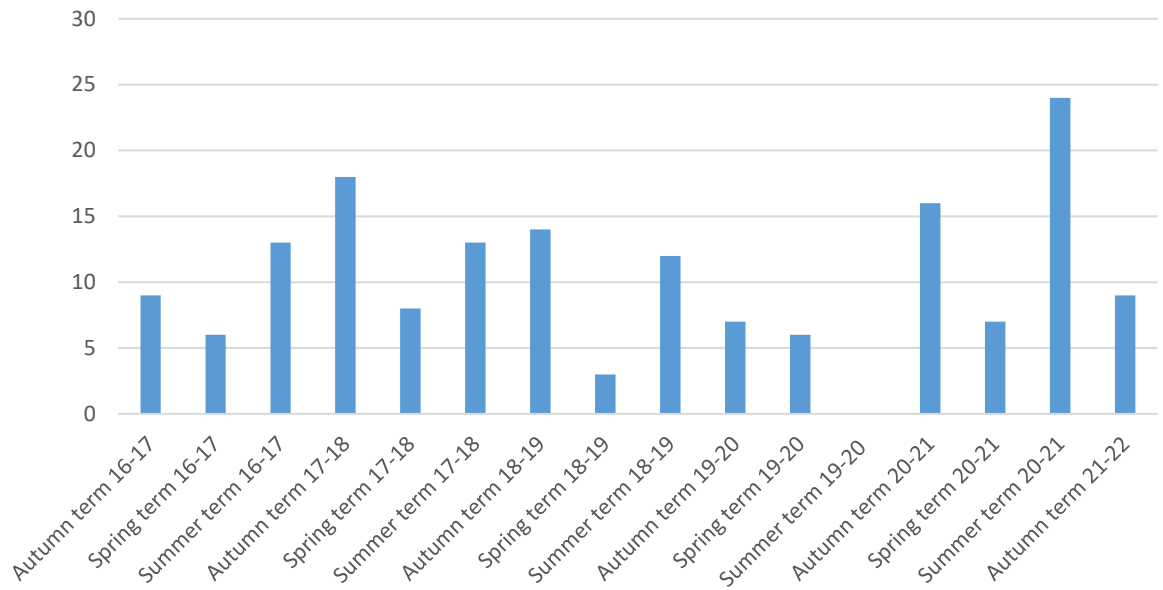
This work will contribute to an important eradication of residual systemic racism and supplement the work that is already underway in schools.

- 4.3. The work of the MCEP project is two-fold:
 - to promote the diversity of Medway through the Heroes project, furthering better understanding of local historic heritage, community cohesion past and present and Medway's diverse ethnic past through the installation of an artist in residence in each of the pilot schools. Funding would be sought from existing channels that have been co-ordinated by Royal Opera House Bridge.
 - to explore how a successful project could be scoped up to impact upon a larger number of schools and the viability of large-scale funding that it would require.
- 4.4. In relation to how the MCEP promotes diversity and equality, its vision is to drive an inspirational, high quality cultural education offer and make it available to all children and young people in Medway. They intend to do this through creating better collaborations between the cultural, education and youth sectors in Medway to increase the creativity, learning and life chances for more of our children and young people.
- 4.5. School leaders are being engaged from January 2023 in the co-production of the artist in residency approach to promoting the Medway's History Heroes. Implicit in the wording of both the MCEP mission and vision statements is the recognition that not all children and young people in Medway have equal access to the creative and cultural opportunities available locally, thus they have different understandings of equality, cohesion and diversity. The partnership therefore prioritises the needs of the least engaged young people in Medway and, as a first step, are conducting research to map the existing local cultural offer and identify the places in Medway which need more targeted provision.

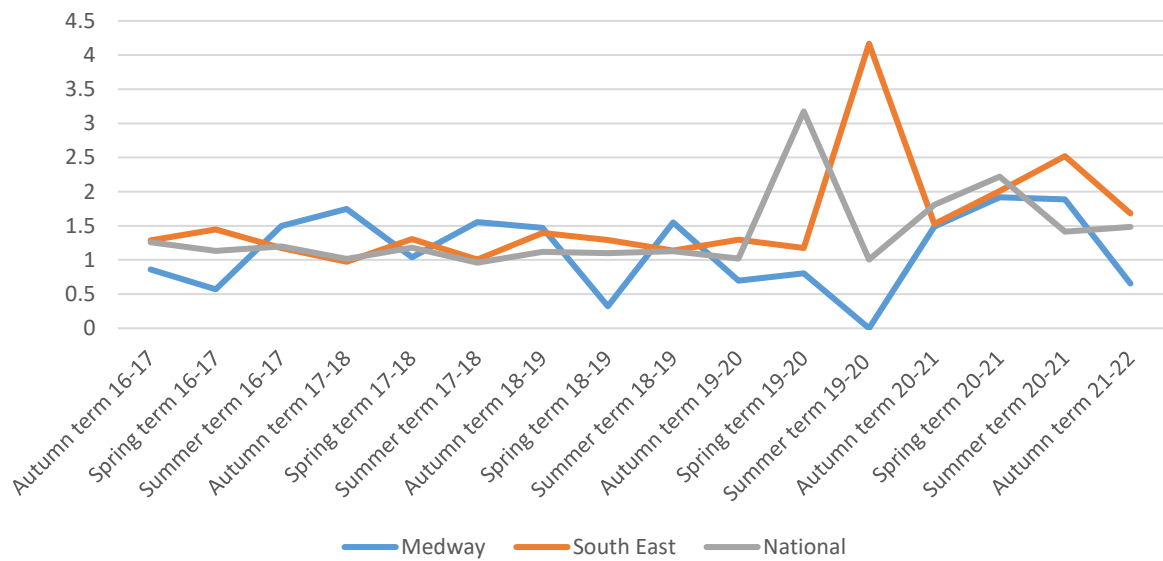
5. Data on Un-School Racial Abuse Incidents

- 5.1. Racist Abuse is a recorded reason in school permanent exclusions and suspensions. These are reported to the Local Authority (LA) by schools as part of the school census returns. However, the DfE records and reports these in arrears. Since 2016/17, Medway has recorded 3 permanent exclusions for Racist abuse and 165 suspensions.

