

HANOVER PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Jack Sloan



Monday, 15 June 2020

Dear parents and carers

Like many of you, I have been following events and demonstrations taking place across the world following the murder of George Floyd, and have spent a great deal of time considering the wider issues that they have raised for all of us. They have brought to the fore the longstanding and deep-rooted issue of racism, which we must all face and address.

As a school, we are committed to being actively anti-racist. Our community is diverse in many ways, and this diversity brings strength and opportunity. The notion that children or members of our community would be judged on anything but their hard work, achievement and character is abhorrent to me and to my colleagues. Racism is something that we must all strive to defeat, and recent events across the world should serve as a reminder of the urgency of this mission.

As teachers and school staff, we all want the very best for our children. We recognise that education is the most important tool in overcoming discrimination - fear and ignorance fuel racism, and we must work hard to ensure our children have the knowledge and skill to question racist views wherever they may encounter them. It is by helping children to understand the world that we will enable them to be the critical and creative thinkers that we so want them to become, and this has been central to the thinking behind our new curriculum over the last year.

We recognise that the National Curriculum does not adequately represent black, Asian and minority ethnic history or the achievements of people from these backgrounds. This is why we created the topic "Where do I belong" in Key Stage one, for example, where we discussed our own histories, the Windrush scandal, and explored some of the benefits that have been brought to this country through immigration. It is the reason why our Monday assemblies are exploring aspects of racism between now and the summer holiday, and why we are also continuously reviewing our plans for assemblies and topics over the next year to better address histories and issues relevant to our community.

We are absolutely committed to doing all we can to stamp out racism. But we know that we do not have all the answers. I speak to you as a white man who cannot tell you with authority about what it feels like to be racially abused. Whilst I have actively fought racism all my life, and tried to educate myself by listening to those with first-hand experience, I recognise that we need to actively listen to our community about how to eradicate racism. In the coming weeks, I will be establishing a "working group" of staff, governors and parents which will be tasked with ensuring we understand the views of our community. This group will look at our curriculum, our response to racist incidents in school, and our messaging to our community, amongst other things.

We want to know how to get anti-racist education right, and want to make changes urgently to ensure that we are addressing racism head-on and with all the resources and ideas available. Please get in touch with me directly if you would like to contribute to this working group. We are a strong community - this period of closure has shown us that - and we must work together to tackle this issue.



ISLINGTON



Healthy School



I urge you all to watch the assemblies that Polly is producing each Monday, and to talk with your families about the issues raised in them. I have been doing this with my own family, as well as with children in school, and I have been impressed at the thoughtfulness and strength of feeling that these discussions have elicited.

Whilst talking about racism can feel uncomfortable, it is vital that we help our children to understand. If you are finding it difficult to talk with your children about racism, or if you or your children are struggling with the emotional impact of this topic, please do get in touch and we can offer support and advice.

I speak for all staff at Hanover when I say that I stand in solidarity with every Black, Asian and minority ethnicity pupil and parent in our community.

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jack Sloan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jack Sloan
Headteacher