**Anti-Racism Audit Tool**

for Early Years Provision

Since June 2020 there has been a focus on Black Lives Matter, which was originally used as a hashtag on social media in 2013; the murder of George Floyd brought this to worldwide attention again in 2020. Key messages have been about racism and being anti-racist, with organisations looking at how effective they are at identifying racism and tackling it within.

***“Everyone involved in any aspect of an early years setting, really needs to understand as much as possible about how to deal with racism
since it is almost certain that they will encounter it in the very lives, ideas and language of young children and of their parents.”*** *Smidt, 2020.*

***“Children’s racist attitudes are widespread before children are four years old. Some children as young as two years old have become aware of cultural, racial, gender and class difference. They acquire their attitudes from the people around them and their environment; books, toys, the media, friends, family, practitioners, carers, what they see (and what they don’t see), what they do and what is said (and unsaid). The setting plays an important part in the development of young children’s identities and their attitudes towards others; what they are exposed to in the setting builds their picture of the world. Practitioners must adopt an approach which counters any negative attitudes and behaviours that children may have already learned – this is crucial. Children must be taught positive values and attitudes. Practitioners must address issues relating to diversity and equality and ensure that the children with whom they work are provided with opportunities to learn to respect difference. Practitioners in mono-cultural settings have a specific role to play in presenting positive images of diversity, as the children may not have encountered other cultures or religions previously.”*** *Cumbria County Council*

**What is racism?**

The belief that different races possess distinct characteristics, abilities, or qualities, especially to distinguish them as inferior or superior to one another.

**What is anti-racism?**

Anti-racism refers to a form of action against racial hatred, bias, systemic racism, and the oppression of marginalized groups. Anti-racism is usually structured around conscious efforts and deliberate actions to provide equitable opportunities for all people on an individual and systemic level.

**What is race equality?**

Racial equality occurs when institutions give equal opportunities to people of all races. In other words, regardless of physical traits such as skin colour, institutions are to give individuals legal, moral, and political equality.

There is a need to recognise individual Black staff members or children and their families do not represent and should not be expected to be the voice of all Black people.

