

Meeting of:	CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES
Date of Meeting:	19 FEBRUARY 2025
Report Title:	UPDATE ON EQUALITIES WORK WITHIN SCHOOLS (SCHOOL YEAR 2023-2024)
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CHIEF OFFICER - FINANCE, HOUSING AND CHANGE
Responsible Officer:	SUE ROBERTS GROUP MANAGER (SCHOOLS)
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no impact on the policy framework or procedure rules.
Executive Summary:	This report provides an update on the Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate's response to racial and/or discriminative incidents within schools.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet Committee Equalities (CCE) with information on racial and/or discriminative incidents within schools, as monitored using the Racist Incident Report Form.
- 1.2 The report will also outline how the local authority has improved communication with schools around reporting incidents of discrimination, along with information on good practice within schools.

2. Background

- 2.1 On 18 March 2019, all schools were sent guidance on reporting racist incidents within schools. Guidance included notifying the local authority of racial incidents as well as notification to the police where incidents were recorded as a hate crime. Incident Report Forms were sent to the Equalities mailbox for recording purposes, and details are annually reported.
- 2.2 In the school year 2022-2023, 43 incidents of discrimination were reported by schools across the county borough. Out of the 43 incidents, 28 were reported by secondary schools, 14 by primary schools and 1 by a special school.
- 2.3 The majority of reported incidents were recorded as verbal abuse or insults (31 incidents).

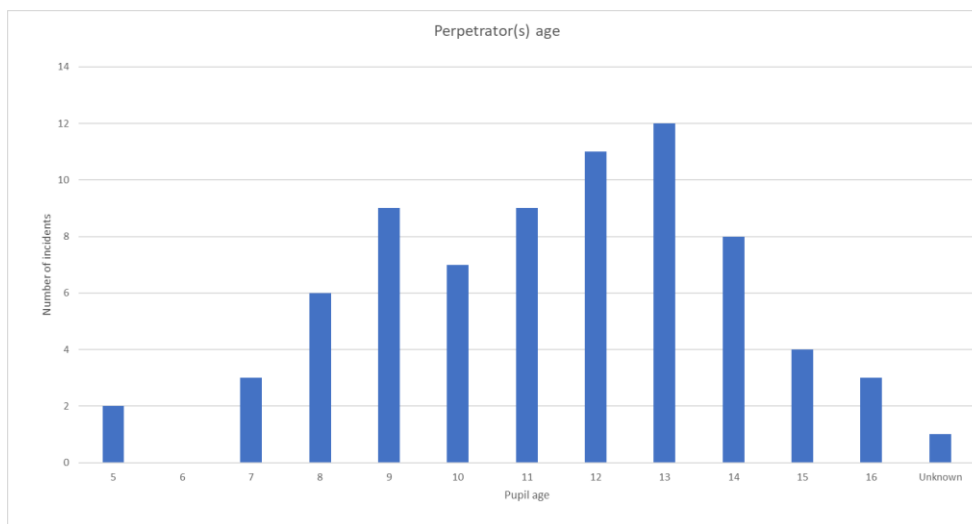
- 2.4 The most common age range of the perpetrator was between 11 to 14 years (25 incidents), while in 37 out of the 43 incidents, the perpetrator was male. In 40 of the incidents, the perpetrator was recorded as White British.
- 2.5 The most common age range of the victim (where the data was provided) was between 12 to 14 years (8 incidents), while in 3 out of the 43 incidents, there was no identified victim.
- 2.6 As an overall analysis of the data, the level of reporting incidents of discrimination is low across schools in Bridgend.
- 2.7 In October 2023, a new online format for reporting incidents of discrimination in schools was introduced. The new format was aimed at making the process easier and more efficient for schools, with the hope of increasing reporting across Bridgend to gain a more accurate analysis of the situation. Completed forms would still be sent through to the Equalities team and the person completing the form would receive a portable document format (pdf) copy of the form once it was submitted.
- 2.8 Following the Cabinet Committee Equalities meeting on 8 November 2023, it was agreed that the local authority would provide an update about the responses to incidents of discrimination and highlight good practice taking place.
- 2.9 In April 2024, the Education, Early Years and Young People (EEYYP) Directorate established the EEYYP Equalities Group.
- 2.10 The group is responsible for advocating the need to report incidents and for sharing good practice taking place in schools across Bridgend with an aim of supporting schools in reducing the levels of discriminatory behaviour.
- 2.11 This group consists of local authority officers across different directorates and headteacher representatives and pupils are invited to share good practice.
- 2.12 There are strong links to other forums around this agenda, including Community Safety Partnership, Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board and Public Service Board (PSB).

