CITY OF BIRMINGHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

1985

EDUCATION FOR OUR MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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PREFACE:

This document itself has a very interesting history. Originally written in 1983 it was finally accepted by members of the Education Committee of Birmingham City Council in 1985 after considerable internal political debate as to when and even if it should be published; such were the political sensitivities related to race at the time. As it happened, it circulated widely in draft form nationally and throughout Local Education Authorities (LEAs) in England and Wales; and much of its thinking and language permeated their own work, policy documentation and practical application. On the face of it, it may appear odd that the CoED Foundation should decide to republish it almost 30 years later especially as there are now many extensive checklists and learned tomes in existence. Thanks, however, to the prescience of its many authors, it still stands as one of the simplest, most accessible and readable documents that outline the fundamental principles of education for our multicultural society. It came to light again when Coles and Brown were working on the Compassion through Cultural Development chapter of the Foundation's seminal book, 'Towards the Compassionate School: From Golden Rule to Golden Thread.'

Nothing, of course, exists in a contextual vacuum, and a great debt is owed to others who were working so actively in the field of anti-racist multicultural education at the time. Particular respect is due to Bev Woodroffe and his team from the Inner London Education Authority; and to Robin Richardson, who at that time was multicultural adviser to the Royal County of Berkshire. Birmingham's document was over a year in the making and involved a range of key local authority and community players, some of whom sadly, are no longer with us. The core team included:-

> ➢ Steve Stephenson : General Inspector in charge of Afro-Caribbean Affairs
> ➢ Mohammed Naguib: General Inspector in charge of Asian Affairs
> ➢ Dr. David Ruddle: Head of the Multicultural Development Unit, Birmingham 's Multicultural Support Service (MCSS)
> ➢ Dr. Leslie Siriwardena : Head of Birmingham's Community Relations Council, (CRC)
> ➢ Dr. Maurice Hobbs: CRC member and adviser.

In addition, numerous Headteachers and other MCSS staff, as well as senior education officers and politicians commented on and amended the document. Final thanks must be attributed to John Crawford, Birmingham's Chief Education Officer and to Arnold Ingoldbsy, the Chief Adviser both of whom supported the venture throughout and offered consistent political, personal and intellectual support throughout a turbulent period, and without whom the document would never have been published. The foundation hopes you may find the document of some historic as well as contemporary interest.

Maurice Irfan Coles, CEO CoED Foundation, and Staff Inspector Education for our Multicultural Society, Birmingham LEA, at the time of the document's writing. October 2014

INTRODUCTION

This document aims to state and to clarify the City of Birmingham's policy on education for our multicultural society. It is Part 1 of the City's policy on Equal Opportunities; Part 2 covers issues related to gender.

It is addressed to everybody concerned with education in Birmingham: all schools, further and higher education institutions and their respective managers and governing bodies; all administrators and inspector s, all career s, psychological and education welfare services, parents and community groups, pupils and students.

It is divided into three parts:

- first, Birmingham's formal policy is stated
- second, a review of the genesis and rationale of this policy brings together various local and national initiatives.
- third, the three major aims are unpacked to assist schools and colleges in the clarification of their own position to enable them to implement Authority policy.

This document is largely addressed to schools and sixth form colleges. There is a separate document for the post-16 continuing education sector.

The Authority acknowledges the inequalities based on sex and class and the complex interrelationship between these and 'race'. The central concern of this document, however, is to define racism, outline ways in which it manifests itself and suggest strategies to counter it. The ultimate aim is to promote racial equality and justice through education for a multicultural democracy.

THE FORMAL STATEMENT

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL

EDUCATION FOR OUR MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY: A POLICY STATEMENT

As part of its wider policy for the creation of a just and equal society, Birmingham District Council requires all its educational institutions and services to establish, maintain and promote racial equality and justice.

All schools and colleges, therefore, are required to implement the three aims:-

1. TO BE A WARE OF AND TO COUNTER RACISM AND THE DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES TO WHICH IT GIVES RISE.

2. TO BE AWARE OF AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE PARTICULAR NEEDS OF PUPILS HAVING REGARD FOR THEIR 'RACIAL', ETHNIC, CULTURAL HISTORICAL, LINGUISTIC AND RELIGIOUS BACKGROUNDS.

3. TO PREPARE **ALL** PUPILS FOR LIFE IN OUR MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY, AND BUILD UPON THE STRENGTHS OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY.

In or der to achieve these antiracist multicultural aims, all personnel in educational institutions and services should:-

a) Understand the principles and practices of racial equality and justice and implement them

b) Identify and eradicate all discriminatory practices, procedures and custom s and replace them with practices, procedures and customs which are fair to all

c) Empathise with the needs, aspirations and demands of the black and minority ethnic communities and respond sensitively to them

d) Encourage black representation and participation in all decision-making processes

e) Encourage the recruitment and promotion of black and minority ethnic personnel at all staffing levels

f) Encourage the appointment of black and minority ethnic governors and managers

g) Monitor and evaluate the implementation of this policy and make changes as appropriate.

This policy is antiracist in that it attempts to tackle the racist assumptions, omissions and practices that underlay much of what we do in the education system. It is multicultural in that it takes account of, and incorporates in to educational procedures, practices and content a respect for the various cultures that make up of city and country.

THE RATIONALE

RATIONALE - WHY PUBLISH A POLICY STATEMENT??

There are many reasons why the City of Birmingham Education Department has decided to make this statement.

First, it is responding to the fact that we are obviously a multiracial, multi-ethnic, multicultural city, part of a multiracial, multi-ethnic, multicultural society. People of diverse cultures are rate-payers and voters, with rights and aspirations about the provision, the content and outcome of the educational processes to which their children are committed by law. It is important that their voices are heard and respected, and, as far as possible, that their wishes are met.

The Authority believes that there is general agreement upon the liberal democratic values that inform the Education Service in the city at all levels, and that "to prepare all pupils for life in our multicultural society" requires that those values should guide all aspects of school and college life. What this means in practice has developed over the years, and provision to meet the needs of all our children has increased - and changed - with clearer understanding. This document is intended to encourage this process.

The 198l Report

In June 1981, the Chief Education Officer presented to the Education Committee a 'Progress Report on Multicultural Education'. This highlighted developments which had already taken place, and re-stated the aims of education in a multicultural society. Schools were requested to provide the Authority with information on the ways in which they were developing, or planned to develop, 'the multicultural dimension ' in their curriculum and activities generally.

This policy document is responding to the situation revealed by the submissions of some of the schools, for by no means all schools felt able to reply. It is clear that schools differ enormously in their understanding of the challenge of a multi-racial, multi-cultural society, and in the practical arrangements they are prepared to make to fulfil the aims set out in the 1981 Report.

Some schools have examined the aims and are implementing them, often with the help and advice of the Multicultural Inspector ate and the Multicultural Support Service. Many others, however, revealed widespread misconceptions. The Authority believes these misconceptions could well to hinder the development of the just and equal society for which it strives.

