Framework for developing an
Anti-Racist and Decolonised Curriculum

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Vision Statement

In their Race Equality Framework for Scotland 2016-2030, the Scottish Government have developed six themed visions in order to achieve their aim "to create a Race Equality Framework based on the priorities, needs and experiences of Scotland's minority ethnic communities."[1] Theme four of this framework relates to Education and Lifelong Learning, and the Government's vision is that "Everyone has the opportunity to learn in an inclusive environment without disadvantage in relation to racial inequality or racism."[2]

Article 29 on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child also relates to education. It states that "States Parties agree that the Education of the child shall be directed to: (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilisations different from his or her own."[3]

Our responsibility then, as educators in South Lanarkshire is to create schools and classrooms where all our learners feel valued and treated equally. Our commitment to, and approach towards anti-racist education should empower learners to engage with an increasingly diverse Scotland.

This document aims to support schools in delivering an anti-racist approach and therefore, it has attempted to minimise the amount of terminology used, to keep it as straightforward for the user as possible. However, we also recognise that terminology around race, is an area that brings great uncertainty to many practitioners and therefore, would advise looking at The Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER)'s glossary in Appendix 2 of their *'Introduction to Anti-Racist Curriculum Development: A guide for teachers'.*[4]

[1] Race equality framework for Scotland 2016 to 2030 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
[2] ibid
[3] https://www.unicef-irc.org/portfolios/general_comments/GC1_en.doc.html
[4] Anti-Racist Curriculum Development - Crer Document.pdf

Please note the definitions used in this glossary is not definitions that everyone will agree with.

Diversity in Scotland

The 2011 census in Scotland showed that 8.2% of Scotland's population was made up by **minority ethnic communities**, this equates to **around 450,000 people**.

This is part of a growing trend given that these numbers are considerably higher than those recorded in the 2001 census. So, we can expect the percentage in 2023 to be higher still.

The Annual Data Check for South Lanarkshire Council pupils in 2022-2023 showed that **11.7% of our pupils** come from a **minority ethnic background**, again part of a growing trend.

This framework will use the term 'minority ethic' as this refers to all people in Scotland who are not part of the majority ethnic group 'white Scottish' or 'white British'.

What is 'racism'?

Race cannot be understood in scientific terms, in fact, scientists have said that groups that we tend to group under the term race do not actually have any distinct, unifying genetic identities. Race is a social construct, designed by colonialists to justify their immoral treatment of those deemed 'different' to them based on appearance. Racism, however, is very real and affects every student in our schools, whether they are aware of it or not. Despite increased anti-racist legislation, we continue to see a growth in intolerance and racism.

The Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER) is a Scottish anti-racism charity based in Glasgow.

They define racism in its Scottish context[5]:

" The term 'racism' is technically most applicable to prejudice or discrimination against groups which have historically been racialised, with implications around skin colour and specific forms of stereotyping. The background to racism in Britain lies in history. During the time of the British Empire, theories that people could be divided into 'racial' groups linked to ethnicity became popular. These theories, although untrue, made it easier for Britain to downplay the brutality of slavery and colonisation. 'Other races' were portrayed as inferior and in need of 'help' from Britain. This impacted the racial stereotypes we see today, where BME people are often treated as though they are 'different' in comparison to the 'normal' white Scottish community. This sense of difference underpins racism.

Racial prejudice can be obvious or hidden, and sometimes the people who hold this prejudice lack the knowledge they need to recognise it in themselves. Someone doesn't have to feel particularly hostile towards people from a BME group in order to have racist attitudes or to act in a racist way. Racism has persisted for so long, and is so tied up with the way society and organisations operate, that it has become embedded across all areas of life in nations like Scotland. We can see its impact through continuing racial inequalities in areas such as employment, income and housing. "

[5] CRER and respectme's publication Addressing Inclusion: Effectively Challenging Racism in Schools

The Principles of delivering an anti-racist education (this document will be explained later) also refer to systemic racism, which can be understood as racism that is embedded in laws, systems, policies, practices and beliefs that produce and maintain racial inequality or prejudice.

What is anti-racist education?

Anti-racist education is:

- Learning that works proactively to prevent and challenge racism that exists within our society.

- A focus that aims to make Scotland the best possible place for our young people to grow up where they will have the opportunity to learn in an environment that is inclusive and supports equality.

- Learning with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at its heart.

- Schools developing an ethos and a curriculum that helps everyone to understand the discomfort many minority ethnic young people may face from being constantly noticed in racial terms.

- Learning that incorporates viewpoints outside of the white-Scottish or Eurocentric perspective, integral throughout courses, not an add on.

