

5th June 2020

Reflecting on the events of the last two weeks and the words that are being repeated over and over again: injustice, inequality, racism...suffering. What should be history is still a reality and one that has deep roots.

Each of us will have a different experience with racism. The demands of our roles mean we are not having discussions about an issue that is affecting many of us. We work with a marginalised population of pupils who experience inequalities due to their complex special educational needs. Our efforts to support their visibility and role as equal citizens sits at the heart of our mission as a school. We actively combat issues to ensure we are not passively allowing discrimination for our pupils.

We are always fighting the discrimination as educators, and with a heightened focus because of the complexity of special needs and disabilities across our pupil population. We work so carefully to help others see their unique qualities. We do not want our pupils to be 'tolerated'. We advocate for their 'acceptance'. We recognise the individuality that each of them reflects and through that focus we find ourselves united in promoting their role as equal citizens.

Our staff community is equally diverse. We reflect the multiculturalism of London and have harmony as a group of staff through our core values. That does not mean we have not felt the inequalities of racism. It does not mean we are not affected by the death of George Floyd and the realities of racism. It does not mean a topic like this should not surface for us as a community of colleagues. We need to ensure we have the space to discuss the complexities of inequality and explore what defaults as socially acceptable forms of racism to change these behaviours.

I followed the first of three memorial services for George Floyd which took place yesterday in Minneapolis. His horrific murder on 25th May has put a lens on the fact that racial injustice has deep roots in our global society. The emotions from yet another death of an innocent black man in America ripples across the world.

Peaceful protests are taking place across many countries and in the heart of London to push for change because this racial inequality needs to stop. We want to support staff who are feeling a mixture of valid emotions during this fight against racial injustice. As much as it is a time for education and engagement it is also a time for acknowledging the impact on wellbeing and mental health. We have selected a set of think pieces, videos, podcasts, and events as the focus of our weekly wellbeing activities. We hope they will be useful and support our reflections as a community.

Sincerely,
Vijita

Reflections	
Camden Council Leader Cllr Georgia Gould:	http://camdennewjournal.com/article/racism-is-not-an-american-disease
Virtual Town Hall Meeting from Former President Barack Obama	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q_gB6SsErpA&feature=youtu.be
Black Live Matters	https://blacklivesmatter.com/
Lecture in Progress: Directory of recommended resources for supporting the Black Lives Matter movement	https://lectureinprogress.com/journal/resources-for-supporting-black-lives-matter-movement
Chartered College of Teaching Thinkpiece: Why Black Lives Matter in Education and Beyond	https://my.chartered.college/2020/06/why-black-lives-matter-in-education-and-beyond/
Ham&High Article: Camden Council Goes Purple in Solidarity with Global Protesters	https://www.hamhigh.co.uk/news/black-lives-matter-camden-goes-purple-and-council-leader-calls-out-systemic-racism-1-6683666
Ham&High Article: Black Lives Matters Protesters backed by Haringey Politicians	https://www.hamhigh.co.uk/news/black-lives-matter-protesters-backed-by-haringey-politicians-1-6685988
The Black Girl's Manifesto for Change: Taking Up Space (Book)	https://www.penguin.co.uk/books/1117762/taking-up-space/9781529118544.html
Wellbeing & Mental Health	
Black Thrive: A Partnership for Black Wellbeing	https://www.blackthrive.org.uk/
BAME Professionals Support (10 th June) Eventbrite link to a free event focused on mental wellbeing and peer support	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/bame-professionals-mental-wellbeing-peer-support-tickets-107075547846?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch
'I Can't Breathe: collaborative support for women' (10 th June) Eventbrite link to a free event from WomenED, BAMEed, NourishedED, DiverseEd	https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/i-cant-breathe-collaborative-support-for-women-tickets-108161339478
Gal-Dem Thinkpiece: What to do if you can't protest on the streets for Black Live Matters	https://gal-dem.com/what-to-do-if-you-cant-protest-on-the-streets-for-black-lives-matter/
The Vice Thinkpiece: Self-care Tips for Black People Who Are Struggling With This Very Painful Week	https://www.vice.com/en_uk/article/g5pgmq/self-care-tips-for-black-people-struggling-from-painful-week