Among these misconceptions were the following:

- some schools argued that the best course of action was for black pupils to cast off their cultural heritage and be assimilated as fast as possible. Such schools perceived multicultural education largely as remedial education, with black pupils seen as "problem s", who often lacked English language and sufficient understanding of British culture to achieve academic excellence. In view of the fact that the vast majority of pupils present in the city's schools have been born in this country, the Authority takes the view that it is quite inappropriate to think in terms of "immigrant" and "host community" any longer.

- other schools argued that the best way of achieving the City's objectives was for all pupils, regardless of their ethnicity, to learn about the life-styles, cultures and religious backgrounds of Britain's black populations . Many simply added on elements of Afro-Caribbean or Asian cultures to parts of their existing curricula and in so doing ran the risk of reinforcing the notion that black people's cultures are exotic and strange. Generally, in the view of such schools this 'multicultural' approach was in itself sufficient. Racism was either ignored or treated as something that was better left alone, as being too 'sensitive' or 'dangerous' an issue.

- some schools assumed that it was sufficient merely to follow the Authority's Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education: 'Living Together'. It is unfortunately the case, however, that not all schools make any consistent use of this excellent resource. Even if all did so, to isolate the schools' responses to the multicultural society in one subject, to which relatively little time is allocated, would be quite inadequate.

- many schools argued that they had no need to consider changing their curriculum or syllabuses since they h ad few black pupils and these were prepared to accept and conform to the traditional provisions, and so constituted 'no problem'.

- in their submissions, m any Head Teacher s confused two distinct dimensions of what is required: to meet the educational need s of black pupils; and to broaden the education offered to all pupils to enable them to participate fully in today's multicultural, multiracial Britain, with respect and justice for all.

- few schools were aware of the all-pervasive nature of racism. Racism was, in the main, merely taken to mean racial incident, and no mention was made of the institutional and cultural forms of racism.

The 1981 Report has become a crucial catalyst in the development of this Policy Document. While the responses revealed misconceptions, many schools took advantage of the opportunity to ask for guidance and clarification. Many Head Teachers were concerned that they and their schools were not meeting the expectations, need s and demand s of the minority ethnic communities, needs which are being increasingly articulated at local and national level.

Therefore, in publishing this Policy Statement, together with the arrangement it is making for in-service teacher education, the Authority is endeavouring to respond positively to black and minority ethnic community concerns, to requests from schools, and to the increasing realisation that ours is a racially and ethnically unjust and unequal society.

Black Community Concerns

In this document the term 'black' is used to describe people from all groups not traditionally considered 'white'. This practice is increasingly common, and is endorsed by most black people active in the struggle for equality. There is no doubt that the black community locates the problem firmly in the failure of schools and the education system generally to respond adequately to the educational needs of their children. For them the key issues are underachievement and racism. As the Rampton Report concluded and the Swann Report confirmed, they believe that teachers' attitudes and expectations of African and Caribbean heritage children are influenced by stereotyped, negative or patronising views of their children's abilities and potential. Such views easily become self-fulfilling prophecies.

This often unintentional form of racism is compounded by a system which suspends disproportionately more Afro-Caribbean children than children from other communities; by the failure of predominantly white governing bodies to allow the relatively few black governors to make their voice heard; and by a system that does not adequately consult them regarding their own children's education.

Many of these concerns are similarly shared by the Asian communities. The linguistic needs of their bilingual children are not being adequately met, especially in primary schools; and by retaining their Anglocentric Christian emphasis many schools, even some with Asian majorities, are not responding sensitively to the religious and cultural needs of their pupils.

The black community generally is very concerned about the lack of a significant number of black teachers, and the position and use of these teachers within the system.   The majority are employed at lower levels of the school and college hierarchies. In addition to their normal duties they are often required by Heads to use their experiences and skill as black people, without adequate remuneration.

The black community has been pressing the Authority to bring about the changes required in schools for this wish to be realised. This document is part of a process of assistance to schools. It is hoped it will go some way to meet the discontent and alienation felt by many black pupils, students and parents.

This process of attempting to meet the needs of its particular pupil population has been part of both local and national policy for many years. Section 7 of the 1944 Education Act states that "... i t shall be the du ty of the Local Education Authority... to contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community by ensuring that efficient education shall be available to meet the needs of the population of their area".

Prejudiced Attitudes

The Authority believes that while education cannot compensate for the inequalities of society, it is never the less uniquely placed to influence attitudes in such a wayas to counter prejudice and racism, help create the democratic pluralist society for which we strive, and meet the diverse needs of its pupil and student population. The Authority acknowledges that 'racial' prejudice is also targeted against other minority ethnic groups,   in particular the Irish and Jewish communities. It is the responsibility of the city's schools to combat these prejudices.

Language Issues

The Authority believes that effective educational provision must take into account the child's home background and culture. Our best school practice has been organised along child-centred lines. It is clear that

pupils need to feel secure about the value of their identity and can learn at accelerated rates if the educational environment is meaningful and relevant to their world. A pupil's first language and home culture are a central part of self-image, and placement in a school or college which totally ignores these can do untold damage to educational performance.

Language and culture are inextricably bound together. If the school denies the home language, it implicitly denies and devalues the home culture. This rejection has repercussions not only for bilingual and bidialectal pupils who are automatically excluded from any child/student-centred approach, but also for the monolingual English-speaking pupils who may well internalise the institution's implicit negative message.

Neglect of bilingual pupils' preferred or more proficient language on entry to school as a medium for learning presents a major barrier to the child's cognitive and affective development at school. This is especially important at the critical early phase of formal educational experience. Early classroom learning turns on oral exploration and interaction and where there is no support and teaching through the home language pupils can be forced into relying on a less developed or less preferred mode of communication (English) resulting in their under-functioning at school, and possible boredom, anxiety and isolation. Teacher assessment, both formal, (using LEA screening devices or reading tests) and informal, becomes distorted when relying solely on pupil development recorded or tested in English. Bilingual education in schools is a means of maximising learning opportunities for bi-lingual pupils, and is a well-established principle in some education systems serving bilingual communities.

The Authority believes that it is the right of all bilingual and bidialectal pupils to know that their mother tongue skills are recognised, valued and utilized as part of normal curriculum and learning in primary and secondary schools.

Positive school recognition and use of home languages, far from impairing the acquisition of English, enhances it and acts as a positive force in academic and intellectual and personal development. Further, it benefits all pupils by increasing language awareness and awareness of cultural diversity, and contributes to combating racism by countering the 'linguistic prejudices' that many pupils and teachers may hold. By meeting the particular linguistic, cultural and religious needs of their pupils, schools and colleges can go some way in helping all students to understand and accept the diverse nature of our society.