- A way of ensuring that our schools can help to begin counteracting the disadvantage that minority ethnic young people and their families face, not only in our schools, but also in the wider community.

- Children exploring what they think 'normal' means, abandoning any sense of ethnocentrism, and seeking to challenge the Eurocentric mindset that has become what they tend to constitute as 'normal'.

Anti-racist education is not:

- About simply recognising and celebrating diversity, it must provide learners with opportunities to explore stereotypes, prejudice, racism and discrimination.

- Just tackling negative ideas and behaviours around race, but it should actively work to alter young people's negative assumptions around race and things that have even become subconsciously acceptable because they exist as social norms.

Decolonising the curriculum

Racialisation is an abuse of power and a tool with which to subvert and control people. It is a concept that was accelerated during colonial times where many European nations, largely Britain (with Scotland playing a key role in this), took control of other nations against their will. At the peak of her Empire, Britain controlled around one quarter of the world. The notion of race was used by these European colonists to justify their oppression of people in these colonised countries as sub-human and 'lesser' than the white man colonising them. Western views of race have continued to be influenced along these lines even after the emancipation of these nations. Decolonising the curriculum then, is about moving away from these Eurocentric assumptions and perspectives.

Studying topics such as colonialism, the Transatlantic Slave Trade and migration of Scottish people can help our learners to understand how much these historic events have influenced perspectives, traditions and cultures today. This can be done across the curriculum and not just in History lessons. A Home Economics teacher for example, could build this into a lesson about sugar.

Decolonising the curriculum isn't about completely changing the way things are done in school, it is about integrating a wider range of perspectives into our lessons. This should include building in histories and stories of minority ethnic people in Scotland. It should also aim to build more global narratives into our teaching.

Guidance for leaders within our establishments

It is crucial that we create a culture of open discussions to allow our young people to work towards developing solutions to racism. Before we can do this, we must create a climate where our staff feel comfortable to talk about issues of race to help develop their capacity and understanding.

Samena Dean carried out a questionnaire of one hundred Muslim children in Edinburgh and found that learner confidence in teachers' ability to deal with racist incidents is low and this often results in learners not reporting incidents of racism (Islamophobia in this instance).[6] It is the case that practitioners within our establishments often do not feel equipped to deal with incidents of racism. Therefore, we must ensure that the staff are confident in talking about racism, by providing professional development opportunities and appropriate platforms for discussion. Staff must be supported to feel well equipped in acknowledging and dealing with incidents of racism, but also to prevent racism occurring in the first instance.

Establishments must create a climate and environment where anti-racist education is supported and can thrive. Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) provides some good opportunities within the curriculum to study race related topics such as the Transatlantic Slave Trade and aspects of migration to Scotland. While these are helpful, we need to go beyond this to create a truly anti-racist approach. We should aim to normalise diverse perspectives throughout the curriculum. This should include opportunities to develop perspectives around current world issues as well as the historical colonial based race related topics.

The Scottish Government have set out their Principles on delivering an Anti-Racist Curriculum in the document entitled 'Breaking the Mould'[7]. These Principles come in two parts: part one gives Principles for our young people (the framework will look at this later); and part two relates to the role of our educators and leaders.

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[6] Dean, S (2016)'Islamophobia in Edinburgh Schools' Islamophobia in Edinburgh Schools | SACC
[7] Breaking the mould – Our Curriculum must be an Anti-Racist Curriculum (education.gov.scot)

These principles are as follows:

Our educators and leaders:

► Will commit to continual personal and professional learning to develop a high level of racial literacy.

► Will investigate and actively challenge all manifestations of racism in everyday behaviours, resources, attitudes, practices and processes.

► Will reflect upon their assumptions and biases, their racial and social identities and those of others, and consider the impact these have on their professional practice.

► Will feel confident in teaching an anti-racist curriculum and in supporting learners to be anti-racist.

► Will co-design and enact a curriculum that takes learners' lives and experiences as a starting point, and actively source and introduce a diversity of perspectives, texts, identities and voices.

► Will foster an anti-racist culture where racism can be discussed openly, honestly and with humility, and with a willingness to take risks and make mistakes while remaining accountable for their actions.

► Will demonstrate personal and collective leadership across the education system, both in actively promoting an anti-racist culture and in supporting people who experience racism.

► Will safeguard against racism and discrimination, understanding those as a source of serious harm for learners, colleagues, families, carers and wider community members. Racism will be understood in the context of GIRFEC wellbeing indicators, children's rights and human rights.