3. Current situation / proposal

- 3.1 In the school year 2023-2024, there were 67 reported incidents of discrimination by schools across the county borough. There was an increase in the number of reported incidents from the previous year, from 43 to 67 (please see **Appendix A**).
- 3.2 Out of the 67 reported incidents, 28 came from primary schools and 35 came from secondary schools. The other four incidents came from one special school.
- 3.3 The following table identifies the protected characteristic that was discriminated against (please note some incidents have more than one protected characteristic):

Protected characteristic	Number of incidents
Race/ethnicity	60
Sexual orientation	7
Gender reassignment	4
Disability	1
Religion/belief	1

3.4 Incidents have been recorded by age of perpetrator and age of victim:



In six separate incidents, there were two perpetrators, and in one incident there were three perpetrators.



In four separate incidents there was more than one victim. On 11 occasions, there were no identified victims because the perpetrator did not aim the discriminatory language towards an individual. In six of the incidents the victim was the teacher.

3.5 Where the gender of the perpetrator was stated, 64 were male and 11 were female.

3.6 Where the gender of the victim was stated, 43 were male and 19 were female.

3.7 In 52 out of the 67 incidents, verbal abuse was directed at the victim.

3.8 Incidents took place in the following locations (please note some incidents had more than one location):

Location	Number of incidents
Classroom	28
Playground	22
Corridor	5
Social media/online	4
School transport	4
Canteen/dinner hall	4
Multiple locations	2
Changing rooms	1

3.9 The following are examples of the support schools put in place following the incident of discrimination:

- emotional support;
- restorative justice;
- phone call to perpetrators parents;
- phone call to victim parents;
- Show Racism the Red Card training/workshops;
- Diversity and Anti-Racism Professional Learning (DARPL);
- engagement with Hate Crime Officer;
- met with Wellbeing Team;
- advice from Schools In-Reach Emotional Wellbeing Service (SHINE);
- anger management session; and
- Early Help referral.

3.10 The data from the 2023-2024 school year reported incidents of discrimination was discussed during the EYYP Equalities Group meeting in October 2024, where two headteachers provided their opinion on the data. The general consensus from the group was that despite a rise in reported incidents from the previous year, schools were still underreporting. The 28 reported incidents from primary schools came from 14 schools (29% of the total number of primary schools in Bridgend) and the 35 reported incidents from secondary schools came from 5 schools (56% of the total number of secondary schools in Bridgend).

3.11 Following further discussions with headteacher representatives, it was agreed that an equalities workshop would be provided at a Team Bridgend meeting.

3.12 In November 2024, an equalities agenda item at Team Bridgend was provided to primary headteachers. The agenda item covered the following areas:

- feedback on reported discriminative incidents in schools during the 2023-2024 school year;
- discussion on current reporting process and discrimination incidents within schools; and
- the sharing of good practice from the headteacher at Cefn Glas Infant School.

- 3.13 Key information from the presentation was also provided to primary deputy headteachers during the Deputy Headteacher Network meeting in November 2024 and to secondary and special school headteachers during the Bridgend Association of Secondary Headteachers (BASH) meeting on 31 January 2025.
- 3.14 The following points were raised as a result of these meetings:
- a general consensus that the current data for reported incidents of discrimination across Bridgend does not reflect what is being experienced in schools, as headteachers reported they were seeing more incidents of discrimination that was being reported to the local authority;
 - some headteachers and deputy headteachers were unaware of the new online format for reporting incidents, but agreed the online form was an easier and more efficient way of reporting incidents;
 - elements of the online form can be improved, for example re-wording the question of 'what has been done following an incident?', as quite often steps have yet to be put in place;
 - access to the online form can be problematic due to issues with accessing it via the intranet;
 - some headteachers were apprehensive about reporting incidents due to the question of providing the perpetrators and victims' names;
 - a request for more guidance about the threshold for reporting incidents of discrimination; and
 - a request for further professional learning about how to develop anti-discriminatory practice in schools.
- 3.15 Feedback from all meetings has been shared with members of the Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate (EEYYP) Equalities Group and the following actions have been agreed:
- feedback from headteachers on changes to the online form will be implemented in collaboration with the Experience and Improvement Team;
 - the link to the form will be provided as a regular item in the Monday mailshot to schools to improve access to the form;
 - schools will be encouraged to share good practice through the EEYYP Equalities Group; and
 - further professional learning is to be arranged in the spring or summer term 2025. This will most likely be through DARPL.
- 3.16 Several schools in Bridgend have engaged with DARPL to support professional practice in tackling and reporting racism, developing anti-racist cultural shifts, and exploring commitment, actions, and strategy at all levels of the workforce.
- 3.17 DARPL presented at the Primary Deputy Headteacher Network in March 2024 and their updates have been shared through the mailshot and across all of our primary and secondary networks.
- 3.18 The DARPL Advocacy Network (DAN) has recently been established, which is a national and global community of practice for learning organisations who are committed to progressive anti-racist leadership through an embedded whole learning organisation approach. DAN supports and facilitates the development and sharing

of excellent anti-racist practice. Two of our schools have committed to join this network, while a further six have expressed an interest.