'White' Schools

All schools even those with no black or minority ethnic pupils have a vital educational responsibility, for they must prepare pupils for a world which is multicultural and interdependent. A curriculum that is not multicultural would fail to prepare pupils for life in our society and world; and would involve them in a re-learning process outside. It would be anachronistic and harmful since it would fail to prepare pupils for the real world.

The responses to the 1981 Report indicates that m any schools appear to be doing just this. Similarly by failing to combat racism, schools are not simply failing to meet the needs of black children. They are also failing to prepare white children to live harmoniously with their black peers. Racism damages and dehumanises white people as w ell as black, for it gives them distorted views of their identity, of society and of history. In this way too, racism is against white children's long-term interests.

The Authority believes, like Swann, that a failure to broaden the perspectives presented to all pupils (particularly those from the white majority ethnic community) , and to challenge the climate of racism, not only leaves them inadequately prepared for adult life but also constitutes a fundamental mis-education. By not addressing ourselves directly to the mismatch between our stated democratic ideals and the experience of black people in this society we would be failing in our duty as educators.

Racism and Racial Injustice

The experience of racism is now well documented by many different sources: by central government in Commons Select Committee Reports; by major inquiries like Scarman, Rampton, Swann and Eggleston; by research done by the Commission for Racial Equality and by the Policy Studies Institute, and of course by much writing by black people themselves. If one looks at housing, at employment and at the ever-growing incidence of racial abuse and racial violence, it becomes clear that the position of black people in Britain is actually worsening.

There is racial inequality in Britain because in the main white people exclusively control most posit ions of management, government, influence and power; black people are disproportionately represented in menial work or have no work at all. There will be racial equality when black people participate fully in all levels of society and the economy, and are therefore proportionately involved in management and government.

It follows that there will be racial equality in education when black people are proportionately involved in teaching and administration at all levels, in higher and further education and in streams, sets, classes and schools leading to higher and further education.

Similarly, there is racial injustice in Birmingham because the practices, procedures and customs which deter mine the allocation of resources do discriminate, directly or indirectly, in favour of the white majority and against minority ethnic groups. There will be racial justice when these practices cease and become fair to all. There will be racial justice in education when the factor s determining successful learning in schools do not discriminate directly or indirectly against black and ethnic minority children.

The Authority is conscious of the burden that this duty places on its teaching force, which has already done much in many schools to bring about the required changes, and which has demonstrated sensitivity and good will. But the Authority believes that it too would be failing in its duty if it did not attempt to help schools clarify and incorporate within their own policies an education which was both multicultural and anti-racist.

THE THREE AIMS CLARIFIED

First Aim: TO BE AWARE OF AND COUNTER RACISM AND THE DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES TO WHICH IT GIVES RISE

To be aware of ……… racism

To be aw are of racism is to acknowledge its existence and the extent of its influence in British society. To be aware of racism in the education system is to recognise and understand its influence on the procedures, processes and outcomes in our schools.

Any suggestion that racism is widespread in our schools can at first sight seem unacceptable and unpalatable to teachers. However, teachers and schools are not immune to the racism we know to be widespread in our society and in white British cultures.

The first step towards an awareness of racism for white people is to overcome the uneasiness, the emotive and negative associations the term evokes. Because the concept is one with which white people feel distinctly uncomfortable, the use of the term 'racism' often results in psychological barriers being erected, and lead s to a defensive reaction. This sometimes prevents an honest and frank discussion of the effects of racism, particularly as experienced by black people.

Until now, white people have focussed on how they see black people rather than taking account of how black people see themselves and white society. For white people to be aware of racism, it requires some re-orientation in order that they may see the world through black people's eyes. This re-orientation could be disconcerting and painful.

The purpose of the Authority's policy is to assist with this re-orientation, to underline the ways our attitudes, structures and practices may well, regardless of intention, have outcomes that are undeniably racist.

But what exactly is this racism which the policy requires us to be aware of and to counter?

Racism has for some time now, meant different things to different people:

- for some people racism refer s to the set of beliefs, developed by White Europeans mainly in the nineteenth century, which places hum an groups in a racial hierarchy and allocates particular character traits to each group.

- for others, racism implies deliberate discriminatory acts, often including violence against black people.

- for some, racism also includes sets of harmful stereotypes and opinions which are offensive towards black people, and which deny equality between black and white.

None of these definitions is adequate to explain the experiences of black people in Britain today. Black people encounter racism in a variety of ways, ranging from explicit discrimination and violence, through exclusion, to legislation which is racist in effect. These experiences have been widely documented, notably in the Policy Studies Institute and the Rampton, Swann and Eggleston reports.

Some aspects of what had earlier been called racism are now more appropriately seen as racial prejudice - the ideas and feelings white people often have about black people, which can result in them making negative judgements about black people. Few white people, even those with the best of intentions, could claim immunity from some of these prejudices, which have been built into Britain's historical culture over several centuries.

While white people's beliefs and feelings about black people are now more appropriately designated 'prejudice', deliberate discriminatory acts are quite clearly part of 'racism'. However, many inequalities of outcome are not just the result of deliberate, planned discriminatory acts. They are often the cumulative effect of many factors; the personal prejudices of individuals exercising power, the failure to take account of the particular needs and concerns of minority ethnic groups, the institutional practices and traditions which reinforce and preserve white power and privilege. Racism is therefore not a term that can properly be applied to the words and actions of powerless black people in Britain.

Because racism is this cumulative process and its outcome, rather than the personal prejudices of individuals, the problem of identifying, recognising and countering it is the more difficult. The complex web of structures, practices and procedures in our schools and other institutions may seem a nebulous and elusive target for our attention, but it is one which must be tackled if our anti-racist commitment is to be anything more than mere rhetoric.

A further difficulty is that concentrating on institutional practices can deflect attention from individuals. In our system where teachers have

considerable autonomy and power, we need to take responsibility for our own individual classroom practices, as well as for the institutional procedures of which we are a part.

How then is racism defined?

Racism has come to be seen as the interaction between three separate components:

Prejudiced beliefs and attitudes of individuals, both conscious and unconscious, the uneven distribution of collective power and influence, and discriminatory practices, procedures and customs.

Racially Prejudiced beliefs and attitudes

Although prejudice as such is probably universal, in the context of Birmingham schools, what is really significant is the influence of white teachers over both black (and in a qualitatively different way, white) pupils. It is necessary to examine each of these components in turn. Prejudice (the ideas, beliefs and feelings white people often have about other groups) of ten results in white people making negative statements and judgements about black people .

In the school context, these would include not only the attitudes and feelings of white teachers but also of non-teaching staff, parents and other adults, as well as attitudes and feelings of white pupils towards black pupils, black staff and other black adults. White teachers' prejudices are often evident in the preconceptions, stereotypes and negative views they may hold about black and other minority ethnic pupils. For example, some teachers say Afro-Caribbean pupils are lacking in culture but are naturally good at music and sports, that Asian pupils come from a strong family network but Asian girls are passive, and that Irish pupils really are 'thick paddies'. These feelings and ideas sometimes influence white teachers ' judgements on such educational issues as select ion and assessment of pupils and students.

