

Dear Parent /Carer

I am writing to share with you information regarding work that we have been planning in relation to anti-racism, racial justice, and inclusion. We have been in discussion as a School Leadership Team and staff body and have engaged with cohorts of parents and students to explore the relationship between racism, safeguarding, mental health, and educational achievement. As a school we celebrate our ethnic and cultural diversity, which is deeper than classifying groups by skin colour – there is diversity within our ethnic groups. Some examples of this work include:

- The long standing ‘Going for Gold’ Programme
- Culture Day, which took place for the first time in June 2022. This event was planned and led by students and celebrated the wealth of cultures represented within our school with origins from the UK to across the globe. This event will be held again this academic year
- The development of our curriculum to reflect our diversity, partnering with CARGO

However, we are acutely aware that there are challenges, some specific to our school and some societal that we cannot hope to positively impact until we are prepared to be open and honest about these challenges. The case of Child Q and the fallout from the Euro 2020 Final in 2021 being just two recent UK examples. We cannot be complacent in this area.

More importantly, we recognise the significant and transformational role we can play as a school community in positively combatting racial injustice and being an example of unity in our city in line with our vision and mission:

Each member of our school community is created by God and our aim is to achieve our full potential (being fully alive). All we do is rooted in this hope of who we are as people and who we can become. We are particularly inspired by Irenaeus’ ‘the glory of God is a human being fully alive’ which comes from Jesus’ ‘I have come that you might have life and life in all its fullness’ (John 10:10).



We are encouraged by the appetite for engaging in this work that I have encountered at this early stage.

A culture of openness and ‘safe spaces’

As a school we are aware that we need to create the space for open and respectful conversations that not only celebrate our diversity but also acknowledge the challenges, questions and concerns our students, staff, and families experience. We need to equip and empower our school community in terms of addressing racial inequity, injustice, and engaging in conversations about sensitive topics in this area as we equip our students with the skills, knowledge, and Alive qualities they will need to make their **unique contribution** to the world. This requires a degree of vulnerability and courage at all levels.

When we refer to **equality**, we mean each individual or group of people being given or being able to take advantage of the same resources or opportunities to flourish.

When we refer to **equity**, we recognise that each person or group may have different circumstances and challenges, and therefore we need to be bespoke and intentional in shaping the exact resources, environment, and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.

There are three major strands to this work.

1. Pan Bristol Collaboration on Black Caribbean Achievement

St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School is a partner school in the Pan Bristol collaboration on Black Caribbean Achievement. The Pan Bristol collaboration seeks to address the academic underperformance of **some** of our Black Caribbean heritage learners in Bristol that has been prevalent for generations. We also acknowledge the disproportionate representation of Black heritage students in relation to suspensions, exclusions, and other sanctions. We seek to identify and address the contributing factors through research in Bristol schools and seeking the best practice nationally. This work builds on the successful work that has been carried out in Lambeth. We are determined and passionate about addressing this. This requires us to review whether our policies, procedures, and practice enable positive change or act as barriers to change.

2. Collaboration with the Church of England

As a distinctly Christian faith school we are utilising the opportunity to work with the Church of England’s Racial Justice Team. The Church of England has a compelling vision for education:

“Educating for life in all its fullness is the goal of our Church of England Vision for Education, Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good. At the heart of our vision is the search for a wisdom that rings true both with the Bible and Christian understanding and with experienced educational practice in the twenty-first century”.

We will be working at a national and international level with a focus on two of their strands in particular:

- Creating confidence and collaboration to acknowledge, understand and address the issues and view issues from a range of perspectives

- Removing barriers that lead to inequality and inequity and seeking reconciliation where needed

It is important for all stakeholders to understand how our Christian ethos informs and governs our approach and policies moving forward.

3. Three-Year Collaboration with FLAIR Education

St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School is among 103 schools that have launched an independent data collection project across a three-year period to drive meaningful change toward racial equity.

Launched in collaboration with [FLAIR](#), an independent leading race and ethnicity data platform, the project is focused on increasing transparency and accountability around anti-racism to advance change. The long-term aim is for this data to become the industry standard for how all educational institutions measure and progress racial equity.

St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School is among the founding schools to partner with FLAIR along with The Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School, Wren Academy Finchley, Queen Elizabeth's Hospital Bristol, James Allen's Girls' School, and Stoke Newington School and Sixth Form.

The data insights go beyond basic diversity metrics to understand the school's culture, helping the leadership team to identify inclusion-barriers and where to make targeted interventions. The data is then benchmarked annually and against other schools to measure progress toward meaningful change.

I have included comments from the press release in relation to this project:

Nii Cleland, CEO and Co-founder at FLAIR commented, "Racism in schools is a safeguarding issue and a data-driven approach is imperative. We are proud to have already partnered with over 100 schools committed to becoming anti-racist and we strongly encourage other schools to follow."

Cleland continued, "Data allows schools to recognise, acknowledge and tackle racial inequities to ensure all of their students and staff can achieve their potential. It provides the starting point to ensure the actions taken are the right ones, and critically, it also allows schools to measure tangible progress to ensure they are driving positive change."

FLAIR's questionnaire opens up the conversation on race and ethnicity across all students and staff to create a culture change that addresses the tolerance of racial discrimination within schools. **All students and staff will have the opportunity to complete the questionnaire.**

Senior leaders are meeting with the team from FLAIR later this month to finalise the launch of the project. We will provide more specific details and access to materials in due course including opportunities to engage parents/carers.

The purpose of all the work we are undertaking is to improve the social and academic outcomes and experiences for **all** our students, help to support our staff, and to benefit our wider society in line with vision and mission. We are proud of all our strengths at St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School and St Mary Redcliffe and look forward to building on these strengths.

Yours faithfully

Mr D Planter
Headteacher
St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School
St Mary Redcliffe Sixth Form