- 3.19 A number of leaders within schools have completed (or are in the process of doing so) the DARPL Enhanced Leadership training.
- 3.20 By January 2025 a total of 17 schools in Bridgend have currently signed up to the 'Show Racism the Red Card's Creative Competition 2025'. There is potential for more schools to engage with the project.

Central South Consortium updates

- 3.21 Central South Consortium has a comprehensive programme of professional learning for all practitioners and governors in the region to ensure they are able to engage with learning, teaching, and leadership development at no cost to the schools. The professional learning programme and all resources are developed to fulfil the vision of Central South Consortium and 'Empowering schools to improve outcomes for all learners'. Equity requires that Central South Consortium ensure they take account of and respond to the unique range of needs, circumstances and backgrounds of individuals and groups of learners within the region and each local authority.
- 3.22 Central South Consortium provide a range of professional learning opportunities for schools and practitioners to support the development of curriculums in school and meet the mandatory aspects of the curriculum for Wales, including meeting the four purposes of the curriculum and ensuring there is a broad and balanced curriculum offer for all pupils.
- 3.23 Central South Consortium has launched a new area of their website, 'High Standards and Aspirations: Equity and excellence for all'. The resource provides a repository of professional learning opportunities, guidance materials, self-evaluation tools, and the sharing of school practice in the three key areas:
 - Curriculum, teaching and learning;
 - Well-being, care, support and guidance; and
 - Leading and improving.
- 3.24 Over the forthcoming months, Central South Consortium will continue to develop the resources in partnership with schools and local authorities. The resources aim to support schools to evaluate their provision, identify areas to be further developed and share valuable practice from schools across the region who are effective at meeting the needs of all learners.
- 3.25 The professional learning opportunities and resources developed by Central South Consortium to support the teaching of themes relating to Black Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities and 'cynefin' (Welsh word included as a core concept within Curriculum for Wales, where children across Wales will have the opportunity to learn by exploring their own areas/communities to help develop a sense of belonging) continue to be aligned to the findings and recommendations of the Welsh Government working group. These resources and professional learning opportunities are available to all practitioners and schools.

- 3.26 Central South Consortium works in partnership with DARPL in ensuring high quality professional learning is available to all schools. Conferences have been facilitated for school leaders, practitioners and school governors.
- 3.27 Where schools have a strategic priority linked to equality, Central South Consortium improvement partners will work in partnership with school leaders to evaluate the progress and impact of the school development plan work. Where a school requires more intensive support, the school improvement partner brokers this.
- 3.28 Central South Consortium works in partnership with DARPL in ensuring high quality professional learning is available to all schools and unconscious bias may form part of their professional learning for school leaders.
- 3.29 Central South Consortium has secured free access for every school in the region to the Thinking Differently online pack from Challenge Education. This professional learning is based around six recorded training modules available to all staff. Sessions have been researched and delivered by expert trainers and experienced school leaders who have a wealth of knowledge on leadership and teaching of disadvantaged youngsters. The main aim of this professional learning is raising the attainment of disadvantaged youngsters (RADY) and is very much targeted at supporting schools in supporting pupils living in poverty, including pupils eligible for free school meals.
- 3.30 Central South Consortium improvement partners work in conjunction with school leaders to plan and evaluate the impact of the Pupil Development Grant that school's use to support and promote attainment of vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils in each school.

Good practice by schools in Bridgend

Pencoed Comprehensive School

- 3.31 The Associate Assistant Headteacher for Teaching and Learning in Pencoed Comprehensive school has led the development of the school's work on anti-racism.
- 3.32 Following feedback from staff through various surveys and pupil voice, it was felt that global majority learners were experiencing racism, and staff lacked the confidence of how to address racist incidents. In response, Pencoed Comprehensive School created the 'Pencoed Anti-Racist Action Plan 2024-2027'.
- 3.33 One of the main areas of the action plan was to have clear leadership on the subject of anti-racism and ensure it was a whole school priority. This is identified in the School Improvement Plan and within all areas of learning experience (AoLE) Departmental Improvement Plans.
- 3.34 A key component of the action plan is the development of the staff and learner Pencoed Anti-Racist Champions (PARCH) group. The learners within this group represent the global majority population within the school, who have used their experiences of racism to impact staff and learners.
- 3.35 PARCH members are supporting the school in becoming an anti-racist learning organisation and examples of their work include hosting school assemblies, writing

speeches and poems to highlight their experiences and supporting senior leaders with diversity learning walks.