White pupils' feelings and attitudes are sometimes manifested in racist name-calling and verbal abuse, racist jokes and mimicry, the writing of racist graffiti and other written insults on the basis of colour or ethnicity. Teachers do not always take these as seriously as they might, or the necessary steps to counter these.

The uneven distribution of power and influence

The education system as it stands is controlled and influenced by white people. Such a system denies black people the opportunity to participate genuinely in decision-making. Few black people have power or significant influence in society, and the education system reflects this pattern. This also applies to school governing bodies which reflect a variety of interests, such as parents, teachers and local authority representatives (usually elected by the political parties). But they do not often include genuine representation of black communities, even when the school intake is largely black.

In some cases w here black staff in schools are called upon to use their expertise, experiences and skills they are not given appropriate stat us, nor are they remunerated at a level commensurate with the jobs they do. For example, an Asian teacher with bilingual skills and know ledge of the Asian communities, may be expected to use such skills to liaise with Asian parents, translate letters, write in appropriate languages and make home visits. Black Afro-Caribbean teachers may be expected to liaise with the Afro-Caribbean communities, to counsel black pupils and parents or to mediate in urgent disciplinary matters involving black pupils. Even when black people f ind a place in the education system, it is usually at the lowest levels and without any influence or power. Their appointment is often little more than tokenistic in effect.

The white Anglocentric view of the world underpins much of the content, methodology and classroom practices of the school and thereby gives credence and validity to the uneven distribution of power and influence.

Discriminatory practices procedures & customs

The important feature of practices, procedures and customs is not the intention behind them, but their consequences. Whether these are based on traditions transmitted over generations, or they specifically constructed, the results are usually the same: the exclusion of black people from decision-making and participation as well as the denial of equal access or treatment.

In educational institutions, discriminatory procedures, customs or practices might include:

- school organisation such as banding , streaming or setting based on inappropriate diagnostic tools, preconceptions and subjective assessments, which serve to place black pupils in lower streams, minimise their educational chances or label them ineducable

- ethnocentric curriculum content which may not acknowledge the multicultural and anti-racist perspective, thus failing to draw on the historical and cultural experiences of minority ethnic groups

- the school ethos, which may deny the cultural and 'racial' experiences of pupils and parents and thereby prevent parental participation in the education of their children

- rules and regulations which do not give a sensitive recognition of the pupils' religious and cultural background and beliefs.

To ……. Counter racism

The first stage in countering racism is to be aware of racism and its manifestations.

In their efforts to counter racism the black communities have been analysing and articulating their experiences, and have developed support and pressure groups and self-help organisations. White communities need to analyse and make changes in their institutions, procedures, customs and practices in order to start the process of countering racism. It is the responsibility of teachers, administrators and other professionals to take the lead.

More specifically, to counter racism, a school needs to move forward beyond recognition and understanding. With clear leadership from the senior management team, the whole staff need to examine their procedures, practices and outcomes. The school could then begin the process of eradicating from the entire curriculum those aspects of its procedures that are racist in outcome. Deliberate efforts are necessary involving pupils, parents, teaching and non-teaching staff to ensure the development of a philosophy, policies and practices which are anti-racist. As part of this process, the views of black teaching and non-teaching staff should be given full consideration, and space made for those views to be expressed in an atmosphere that is supportive and constructive.

Having committed itself to the development and implementation of a clear anti-racist policy, a school will need carefully to monitor the extent to which that policy is being put into effect.

Countering racism will require changes in many aspects of the school. This will include' such matters as selection and interpretation of materials and syllabus content, methodology, testing and assessment, disciplinary structures and practices, language policies, pastoral matters, staff recruitment and selection, and parental involvement.

Summary

Schools need to recognise and understand the extent to which racism influences their procedures, processes and outcomes. Racism is seen as a combination of prejudiced beliefs and attitudes, the uneven distribution of power and influence in favour of white people, and the discriminatory practices to which a combination of these gives rise.

To counter racism schools need to examine carefully all their teaching, their procedures and mechanisms and practices, bearing in mind that it is the outcomes and not the intentions of these that really count. They then need to make changes that will be equitable to all pupils and students, and to monitor these changes to ensure that they are really working.

Action checklist

Countering racism in teaching involves:

- Selection of materials which take into account the existence, contributions and perspectives of Black , Irish and other minority ethnic people

- Ensuring that our teaching does not interpret facts, history and black-white relationships in favour of the dominant European perspective

- Guarding against the transmission of attitudes which stereotype and label black people as primitive, subservient, lacking intelligence or unable to take responsibility for their own lives

- Teaching which strives to acknowledge and build upon the linguistic back grounds and particular linguistic needs of children from minority ethnic groups

- Teaching which maintains high expectations about the performance of black pupils

- Ensuring that our displays, books and visual aids present positive images of black people

- Preparing black pupils for the realities of their present and future lives, by teaching about racism and the strategies for tackling and challenging it

- Teaching about racism to white pupils

- Making the school's anti-racist stance known to students and community

- Being prepared to discuss issues of prejudice racism in a frank and open way with pupils, students and colleagues.

For many teachers changes in syllabus content might be the more obvious starting point for an anti-racist initiative. Not so immediately obvious, but equally important, are the effects of practices, procedures and structures which we take for granted as being normal.

Countering racism in structures and procedures involves:

- Ensuring that we do not use testing and assessment procedures which result in black children being placed in class or bands which do not reflect their true ability

- Ensuring that black pupils are entered for 'O' level examinations where appropriate, not just for CSE

- Ensuring that inappropriate early-age diagnostic tests are not used to effectively determine the grouping, setting or banding of minority ethnic pupils for the remainder of their school careers

- Acknowledging and taking into account the ethnic and cultural identities of the pupils, so that pastoral care is not based on the simplistic idea that children are just children

- Ensuring that a situation does not develop where black students are suspended in proportionately greater number s than white students

- Treating racist abuse as seriously as any other disciplinary matter

- Consulting with black community groups and parents

- Offering careers guidance which is not distorted by negative stereotypes

- Examining the appropriateness of the schools' practices rather than locating 'the problem' in black communities, family structures or standards

- Discussing and properly tackling black alienation and disenchantment where it occurs in school, rather than sweeping it under the carpet

- Ensuring minority representation on interview panels and board of governors

- Promoting the professional development and career advancement of black staff

- Communicating with minority communities in languages they understand

- Remunerating black staff for extra work done because of their experience and expertise

- Monitoring the curriculum to ensure that it is serving the need s of <u>all</u> pupils and not just those of the white communities

- Involving ancillary as well as teaching staff in moves towards an anti-racist curriculum

- Taking into account the diet and dress requirements of all religions and cultural groups.

