



14th July 2020

Black Lives Matter

The murder of George Floyd on 25th May 2020 in the USA, along with the subsequent protests around the world, has rightfully brought into sharp focus the inequalities that saturate modern societies and institutions. Prince Henry's, like all other schools, also has a duty to respond and reflect upon the issues raised by this important movement. A number of former students have recently contacted the school, and we have met them, and intend to use the feedback generated to continue to make our school a better place for all, through both our curriculum offer and pastoral support.

As a result of the Black Lives Matter movement and issues raised in recent correspondence to the school, our school improvement plan for next year will refine aspects of our pastoral support with specific reference to BAME issues. We want to ensure all students feel supported and have equal opportunities that they are entitled to. Over the next academic year we intend to:-

- Provide training to staff and students about creating a truly supportive atmosphere for BAME students where issues concerning race can be discussed safely and students know how actions are followed up. This will be quality assured to ensure it is effective with both existing and former students.
- To enhance our SMSC programme to specifically include a focus upon the Black Lives Matters movement.
- Review our Safeguarding Team to ensure that supportive mechanisms are in place to support students who encounter any forms of racism including a designated point of contact for BAME issues.
- As well as the Learning and House Councils, to set up a Student Diversity Council with a special focus upon equal opportunities, respect, tolerance and friendship for all.
- We will ensure that we have a quiet space in which pupils can reflect upon their beliefs
- To work with our feeder middle schools to ensure all BAME pupils have a positive and consistent experience
- To meet with present and former students to discuss their experiences so that the issues raised through the Black Lives Matter movement can be used to reinforce and develop the curriculum and teaching at Prince Henry's.

The teaching at Prince Henry's has always operated on the basis of providing students with a broad balanced curriculum. As a school we have always worked with the purpose of educating our students in a wide range of subjects as well as promoting key values such as Equality, Tolerance, Mutual Understanding, Courtesy and many more. Additionally, we deliver regular assemblies about all aspects of life including the promotion of key British Values as defined by the UK government's 2011 Prevent Strategy: Democracy; The Rule of Law; Individual Liberty; Mutual Respect and Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

Our existing curriculum already offers a significant coverage of the issues raised by the Black Lives Matters movement. However, there is more to do. The school's curriculum will be fundamental in underpinning the issues raised by the Black Lives Movement and we are exploring how we could work effectively with programmes such as the 'Black Curriculum'. As a school we have always focussed attention on teaching students about life outside of the directed exam specifications and between departments. This has led to a recent joint project between the History and RE department in which those departments examined the events of the Holocaust and its impact upon all groups of people. This led to a wonderful opportunity for many of our students when they met with Ivan Shaw, a Holocaust Survivor, who spoke to our students about many topics, but specifically the dangers of discrimination and prejudice.

The school is always looking for opportunities to engage students with an understanding of all types of people in the modern world and in the past, both nationally and internationally. As part of the school's annual Remembrance Day commemoration programme, a specific assembly on the contribution of the British Commonwealth soldiers to the British war effort is an excellent opportunity for students to learn more about the immense contribution of people from all walks of life. World Challenge trips in recent years have taken students from Prince Henry's to Cambodia, Laos, Borneo and Malaysia.

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Working in collaboration with Bredon Hill and St Egwin's Middle Schools

The school also focuses much attention on delivering a comprehensive assembly programme, which attempts to expand the thinking of students and provide them with a wider worldview. In recent years, we have delivered assemblies on themes such as: community; 'labels' and 'stereotypes'; freedom of speech and liberty; Poverty in Africa.

We have been developing our subject curriculum in recent years to bring in a broader and more diverse approach including for example:

English

In English at Key Stage 3, there are elements of the course which cover the history of black people. For example, *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Of Mice and Men* are studied. Whilst these are American texts and existed pre-Civil Rights, the department uses these texts as a springboard to explore the manifestations of prejudice the characters experience and beyond. This includes teaching about the slave trade and its lasting impact. The study of these materials, extend into British society too, so that students are able to understand that - whilst different countries - Britain had a great responsibility for black people's treatment and that our own white-centric culture often layers racism in different ways.

At GCSE, where there are opportunities to explore the history and experiences of black people further, these are taken. For example, John Agard's poem *Checking out me History* is used as a vehicle to explore the systemic oppression of black history and culture. In the poem, he challenges why Florence Nightingale is lauded as a hero, when Mary Seacole is far less known.

At A Level, in both English Language and Literature, the opportunity arises to teach about the British Empire and to invert the historical idea of 'Great' Britain. In English Literature, although the exam texts are white writers, where possible the department does teach about people of colour. For example, in the World War One unit the studied texts are *Regeneration*, *My Boy Jack*, and the poems of Wilfred Owen - all white authors. So we go further and explore Kipling's ideas about the Empire and, indeed, his thoughts about the 'White Man's Burden'. To provide students with a greater understanding of this period, students are also taught about Britain's colonisation, the exploitation of India and explore responses to poems such as Henry Labouchere's *Brown Man's Burden*.

We also teach how Indian Sikhs fought in the war and the prejudice they faced to disrupt the narrative of WW1 being a sort of 'equality' club. Through the English Department's teaching during Lockdown, where possible and appropriate, the department has used stories in the news to explore the language of the media and, in the viewpoint writing students have done, some have used George Floyd as a springboard to explore racism in the UK and USA further.

Geography

Geography is a key subject within the school in terms of exploring all political, social, economic issues within the UK and outside of it. These topics, although restrained by the exam curriculum do give some scope to examine issues of race and race relations.

At GCSE, the Geography Department studies Bristol as a major UK city, and this covers Bristol's past as a slave trading hub. Additionally, the modern make-up of Bristol is also explored, and an emphasis is placed upon areas in Bristol such as St Paul's, which has a significant Afro Caribbean community.

At A Level the course expands on topics covered at GCSE, and the students look at the post-Windrush migration from the Caribbean, why they were invited, what they did and how they were treated. There is also an examination of Haiti as a case study relating to its natural disasters. This links into the island's past relating to the slave trade and rebelling against French rule as having a legacy effect on its current poverty and views about it. The A Level course also revisits the concept of colonialism as an early form of globalisation and how it is one of many factors that has led to a gap between the global inequalities of wealth.

RE

At GCSE, aspects of hate crime are studied and examples such as the racially motivated murder of the young black teenager Anthony Walker in Liverpool is studied. The department also examines segregation in the US and apartheid in South Africa as part of topics on reconciliation and pacifism. There are many other examples across all subject areas where issues of race and challenges for all groups of people are studied.

As part of the dialogue generated by the Black Lives Matters movement, we intend to meet with our alumni on at least an annual basis to ensure that our curriculum and pastoral support constantly evolves and provides a broad and balanced education, which will prepare all Prince Henry's students for the world in which they will live one day.



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