- 3.36 The PARCH Team, alongside the Associate Assistant Headteacher and Behavioural Support Team staff have reviewed and refined how the school deals with racism in school. The learners have helped to develop the racist intervention booklet and how they feel racism should be addressed.
- 3.37 Two PARCH learners presented the good practice of their team to the EEYYP Equalities Group in December 2024. The poems shared with the group have since been shared with Staff Officer to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and Criminal Justice Race Equality Implementation Manager. The work has also been shared with Welsh Government's Anti-Racism Team.
- 3.38 Learners from PARCH have presented to cluster primary headteachers to highlight the work they have been doing. Pencoed Comprehensive School and cluster primary schools are now developing a cluster approach to developing understanding of anti-racism. This will include workshops and assemblies with the cluster primaries.
- 3.39 The learners are now developing a school wide anti-racist pledge and supporting the school with the reviewing and developing of the anti-racist policy.
- 3.40 The positive work of the PARCH group was highlighted in the recent Estyn inspection that took place in September 2024. The report stated, "Pupils, including those eligible for free school meals and Tŷ Ewenni pupils, benefit from a range of leadership opportunities such as the Undod (LGBTQ+), Parch (anti-racist) and Amdani (Cymraeg) champions. Representatives from these groups form the school council, which has a strong influence on the quality of experiences for pupils."
- 3.41 Pencoed Comprehensive School has provided professional learning to all staff through an In-Service Education and Training (INSET) event that was led by DARPL and Show Racism the Red Card. The training has improved staff knowledge on how to deal with racist incidents and has provided teachers with guidance of how to develop an anti-racist curriculum.
- 3.42 The training was also attended by representatives from the cluster primary schools, which has ensured all schools within the Pencoed area has received professional learning on anti-racism. Governors also attended the DARPL anti-racist training. The school has now identified a lead governor for diversity and anti-racism.
- 3.43 Pencoed Comprehensive School has reviewed how incidents of racism and discrimination are reported. The school has amended how these are recorded on the internal behaviour monitoring system to ensure the school has a clear overview of racist incidents.
- 3.44 Key staff within each AoLE have attended Central South Consortium anti-racist training. These staff are now conducting action research into how they can decolonise the curriculum (a process that aims to challenge the ways in which colonialism has influenced education) in their areas and are targets on their professional development reviews.

- 3.45 In October 2024, Pencoed Comprehensive School were one of two schools from Bridgend to be part of the DARPL Advocacy Network (DAN). The Associate Assistant Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher for Teaching and learning are both enrolled on DARPL Enhanced Leadership Series.
- 3.46 The Associate Assistant Headteacher presented at Central South Consortium's DARPL event in November 2024 to share a whole school approach to anti-racism.

Coety Primary School

- 3.47 As a result of an analysis of the school's discrimination data, Coety Primary School commissioned Show Racism the Red Card to work with Year 4 and Year 6 children during the autumn term 2023.
- 3.48 The work was centred specifically around the following aims:
- to familiarise pupils with the causes, consequences, and different forms of racism;
 - to equip pupils with a range of skills that will support and enable them to challenge racism;
 - to enable young people to develop positive relationships, respect and celebrate the differences between people regardless of their race, ethnicity, nationality, or religion;
 - to prepare young people to play an active role as citizens in a growing multi-racial society, preparing them for life experiences; and
 - to develop critical thinking, empathy, and compassion.
- 3.49 Due to the significant cost, the school supported the children who received the workshops to teach their younger pupils/friends.
- 3.50 Furthermore, to upskill all staff at Coety Primary School, including teachers, learning support officers (LSOs), lunchtime supervisors and administrative officers, the school commissioned Show Racism the Red Card to provide an after-school twilight training session focussing on how to recognise, respond to, record and report incidents of racism in the autumn term 2024.
- 3.51 In the summer term 2025, the organisation is returning to facilitate another workshop for the Coety team, focusing on embedding anti-racism within us and the learning environment.