Second Aim: TO BE A WARE OF AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE PARTICULAR NEEDS OF PUPILS HAVING REGARD FOR THEIR 'RACIAL', ETHN IC, CULTURAL, HISTORICAL, LINGUISTIC AND RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND.

"TO BE AWARE OF AND TO PROVIDE FOR….."

The education system should reflect the demands of a multicultural society. Schools need therefore to consider these demands and how to respond to them.

The general orientation of schools at present requires that school populations, which are often multicultural and multi-racial, should fit in with what is on offer. Any discussion of the particular needs of children from minority ethnic groups should not assume that the pupils themselves are 'the problem' and that their inadequacies and deficiencies should be remedied. Instead, the discussion should focus on the relevance and effectiveness of what is being offered to the children. Such a review of school practices and procedures will need to be informed by a 'pluralist' perspective which acknowledges and respects all minority communities as 'different but equal', and which would embrace the wider concept of education of all children in and for a multi-cultural society . Arising from such a review should come specific changes in practice better designed to meet the needs of all pupils. These changes should be monitored in order to evaluate their effectiveness and to g u ide future reviews so that educational provision can be flexible and responsive to needs.

Quest ions such as 'How do you find out the need s of children?' 'What is the child's background', 'What does he or she bring to school?' should be the starting point of any provision that the school may make. Knowledge of children's home backgrounds and liaison between home and school are essential for effective educational provision.

They are not needy children

Though certain children may have 'particular needs having regard for their back g round', it cannot be stressed too strongly that this does not mean that they are needy children in the usual sense of poverty or physical incapacity, or children likely to need 'Special' Education under the 1981 Ac t. The city's policy assumes that all children are lively, and capable of learning. The city policy therefore emphasises the need for schools to respond sensitively to the children's backgrounds and the need

for schools to engage in dialogue with black people in or der to see how they perceive their own needs.

All children have the following needs - some of which may require particular consideration:

The need to know what I am

Children may w ell need help in sorting out the different connotations of labels such as 'Asian', 'British', 'White' 'Paki' or 'Irish' which tell children how others see them and may be quite different from their own perceptions of who they are.

The need to know where I come from

This is not much a matter of geography, though some children have little idea of the global location of the places from which their forbears came. It is more a matter of a personal understanding of the different cultural processes of socialisation which, in the family and community, have 'made me what I am'.

The need to know 'where I fit in and how I may do so'

This may be considered as follows:

- a proper appreciation of what I, as an individual and as a m ember of my group, have to offer to school and society, to other students, to teacher s, to the institutions and activities I hope to enter.

- acceptance and respect on the part of those who are responsible for my education - not only teachers but school secretaries, caretakers and others.

- competence and skills, in traditional areas but also in the management of social encounter s and political processes including racial discrimination . In a democracy children in the process of becoming adult citizens should be able to defend themselves and their communities, and make the fullest contribution of which they are capable to the general well- being.

The need to succeed

Many people from minority ethnic groups have a strong respect for education and teachers as the means whereby they may achieve in society. Expecting a great deal from education, they believe that under

the direction of teachers, we are experts, hard work must surely be rewarded by success in examinations, which provide the necessary qualifications for entry to desirable careers. Problems, disciplinary and other wise, can and do arise when pupils perceive that their (and their parents') expectations are not likely to be fulfilled, even if they have done their best to give what is required of them. Frustration may also arise if what teachers expect of pupils is less than they are prepared to give, or know themselves to be capable of giving.

Backgrounds - some general considerations

All children have 'backgrounds 'from which they arrive at school daily. These can be analysed under such headings as culture, history or language. Though in common talk in Britain today, 'race' and 'ethnicity' are concepts which immediately call to mind 'black immigrants' and their children, it should not be assumed that this aspect of the city policy is directed only to black children in schools. It also includes children from white minority ethnic groups, most notably in this city, the Irish community. Neither is it intended to suggest that only these children have needs or that they alone are specially in need of consideration; rather that if children of whatever origin are to obtain the greatest benefit from their education, teaching must start from where they are.

Backgrounds are not static. Though the original migrants brought with them values and behaviour learned in their own childhood, they made a great leap into changed circumstances in which they have modified their beliefs and life-styles. Their children have been brought up in the culture of urban Britain. The great majority of black and minority ethnic children now in Birmingham schools have been born in Britain. Although it is essential that these children have a clear and rich appreciation of their 'roots' it is equally essential that they should respect themselves in the here and now and not simply in terms of a somewhat romantic long-ago and far away.

Children of white parents have, with a few exceptions, been steeped in the English language, in history seen through English eyes and in 'Christian' culture, all carrying assumptions of superiority. They will need teacher help and direct ion to recognise and overcome their racial prejudice and hostility.

Their racial background

It is generally assumed that 'race' is a biological and scientific reality. This false belief was encouraged in the nineteenth century largely to justify the

economic exploitation of people classified as inferior. There is only one 'race' and that is the human race. One discredited racist notion in education is the idea that educability, like colour of skin or hair texture, is genetically determined. Children may be very greatly disadvantaged if it is believed that because they belong to a particular 'race' their I.Q. and their educational potential are likely to be low.

The manner in which the concept of 'r ace' has been constructed by society has created a set of educational needs for all pupils. Black pupils experience discrimination as a profound part of their lives and both they and white pupils need to understand how racism operates and how to counter racist practices. This requires that teachers make themselves aware of the way in which racism and discrimination are part of black pupils' experiences.

Many white pupils have prejudiced or racist attitudes. Given that Britain is a multicultural society, teacher s cannot be neutral on such issue and need to adopt a positive anti-racist stance.

Their ethnic background

An ethnic group is defined as a group whose m ember s have a common culture which marks it as being different from that of other groups. This concept of ethnicity subsumes not only the historical and linguistic background of people but also their geographical location, both before and after settlement in Britain. The ethnicity of a given people-group is formed as they respond to the value system, and the social and physical environment in which they live. That is why we already use descriptions like 'Birmingham -Irish' and 'Black British'; Muslims born and brought up here are not Muslims of Mirpur but of Birmingham.

Popular usage of the term 'ethnic' however, shows that the criteria used to define a group are by no means constant, sometimes having to do with culture, sometimes with religion, sometimes with ideas of being a nation and at other times with skin colour. This variability shows that the concept is a social invention having more to do with what people choose to see as being a significant difference, rather than with specific and constant cultural features.

Their cultural background

'By culture is meant the child's total lived experience in Britain today. It is inappropriate to think of 'culture' in narrow static terms, referring only to certain aspects of aesthetic or religious experience and associating this

only with some distinct 'homeland.' Thinking of culture in this limited way can easily lead to a preoccupation with exotic features to the exclusion of other more important considerations. Any approach which sees culture in terms of saris, steel bands and samosas must seek to set these in the context of the children's experience of life here-and –now.