Central to this, is developing a curriculum with our young people, and not just for them. Thus, we must find a platform to give young people a voice in the development an anti-racist curriculum.

It is also crucial that practitioners within our establishments feel comfortable and confident in dealing with issues around race and therefore, centres have an obligation to ensure that staff have the necessary training and supports to do this.

Before any establishment can create the desired culture and ethos, they must understand their current culture, in terms of race. An audit of the views of key stakeholders should allow leadership a good overview of their current climate. They would then be able to use the Principles above to inform where areas of change are required. All stakeholders should be consulted and involved throughout this process of change. Once the desired culture is obtained within a school, then teachers can be supported to begin incorporating the first part of the Principles into their day-to-day teaching practice.

Teachers will need supported throughout the process of embedding the Principles into their day-to-day practice and, it is crucial that the Principles are met across the curriculum and as frequently as possible (although this should be naturally occurring). These Principles do not need a system of tracking and monitoring, this should be thought of as a cultural change in the delivery of curriculum, rather than another bureaucratic exercise for teachers.

The place of anti-racist education in South Lanarkshire Council's Framework for the Curriculum

South Lanarkshire Council Priority for 2022-23, **"Ensure inclusion, equity and equality are at the heart of what we do."**

When developing our curriculum rationale, it is important to look at the development of our young people under the four capacities. Minority Ethnic young people struggle to develop under the four capacities if they are not represented within the curriculum. For example, one of the attributes of becoming a Confident Individual is Self-Respect. Responsible Citizens need to have respect for others, and this can only be obtained if they have an understanding of 'others'.

Guidance for practitioners

Part one of 'Breaking the Mould' focuses on what an anti-racist curriculum should look like for our young people. These are not a series of benchmarks that we want to track in our young people, they should be ingrained and evident throughout our courses.

These principles are as follows:

Our children and young people:

► Will experience a curriculum that meaningfully recognises and fairly represents the rich and diverse communities in Scotland and beyond.

► Will understand and enquire into Scotland's role in historical world events, including trans-Atlantic enslavement and colonial histories, and their continuing impact today.

► Will learn about and investigate past and present events in a way that amplifies under-represented perspectives and stories.

► Will feel safe and confident to co-design their curriculum from their personal perspectives and those of the wider world.

► Will be critical thinking global citizens that challenge discrimination and prejudice through an understanding and awareness of the behaviours, practices and processes that create injustice in the world.

► Will learn the difference between individual and systemic racism, their impacts, and how they intersect or connect with other types of injustice.

► Will be supported to reflect on positionality, privilege and power, and to unlearn bias, prejudice and divisiveness.

► Will learn that everyone has a right to be safeguarded from racism and discrimination, and will be empowered to challenge any infringement of this right.

► Be empowered to bring about new ways of being together in the world by valuing and promoting empathy, solidarity and shared humanity that is often disrupted by systemic racism.

Its place in the Skills Framework

The work that we do in our classrooms to develop an anti-racist curriculum need not be new and should, in fact, link in with all our messages around Curriculum for Excellence. The South Lanarkshire Council Skills Framework is a very useful place to start this journey. By looking at the skills developed within the four capacities we can see how instilling that anti-racist message within our young people, will better prepare them for life in our diverse and ever-changing society.

The following table shows examples of skills that could be developed in the delivery of the anti-racist curriculum Principles as well as the success criteria covered by it.

Please note that these are only examples and not an exhaustive list.

The skills aligning to each Principle will wholly depend on each practitioner's approach and this is not a one size fits all.

The table shows the skills colour coded under the 4 capacities to show that sometimes, as young people progress through the stages, one Principle can cover many skills, depending on the lesson and approach used by the class teacher. Red represents the skills covered under 'Successful Learners', blue is 'Confident Individuals', purple is 'Responsible Citizens' and green is 'Effective Contributors'. These examples aim to show that building an anti-racist curriculum can help us to develop skills, at various stages, in learners across the 4 capacities.

Principle Our children and young people:	Relevant skill(s)	Success criteria
Will experience a curriculum that meaningfully recognises and fairly represents the rich and diverse communities in Scotland and beyond.	Open minded Giving information	**Stage 1** I can recall the different Minority Ethnic groups that live in Scotland. **Stage 4** I can use a range of platforms to give information that represents the variety of Minority Ethnic groups across Scotland.
Will understand and enquire into Scotland's role in historical world events, including trans-Atlantic enslavement and colonial histories, and their continuing impact today.	Higher order thinking Critical thinking Courage	**Stage 3** I can draw connection between Scotland's role in the trade and immorality of the wealth Glasgow received as a result. **Stage 4** I can consider the view that Glasgow deserves to keep the wealth that they gained from the slave trade and show present arguments and opinions to justify this, even although I find this position indefensible. **Stage 2** I can speak out when I see an injustice.