Suspensions for Racisit Abuse in Medway Schools



% Suspension for Racisit Abuse



6. Racial Incidents Reporting

- 6.1. In response to action coming from the Cross Directorate Prevent Group, a process was established in Autumn 2022 to monitor racial incidents annually in Medway schools. Schools are invited to submit information about racial incidents. All information is treated in confidence and used by the School Effectiveness service to identify trends and inform evaluation on an annual basis. A report on the outcome of this will be shared with schools in Autumn 2023. The reports will be useful to identify evidence-based priorities for coordinated action.
- 6.2. The racial incident reporting process has been designed in partnership with the Kent and Medway Prevent team. It is not compulsory for schools to submit information regarding racial incidents, but all schools have been encouraged to take part in this important initiative, in the spirit of working together to bring forward the day when racism is eradicated.
- 6.3. The Medway Education Partnership Group – a multiagency forum with representatives across schools, academies, LA Children’s Services – will maintain oversight of the trends and outcomes of racial incident reports.

7. Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

- 7.1. The table found in Appendix 2 provides data on how Medway’s proportions of SEND K (SEND K = census code for pupils identified as having SEND but do not have an EHCP) and Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) cohorts, within ethnicity groups, compared with the same cohorts nationally.

Primary

- 7.2. White British learners make up the largest ethnic group of SEND support (SEND K) learners in primary, schools, both nationally and in Medway. Medway’s proportion of White British SEND Support learners is broadly in line with national with 12.8% of the whole cohort compared to 10.5% nationally. Within other ethnicity groups, Medway tends to mirror the national proportions across the ethnicity range. The proportion of the entire primary SEND K cohort in Medway is higher than national, with 16.6% in Medway compared to 15.4% nationally.
- 7.3. Regarding proportions of EHCP learners, White British is the largest proportion in Medway, the proportion compared to national is smaller. In Medway it is 1.4%, compared to 1.7% nationally. All other ethnicity groups tend to match the national proportion profiles.

Secondary

- 7.4. White British learners make up the largest ethnic group of SEND K learners in secondary schools, both nationally and in Medway. The proportion of Medway

White British SEND K is larger than nationally, with 12.4% in Medway compared to 10% nationally. Within other ethnicity groups, the proportions are broadly similar to the national profile. The proportion of the entire secondary SEND K cohort in Medway is higher than national, with 15.1% in Medway compared to 13.9% nationally. See Appendix 2

- 7.5. Regarding proportions of EHCP learners, Medway’s White British group is smaller, proportionally than national.

Special

- 7.6. Medway has a larger proportion of White British EHCP learners than nationally, with 76.5% of the cohort in Medway identifying as White British, compared to 66.7% nationally. Unlike, primary and secondary, there is a greater diversity of learners with EHCPs with groups of learners in Medway being represented in each ethnicity group. See Appendix 2

8. Advice and Analysis

- 8.1. The continued monitoring of ethnicity within Medway’s school population allows us to understand the diversity within our school system. Measures that allow us to examine educational achievements by ethnicity, together with the developing reporting on racial incidents occurring in school, provides an opportunity to have a greater understanding of pupils’ experiences and outcomes and supports the identification of potential racial inequality and/or discrimination.

9. Risk Management

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk
No reporting mechanism in place for racial incidents occurring in school	Without a robust mechanism in place to enable schools to report racial incidents (and the response to these), in a timely way, to the Local Authority, the Council cannot accurately assess the prevalence and impact of such incident within Medway schools and, therefore, cannot provide the support to local school leaders in how they manage and respond to these.	An online form has been provided for all schools to use to report racial incidents. This tool is intended to support schools to evaluate how these incidents have been responded to. This reporting has been shared with the Medway Education Partnership Group, where it will continue to be monitored.
Lack of reporting from schools where racial incidents occur	Equal to the above risk is the risk that school leaders do not use the reporting tool provided when racial incidents occur. This results in the same impact outlined in the risk above.	Should a lack of reporting become apparent, this concern will be escalated to the Medway Education Partnership Group for Local Authority officers to work with school leadership representatives to ensure that the importance of reporting is

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk
		understood and to ensure that the process itself is robust and allows schools to complete this without issue.

10. Climate Change Implications

10.1. There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

11. Financial Implications

11.1. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

12. Legal Implications

12.1. 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.

12.2. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

13. Recommendations

13.1. The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note and comment on the contents of this report.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1– Overview of Ethnicity within Medway’s Schools and the Range of Languages Spoken

Appendix 2 Appendix 2 – National and Medway comparisons for SEND K and Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) cohorts by ethnicity

Background Papers

Link to: [Racial Incident Reporting in Medway Schools](#)