The children's total lived experience may include the adherence to a particular religious group, experience of racism, speaking languages other than English, and following the precepts and norms of a faith. The term culture refers to the sum of life experiences children may have including social and moral customs, values and practices different from those which schools expect. Many schools have sought to build upon and reflect these experiences rather than perpetuate a monocultural perspective. So defined, is an all embracing notion describing an experience of life. For the purposes of analysis, however, different aspects of this experience can be identified as being worthy of special attention especially with regard to the kinds of educational provision that may be made. Aspects such as the children's language, religion, and historical backgrounds form part of the socially constructed categories of race and ethnicity.'

Their historical background

Teachers and pupils, w het her black or white, have this much in common - that much of their recent history has been within the British Empire and latterly the Commonwealth . White people have been conquerors, missionaries and administrators in the former colonies and dependencies from which mainly black people have come. The traditional English interpretation of history has accordingly favoured and justified, conquest, evangelism and exploitation. The view from the other side is quite otherwise. Their heroes and heroines are people who resisted, even though enslaved, conquered, exploited or ill-treated.

Although some children may have migrated to Britain, the vast majority who were born here have also experienced prejudice and discrimination because their colour, ethnicity, food, clothes, customs or religious practices are seem as being different and in some way unacceptable. A knowledge and understanding of the historical experience of people who make up our multicultural society is a necessary element in any effort to counter such prejudice and discrimination. For this to be effective, recognition has to be given to views of history from the perspective of black people and people from other minority ethnic communities.

All children need to understand the historical forces which have shaped the present multi-cultural society. School history should provide an account of the past with which black and minority ethnic children can identify in a positive way and which also relates to their experiences in Britain today. School history should enable children to examine critically interpretations of past events and should include African and Asian and Irish contributions to world development and some account of the processes of migration.

Their religious background

Religious Education is one area of the curriculum where significant advances have already been made. The multi-faith syllabus 'Living Together' offers schools a useful starting point from which to reappraise their perspective. Many schools have a mono-religious, mono-cultural ethos though children come from many different faith and cultural backgrounds.

There are in Birmingham followers of Islam, Sikhism, Hinduism, and Judaism; adherents to the Greek Orthodox Church, Black led Pentecostal Churches, Irish Catholics and other Christian denominations; Jehovah's Witnesses and Rastafarians. In some schools the majority of pupils who have experience of a faith will not come from a Christian background. There is also an increasing proportion of children who have no faith background and whose circumstances need to be taken into account.

The social values and forms of behaviour of pupils from particular religious and cultural backgrounds will differ. Car e must be taken to guard against interpreting such differences as deficiencies of some kind. In order to provide for the particular needs of children with regard to their religious background schools need to consider the implications this holds for their ethos, procedures, rules and regulations, and to alter their practices accordingly.

Some schools have already usefully examined the structure and nature of their assemblies and Religious Education. Schools should consider the possibility of providing alternatives like specialised instruction, and will need to ensure that parents are aware of their right of withdrawal.

The religious festivals of different groups could be celebrated as part of school life. Schools with a predominance of Muslim pupils could for example take occasional days on the festivals of Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha. Schools could investigate the need for prayer facilities and where

such need exists provide an appropriate facility such as a separate classroom so that children can worship.

More schools will need to examine their requirements regarding dress and school uniform. This will include matters such as the wearing of turbans by Sikhs, salwar and kamiz by Muslim girls, locks by Rastafarian boys and head wraps worn by Rastafarian girls. Where possible, items of clothing could be in school colours or alternative clothing suggested which conforms to the religious requirements. Similarly, clothing worn for P.E., games, dance or drama may need to take in to account the principle s of modesty. This principle applies to changing facilities, showers and swimming. Some children may wear religious symbols which schools may wrongly interpret as mere 'jewellery '. (More detailed information on these points can be found in the Authority's 'Guidelines on Meeting the Religious and Cultural Needs of Muslim Pupils').

It is important to remember that children are individuals and to remember that cultural differences will exist even within the same religious group. For instance, children whose parents may have come from Pakistan, Cyprus, Nigeria or Birmingham may have in common an adherence to Islam, but may differ culturally in many other respects. What is required in this area of provision is an increased sensitivity on the part of schools to the nature of people's religious customs and beliefs.

Their linguistic background

Children bring to school a range of linguistic experience reflecting their diverse cultural backgrounds. Most children are able to speak a regional variety of English and have some understanding of how their language is modified when used in different contexts for different purposes. In addition, children from minority ethnic communities may bring a variety of skills in languages other than English. These children are often bilingual and may also be literate in two or more languages. For these children English may not be their preferred language for expressing ideas, thoughts and feelings in certain areas of experience.

The languages, dialects and registers which children use must therefore be taken into account if effective education is to be provided. When linguistic factors of this kind are ignored or only partially understood erroneous judgements can be made about the children's capabilities, resulting in inappropriate provision.

Children need to be proficient in English, not only of the standard variety associated with academic success but also the local varieties spoken in

their immediate local communities. This is necessary both to ensure an equal opportunity of access to the benefits of society and to encourage a sense of belonging to the wider society.

Children also need to have the opportunity to maintain their home or heritage language(s) and to increase their skill in using them not only because these languages are a part of their own identity and a feature of British society today, but because used as a learning tool they enhance the acquisition of English, and other skills. These two broad aims are compatible if one ensures that skills which the children already possess are fully used in helping them acquire new skills, knowledge and concepts.

Some schools have failed to use the linguistic skills which children already possess. Children were thought to have a learning difficulty solely because the language which they were being taught was different from the language which was spoken in their homes. Many schools have equated lack of competence and proficiency in English with 'language deficiency'. Children not speaking English were often said to have 'no language'. This is a misunderstanding with serious consequences for it first ignores the language(s) the child may speak and then implies intellectual inferiority. Children are disadvantaged only to the extent that (for whatever reason) their preferred language is not used as an integral part of learning process. The child is disadvantaged if linguistic proficiency is not utilised as a medium for learning, especially in early schooling, and during the development of literacy foundations.

There is increasing research evidence suggesting that by using the home language as part of the learning process, the acquisition of English and concepts by children in primary schools can be greatly enhanced. Schools could consider providing bilingual classroom assistants, appointing bilingual teacher s and employing clerical and ancillary staff from the community as a means of enhancing the children's education and bringing the school closer to the community which it serves.

It is the city policy to foster the bilingual development of pupils. All schools and colleges will need to consider the implications for the linguistic diet offered. They will need carefully thought-out and well-discussed language policies which build upon the perspectives and principles of the Bullock Report, and more recent trend s in bilingualism and literacy development. In secondary schools this will be particularly applicable to language departments and in primary schools, to language post-holders.

A wide range of languages is spoken by local communities in the Birmingham area. These languages include Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali, and Gujerati (with their corresponding varieties of Mirpuri, Sylheti, Kachchi), English, Hindi, Pushto, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Jamaican Creole, Malay, and Greek. Where these are the home or community languages of m any children attending a school, provision should be made to offer these languages as areas of study in their own right. Just as important though perhaps not so obvious is the need for non-European languages to be on offer in schools which are predominantly white so that all children can gain some understanding about the lives and customs of other members of society, and take oral and written examinations in these.

