

Why should we discuss this issue in our school?

1. In Church schools, in response to the gospel imperative, there must be a commitment to base relationships on the teachings of Christ to love “your neighbour as yourself”.
2. Church schools should seek to be a model of excellence in pursuing racial justice and equality.
3. Schools must provide opportunities for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of the pupils. There is an imperative derived from each of these dimensions severally and collectively to ensure that pupils are led to understand and value social and cultural diversity in Britain and the world.
4. Schools must be committed to the prevention of bullying, racism and other forms of violence, whether physical, intellectual or emotional. They must be safe places in which all pupils and adults can work, learn and grow together.
5. Schools are required by law to prepare pupils for the experiences of adult life. An essential part of preparation for adult life is preparation to live in a multi-ethnic, multicultural and multi-faith society.
6. The Stephen Lawrence Enquiry Report, 1999 has challenged the country to tackle “institutional racism” defined in the report as – *The collective failure of an organization to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin.*

It is important for schools to take steps to ensure that they are not trapped into unjust patterns of behaviour and thought. With respect to educating children and young people, the evidence given by Chief Constable Burden (South Wales Police) in the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry is relevant “...racism exists within all organizations and institutions, and it infiltrates the community and starts amongst the very young. Recent research in Cardiff showed that 50% of the racist incidents considered by the Race Equality Council involved young people under 16 years old, and 25% of these incidents involved children between the ages of six and ten years. The problem is thus deeply ingrained”.

7. OFSTED has the following question in its framework for inspection: “Does the school teach pupils to appreciate and develop their own cultural traditions and appreciate the diversity and richness of other cultures?”