West Park Primary School

- 3.52 During the last five years, West Park Primary School has developed their curriculum to ensure diversity is a key component of their curriculum.
- 3.53 In the autumn term 2019, they developed knowledge through Curriculum for Wales, exploring a topic on Children's Rights called 'Everybody Counts', using the story of Malala Yousafzai (Malala's Magic Pencil). This learning promoted the story of a diverse figure, raising awareness of other cultures and religions united by the United Nations children's rights, especially 'The Right to Education.'

- 3.54 Following this topic, the school explored their own thoughts, feelings and understanding of what is meant by diversity. It emerged staff had a fear of causing offence (through not fully understanding the issues and a worry of using incorrect terminology), attached to the teaching of this topic and the school sought further support.
- 3.55 Cardiff Metropolitan University supported the school with advice on how to ensure diversity is embedded within their curriculum.
- 3.56 From spring term 2021 to summer term 2022, West Park Primary School has implemented several topics based on diversity, which include 'Heroes', 'Let's Talk About Race' and 'Wonderful Wales'. In 'Wonderful Wales', the school made a conscious decision to develop the topic further by addressing stories from Black and Ethnic Minority backgrounds.
- 3.57 West Park Primary School presented to an Education Workforce Council (EWC) meeting on teaching diversity in the summer term 2022.
- 3.58 During summer 2022 (to celebrate The Queen's jubilee) the school undertook a topic, 'The Queen and Commonwealth', with a focus on trying to decolonise these themes to look more objectively at the history of the British Empire and its impact on people, leading into an understanding of why and how it developed into The Commonwealth.
- 3.59 The school is now on a cycle of evaluating, extending, and revisiting the above themes.
- 3.60 During spring term 2025, the school is looking at Wales and Porthcawl, placing issues of diversity at its centre.
- 3.61 In addition, the school has invested in training and resources around diversity such as a Personna doll, skin-coloured crayon packs, dolls from diverse backgrounds and story books that share messages of fairness and diversity.

Brynteg School

- 3.62 With the implementation of Curriculum for Wales, Brynteg School has recently made a structural change to their timetable for Year 7 and Year 8, with each AoLE having an allocated day a fortnight to allow for opportunities for project-based learning.
- 3.63 This format incorporates 'Expedition Challenges' for pupils to work towards completing, which can be documented using an easily accessible e-portfolio (Seesaw).
- 3.64 Pupils have been able to explore topics in more detail, with there being specific examples of work on discrimination, equality and prejudice through religion, values and ethics (RVE) in the Humanities AoLE.
- 3.65 An example includes pupils entering the 'Show Racism the Red Card' competition to raise awareness on the issue of racism. Pupils completed videos on this topic through their Expedition Challenge.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty, and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services, and functions. This is an information report; therefore, it is not necessary to carry out an Equality Impact assessment in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

5. Well-being of Future Generations Implications and Connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

6. Climate Change Implications

6.1 There are no climate change Implications from this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 There are no safeguarding and corporate parent Implications from this report.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications in relation to this report.

9. Recommendations

9.1 That cabinet committee notes the annual update on racial and/or discriminative incidents within schools.

Background documents

None

Appendix A

In the school year, 2022-2023, there were 43 incidents of discrimination reported by schools across Bridgend. Incidents were reported by the following 15 schools:

School	Number of incidents
Porthcawl Comprehensive School	12
Bryntirion Comprehensive School	5
Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School	3
Coety Primary School	4
Brynteg Comprehensive School	3
Cynffig Comprehensive School	4
Oldcastle Primary School	2
Betws Primary School	2
Nottage Primary School	2
Brackla Primary School	1
Ffaldau Primary School	1
Maesteg School	1
Porthcawl Primary School	1
West Park Primary	1
Ysgol Bryn Castell	1

In the school year, 2023-2024, there were 67 incidents of discrimination reported by schools across Bridgend. Incidents were reported by the following 20 schools:

School	Number of incidents
Porthcawl Comprehensive School	15
Pencoed Comprehensive School	10
Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen	6
Coety Primary School	5
Ogmore Vale Primary School	5
Ysgol Bryn Castell	4
Llangewydd Junior School	3
Maesteg School	3
Afon y Felin Primary School	2
Croesty Primary School	2
Pen y Fai Church in Wales Primary School	2
Porthcawl Primary School	2
Archdeacon John Lewis Church in Wales Primary School	1
Betws Primary School	1
Bryntirion Comprehensive School	1
Corneli Primary School	1
Nantyffyllon Primary School	1
St Mary's Catholic Primary School	1
West Park Primary School	1
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Calon y Cymoedd	1