Some schools are already doing constructive work with Jamaican Creole. This language, the result of the fusion of two or more parent languages, continues to be looked down upon and to have low status even amongst some of its speakers. Jamaican Creole i s of ten treated as a dialect of English despite over a century's evidence from linguistics that it is a language in its own right. Schools can play an important role in teaching about Jamaican Creole and using it as the base from which speakers of Jamaican Creole can become proficient in reading and writing standard English. Jamaican Creole offers a rich and vibrant oral tradition as an addition to the expressive domains of the curriculum.

'Language Awareness' can be part of bot h the primary and secondary curriculum. Language Awareness develops an appreciation of language diversity and language function as part of the mainstream curriculum. In secondary schools this can be in either English or Modern Languages departments, in primary schools as part of the whole language development programme.

Summary

Any educational provision must have at its star ting point a consideration of the needs of the learners and the demands of society. Britain is a multi-cultural and multiracial society and this fact holds implications for everybody concerned with education. In this context, the city policy calls on schools to review their practices so that they can respond sensitively to the children's needs.

Further, the city policy acknowledges that an assessment of needs and effective educational provision must be informed by a good understanding of all children's backgrounds and emphasises the need for schools to engage in dialogue with their local communities and especially with black

people when seeking to arrive at such understanding. Finally, attention has been drawn to seeking to educate in and for a multicultural society.

Action Checklist

"Providing for the particular needs of pupils means:

- ensuring that the school seeks out and listens to the perceptions of black parents and pupils of their needs in order to ensure educational provision which is sensitive and responsive to diversity of pupils ' experience

- providing learning experiences which recognize the value and strengths of diversity and which do not see difference as deviant or defective

- providing educational experiences which give pupils the opportunity of locating themselves socially culturally, politically in British society today

- ensuring that the life experiences of black people and minority ethnic groups are integral to learning content and processes and explicitly developed as a feature of norm al curriculum content at all stages of schooling

- helping pupils to understand racism and how it is experienced and affects black and white people in British society today

- supporting black and minority ethnic group pupils in developing strategies for challenging racism as they encounter it

- developing a critical understanding of the history of our present day multicultural society with the perspectives of black and minority ethnic groups represented and developed

- respecting the diversity of religious and ethical values existing among pupils and their families and striving for an ethos and practices which recognize these

- providing assemblies which reflect and consider this diversity , and ensuring the right of withdrawal from collective acts of worship with

the possibility of alternative provision for pupils' worship in the school

- ensuring that religious education recognizes diverse faiths and life stances

- respecting different requirements concerning dress and diet arising from religious convictions and making provision for these within school practices and rules

- using pupils' home and community languages as a medium for learning and a focus for study as a way of development parity of status for these in school with English and other European languages

- ensuring that young bilingual and bi-dialectal children have every opportunity and encouragement to use their home language for learning activities to assist their full participation in classroom learning

- using minority ethnic group languages in the mainstream classroom in normal literacy and oracy work to provide all pupils with opportunities for sharing learning experiences and to avoid representing such languages as exotic or unsuitable for classroom purposes

- providing modern language courses in secondary school in minority group languages open to all pupils to ensure greater understanding and respect among different linguistic communities and creating wider opportunities for bilingual pupils to become bi-literate within the examination system

- promoting opportunities in normal classroom work for the use of minority group languages, arising from the classroom content as, for example, in humanities work on community or history

- ensuring that young bilingual children as supported on entry and in the early years of school by bi-lingual teachers who can effectively communicate and relate to the pupils' needs

- using the diversity of languages and dialects in school as a focus of study in the general development of pupils' awareness of the nature and functions of language at all stages of schooling

- seeking to communicate with parents in their home and community languages both in written communication and in meetings

- seeking to work with black and minority ethnic group parents in way which enable parents and teachers and others concerned in the life of the school to reach a mutual understanding of intentions, and purposes of classroom and school work

- working with black parents and other adults where voluntary help is offered to help meet some of the perceived needs in a manner which is non-exploitative and demonstrates a mutual exchange of services

- providing materials, content and classroom organisation which fosters confidence and makes space for black and minority ethnic group pupils to express their particular experiences, understandings and knowledge

- ensuring that classroom materials, content and organization does not create an impression of particular values and lifestyles as preferred or ideal and those of other groups as deviant or inferior.

Third Aim: TO PREPARE ALL PUPILS FOR LIFE IN OUR MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY, BUILDING UPON THE STRENGTHS OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY

All pupils

Since city policy requires that "all pupils" shall be prepared for "life in our multicultural society", it follows that all schools must adopt programmes directed to this end. This applies to all schools-not only those schools with sizeable populations of black children, but also those that hither to have felt able to say, 'Multicultural Education is not emphasised here because the students are predominantly white and problems arising from ethnic differences are few'. Nor can such programmes be adopted only for the less able as a form of remedial education for the few, or merely added on to the existing curriculum. Neither can the policy be fulfilled if it is left only to a few committed teachers acting in isolation, or to particular subjects and departments such as R.E. The policy requires a 'whole school' and an 'all schools' approach.

To prepare ……………… For life

This is to be interpreted generously to mean not merely existence, but also fulfilment; not merely individual well-being but also participation in all the life processes of the city and country. The word "prepare" implies a conscious, planned determination to bring about certain desired ends.

A duty is, therefore, laid upon all schools:

a) to clarify and define these goals, in terms that are appropriate to the ages, aspirations and abilities of the pupils and to the rights and responsibilities of citizenship of multiracial Britain

b) to develop those qualities which will enable them to participate fully in the economic, social and political processes

c) to develop the values which should inform and direct citizens of our multicultural democracy

d) to provide future citizens with the knowledge and skills for full participation in our society .

To be effective this duty will involve all staff (both teaching and ancillary), parents and governors, and pupils and students themselves, in a reappraisal of the curriculum in its widest sense, in an examination of

differential achievement rates between different groups of pupils and in a determination to eliminate unfairness and anomalies.

In our multicultural society

The phrase "our multicultural society" contains two ideas, to bot h of which proper weight must be given. "Our society" is singular and implies cohesion and unity. "Multicultural", on the other hand, suggests plurality in matters of social behaviour, of religious belief and rituals, and of values and world views.

It is important that all pupils learn to understand the forces making for cohesion, as well as the factors which may cause tension and disharmony; and that they should understand their own place and role in the management of conflict and in the achievement and maintenance of peaceful collaboration between all members of a single society.

None of them is very distant from places where Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims, Afro-Caribbean and Irish people live, work and worship. Schools and colleges are in the business of 'life development ', and should therefore examine the variety of life-styles, interests and cultural groups.