Principle Our children and young people:	Relevant skill(s)	Success criteria
Will learn about and investigate past and present events in a way that amplifies under-represented perspectives and stories.	Receiving information Respect Story telling	**Stage 4** I can analyse/evaluate information that I have received to effectively understand under-represented perspectives. **Stage 3** I can acknowledge the values, opinions and attitudes of different groups within society and compare them to my own. **Stage 4** I can select and tell a story of an under-represented person/people to motivate others.
Will feel safe and confident to co-design their curriculum from their personal perspectives and those of the wider world.	Empathy Recognising reliable sources of information Risk taking Creativity	**Stage 4** I can begin to 'step into another's shoes' to view thoughts and feelings from another perspective. **Stage 3** I can compare more than one article about the same topic to support my own writing. **Stage 4** I can assess, plan for and overcome potential risks that may arise when trying to achieve my goals. **Stage 1** I can use my imagination to create a project/story/model/picture.
Will be critical thinking global citizens that challenge discrimination and prejudice through an understanding and awareness of the behaviours, practices and processes that create injustice in the world.	Critical thinking Develop and maintain relationships Taking responsibility	**Stage 3** I can make decisions based on evidence that I have presented to me. **Stage 3** I can describe negative behaviours and factors that contribute to negative relationships, and how these can create injustice in the world. **Stage 4** I can use my knowledge of injustice and actively take a stance against it.

Principle Our children and young people:	Relevant skill(s)	Success criteria
Will learn the difference between individual and systemic racism, their impacts, and how they intersect or connect with other types of injustice.	Emotional literacy Higher order thinking	**Stage 2** I can describe the influence that people, situations, and events have on people's emotions. **Stage 2** I can explain the difference between concepts like individual racism and systemic racism. **Stage 3** I can explain the connections between racism and other types of injustice like equal opportunities.
Will be supported to reflect on positionality, privilege and power, and to unlearn bias, prejudice and divisiveness.	Courage Curiosity	**Stage 4** I can step out of my comfort zone by challenging my own thinking and the thinking of those around me by reflecting on my position in society and things understood as 'societal norms'. **Stage 1** I can ask interesting questions about my surroundings.
Will learn that everyone has a right to be safeguarded from racism and discrimination, and will be empowered to challenge any infringement of this right.	Integrity Encouraging	**Stage 2** I can demonstrate commitment to anti-racism in my words and actions. **Stage 2** I can use encouraging words to motivate others to stand up against racism.
Be empowered to bring about new ways of being together in the world by valuing and promoting empathy, solidarity and shared humanity that is often disrupted by systemic racism.	Listening Emotional literacy Thinking critically and creatively Imagination Empathy	**Stage 4** I can respond to the views of others by analysing/evaluating information and thinking critically. **Stage 4** I can identify and implement strategies to manage and moderate emotions in increasingly unfamiliar situations. **Stage 3** I can overcome problems I encounter by considering a range of solutions. **Stage 4** I can produce and simulate novel ideas in my mind and apply these to real life situations. **Stage 4** I can begin to 'step into another's shoes' to view thoughts and feelings from another perspective.

Ideas for activities[8]

Activities that incorporate a number of representatives from a variety of ethnic groups can help combat potential views of the 'in-group' and 'out-group'. "Co-operative learning activities where a diverse group have to work together to achieve a goal, with each person playing their part in this, have been shown to be particularly effective."[9] Using stories of friendship between minority ethnic and majority ethnic groups can also help to break down barrier and challenge ways of thinking. In the same way, using examples of minority ethnic people that are unlikeable can help to reinforce negative ideas.

Further support and lesson ideas will become available on the Staff Learning Centre in due course.

Glossary

Minority Ethnic – refers to all people in Scotland who are not part of the majority ethnic group 'white Scottish' or 'white British'.

BME – This is the preferred term used by CRER in Introduction to Anti-Racist Curriculum Development: A guide for teachers' and stands for 'Black and Minority Ethnic'.

Ethnocentrism – the assumption that our own ethnic group and its perspectives are more valuable and 'normal' compared to those of other groups.

Systemic racism – racism that is embedded in laws, systems, policies, practices and beliefs that produce and maintain racial inequality or prejudice.

Decolonising the curriculum – a move away from the Eurocentric ideas and perspectives that are currently embedded in our curriculum.

8 CRER Anti-Racist Curriculum Development (squarespace.com) p31
9 ibid p31

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