Schools and colleges with largely white intakes have particular responsibilities which call for particular courses of action. Many of their students will go on to higher education, to become lawyers, doctors, civil servants and other 'ekute ' occupational role - people who may well become the decision-maker s who will directly affect the lives of their fellow-citizens. It is essential that future leaders in politics, government, commerce and industry should be **made aware of the racism which may consciously or unconsciously affect their decision-making.** However, the majority of white youngsters will not be in these power-holding and decision-making roles. It is equally essential that these pupils be made aware of racism, how it operates and how it will probably affect their relationships with black people! Apart from this, there is the need to emphasise their general social and political obligations as equal citizen's of a democracy, where blackness and whiteness have distinct social meanings. This applies to <u>all pupils</u> wherever the locations of their schools. It is equally essential for all white pupils to be made aware of the racism which may affect their relationships with black people.

Schools with black majorities or with mixed populations should resist the temptation to wish themselves otherwise, or think themselves disadvantaged. Such schools -may well reflect the mixtures that are universal in the world. They have the potential to become exemplars of

the kind of society a multicultural society might be, were human ideals to be achieved. They present not 'problems', as some teachers argue, but challenges and opportunities.

The issues of racism, discrimination and conflict with in a multicultural society should not be left until adolescence. Attitudes are developing even before arrival in the nursery school and it is crucial that teachers lay the groundwork about different customs, religious beliefs, 'race' and racism as early as possible.

It is important, therefor e that staff of both primary and secondary schools should realise that they are together involved in the fulfilment of the city policy, which calls for unprecedented collaboration between them in the development of a positive engagement with the issues involved in "preparing all pupils for life in a multicultural society". At the very least, it is important to avoid confusion and contradiction in what the children learn about each other and the society in which they live, as they move from primary to secondary school. A continuity of approach is crucial and the multicultural anti-racist policies of primary schools should cohere with those of their secondary neighbours.

Building on the strengths of cultural diversity

The underlying assumption is that a culturally diverse society is ipso facto a strong one. There are those who argue that such a notion strikes at the heart of 'British' values and customs and somehow waters down 'British' culture. Yet the cornerstone of British values and culture has always been the freedom for individuals to be themselves with in the law, an openness to change, and a positive welcoming of people from different ethnic and cultural groups.

Educationally, "cultural diversity" makes for interest and facilitates comparison and contrast, out of which can come creativity. Education is enhanced when dialogue is added to description and when face-to-f ace experience replaces arms-length exploration. It is possible in a city such as ours to re-inforce book and T.V knowledge with live encounter and genuine interaction.

Within our democratic framework a diversity of religious beliefs, values, cultural idioms and skills adds to the total cultural stock, and indeed to our national wealth and well-being. A critical appreciation of this stock is a necessary component of good education. Pupils must be taught to develop their ability to judge fairly and rationally, on the basis of knowledge and experience; to recognise and evaluate prejudices; to make

choices between alternative modes of conduct, and to make alliances which are all the stronger for the contribution of different skills and qualities.

From nursery school pupils ought, as a matter of course, to be exposed to the wide range of Birmingham's cultures. It is not a matter of simply adding-on to the existing curriculum bits of information about different groups. Nor should the emphasis be on the different and the strange, with pupils sometimes used as living examples of cultural exotica. Birmingham's many cultures are dynamic not static. They are here and, in the case of minority ethnic groups, must no longer be presented through a 'homelands ' approach which located them elsewhere than Britain, and which implicitly says 'you are visitors who may one day return home'. Their history must no longer be treated only as quaint, distant or of passing interest, but as a vital component in the history of an interdependent world.

Teachers in both inner-ring and outer-ring schools can enhance their own knowledge of minority ethnic groups through association with the different ethnic groups, through listening, learning and respecting what they say, through twinning and exchanges of school staff and through reading materials written from the minority perspective . In this way teacher s should allow minority groups to define what they consider are their own cultural strengths.

Summary

In order to ralise the Authority's objectives it is essential that all educational institutions understand and implement the policy. Within individual schools/colleges there are enormous benefits to be gained by the learners and by the staff. This can only be achieved in the context of a determined whole school/college approach.

This particular objective therefore requires all education institutions to consider and begin the process of change which will affect all learners. This can only be realised if unequivocal attention is given to the nature of our society, the preparation of pupils/ students for life in our multicultural society and a commitment to build upon the strengths, experiences, beliefs and values of differ ent cultures which make up our society.

Action Checklist

The Head and Senior Management team will need to:

- Understand and promote changes which incorporate education for a multicultural society offering justice and equality as an integral part of the school's/college's philosophy

- Develop and implement school-specific multicultural antiracist policies

- View education as a continuous process and establish stronger links with other institutions in order to reduce confusion and be more supportive

- Ensure that the school/college has identified and attempting to meet the needs and aspirations of its all pupils.
- Design and maintain a school focussed in-set programme which is pro-active

- Ensure that effective consultation is established and maintained with pupils, staff, parents and the community.

The Pastoral Curriculum. Deputy Head, Heads of Years/Houses and form tutors will need to:

- Understand the concept, causes and effects of racism

- Examine the organisation and administration of the pastor al system to identify and actively combat racism

- Ensure that the system is consultative rather than punitive

- Ensure that in terms of treatment and the administration of discipline the system is constant, accounts for cultural differences and is free of stereotyping

- Provides accurate, informed, sensitive counselling on options, careers and cultural conflicts in the home, school and society

- Have fundamental knowledge and understanding of the social and cultural backgrounds of their pupils/students

- Design a programme with in the pastoral curriculum which relates to the needs of pupils/students and which encourages them to participate in their own development

- Ensure that the content of the pastoral programme relates to the experiences and cultures of all pupil/students

- Ensure that the pastoral programme offers alternatives in respect of social behaviour, responsibilities, values and beliefs

- Ensure that there is a clear system for dealing with racist behaviour and racial incidents.

The Academic Curriculum. Deputy Head, Heads of Departments and subject teachers will need to:

- Ensure that cultural diversity is reflected in courses at examination levels

- Ensure that pupils/student are entered for examinations in respect of their potential, aspirations and ability and is not based on cultural stereotyping

- Select appropriate content within subject areas which relates and reflects the plural nature of society

- Review and modify the methodology adopting a skills-based collaborative learning approach

- Teach about racism and its effects in society

- Ensure that in subject areas recognition is given to concepts and issues which relates to a global perspective (e.g.) trade, relationships, conflicts, co-operation etc

- Ensure that as far as possible the curriculum is meeting specific needs in respect of cultural background

- Review and modify forms of assessment, evaluation and organisation of pupils

- Address the concept of the 'Hidden Curriculum' (e.g.) composition of staff, assemblies, display, extra-curricular activities etc

- Examine and remove racist materials/resources

- Promote the use of a variety of resources reflecting cultural diversity

- Value and use the community as a suitable resource

- Create an ethos in the school which encourages pupils/students to understand value and respect cultural diversity.