***“It is never too early to talk
anti-racism with young people”*** *RACE.ED.*

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|  |  | Not yet | Working towards | Working well |
| **Principle 1: See all learners and their families as of equal value.** | * Is everyone in your setting equally valued and treated with equal respect and concern?
* Do you ensure that children and parents’ and carers’ opinions, views and voices are listened to, responded to and shared, irrespective of their language and culture?
* Are all new families made to feel special when welcomed into your provision?
* Do you use the settling in period to find out about the diversity of your families – their cultures, traditions, faiths, languages?
* Do you record cultural and religious information at admission including customs diet, festivals and worship?
* Are all children’s wellbeing and involvement levels observed and responded to so that future learning opportunities meet their needs?
* Do you feel that families’ linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds are valued and seen as positive assets to the setting when you look around the environment and listen to interactions?
* Do you have resources from other places and cultures, which reflect the world we live in?
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| **Principle 2: Recognise and respect difference. Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same.** | * Do you actively plan to help children develop positive peer relationships?
* Do you provide opportunities for children to negotiate and collaborate with their peers?
* Do you actively plan to support children’s developing understanding of fundamental British values; are equality, diversity and British values actively promoted in everyday practice?
* Do practitioners have the confidence to talk to children and families about diversity, inclusion and anti-racism?
* Do practitioners talk openly and matter-of-factly about the ways individuals and families can be different from one another, whilst avoiding using those differences to label them?
* Do practitioners encourage children to be curious when they talk or ask about how others are different in just the same way they would encourage them to be curious about anything else?
* Do practitioners encourage children to talk about skin colours, family structures or disabilities, and to show them in their own drawings and paintings?
* Do practitioners talk positively about difference in the books they share with children?
* Do practitioners interact in a warm, positive way with the diverse resources in your setting?
* Do practitioners talk with children if they notice that they respond negatively to certain resources or characters in books?
* Do practitioners use stories to support children to think through complicated issues and develop empathy?
* If a religious belief conflicts with your own or other practitioners’ beliefs, do you take care not to allow this to negatively affect your relationship with the child’s family?
* Wherever possible, are staff allowed to take time off for religious holidays as part of their annual leave, and are they able to do so without feeling that they are causing inconvenience?
* Do you take account of personal, cultural and religious practices when planning outings?
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| **3: Foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.** | * As a team, do you treat one another with respect and value each other’s diversity?
* Do resources and displays represent the ethnic cultural and social diversity of families and wider society?
* Do you ensure music, songs, rhymes and stories come from a range of different cultures, traditions and languages?
* Do your menus include meals from different cultures?
* Do you ensure your outings reflect the diversity of your local community?
* Do you celebrate festivals and special days which are relevant to your children, families and staff?
* Do you regularly consider how you could further improve the range of events you discuss and celebrate in your provision?
* Do you actively plan to promote feelings of belonging in children and their families?
* Does this include belonging to the wider community rather than the setting itself?
* Do leaders/managers take time to monitor and evaluate the quality of relationships with parents/families, community and within the team?
* Do you discuss relationships and partnerships which staff feel could be improved and problem solve how to do this together?
* Do you ask parents and carers to share with you words and phrases of a child’s home language to show you value their language and culture?
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| **Principle 4: Observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development**  | * Do all staff have an awareness of the Equality Act 2010 and the Protected Characteristics covered by the Act?
* Do all staff understand their responsibilities to be inclusive?
* Does the staff team reflect the diversity in the community? – You could complete an audit of your current workforce for their skills, abilities, experience
* Does your provision attract and recruit people who are best suited to meeting the requirements of the post? Does it attract candidates from diverse communities?
* Do you provide informal and volunteering opportunities so that parents, extended family members or members of the community who have the right aptitude are upskilled for potential jobs that you may have in the future?
* Do your induction procedures include familiarisation with your equality and inclusion practices?
* Do you share your inclusive ethos, policy and practices with families, new and existing members of staff, students and volunteers?
* Do staff have access to meaningful and relevant training – e.g. in race equality?
* Do supervisions provide an opportunity to discuss equality and diversity; to talk about what is working well, to share issues, identify solutions and receive coaching?
* Do you find out about the skills, knowledge and diversity of your staff?
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| **Principle 5: Aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist** | * Do you have a policy to inform your practices in inclusion, equality and diversity? Is race equality specifically referenced?
* Do all practitioners acknowledge the unique situations that families find themselves in, and plan to lessen the effects of these barriers by offering additional opportunities, for example increased time on balance bikes for those children living with no access to outside space?
* Do you ensure that staff openly discuss emotive and difficult subjects such as racism or the effects of religious cultural or economic intolerance in our community?
* Do all staff have high expectations and aspirations for children from Black, Asian or Multi-ethnic backgrounds?
* Do staff have the confidence and training to appropriately respond to any discriminatory incidents when they occur?
	+ Do staff challenge discriminatory comments or actions?
	+ Do they make it clear that discrimination in any form is not acceptable in the setting?
	+ Do they first comfort and reassure the individual if they have been offended or upset by discriminatory comments or actions?
	+ Do they talk with the person who discriminated so that they realise why their comments or actions were unacceptable?
	+ Do they record the incident?
* Do you have systems in place and are these shared with parents, so they know how to report instances of racism, racial harassment or victimisation?
* Are parents confident to report concerns?
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| **Principle 6: Consult and involve widely** | * If you have a policy to inform your practices in inclusion, equality and diversity, have all staff participated in its development?
* Do you consult with parents to find out if the setting is inclusive and welcoming for them and their child? Do parents feel they can always make their feelings, views and opinions known to the staff, and that these will be dealt with respectfully and taken seriously?
* Are you building relationships with a diverse mix of families and people from the local community?
* Does your setting welcome all families and people from the community to share their experiences and unique skills?
* Do you encourage parents and families to share their cultural backgrounds and to celebrate customs and festivals with others in the setting without placing any pressure on them to do this?
* Do you ask parents, carers and staff what events and activities happen in the community and find ways of being involved?
* Do you ask parents to become champions for others – offering, for example, to translate and explain key information for them?
* Does your setting offer a welcoming, safe space for families and generate social and community participation which brings people together for a common purpose?
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Acknowledgements to: Tower Hamlets Council Early Years’ Inclusion service – ‘*Equality guidance for Early Years settings’;* Laura Henry-Allain MBE and Matt Lloyd-Rose - *‘The Tiney Guide’;* Cumbria County Council - ‘*Embedding Cultures and Diversity within an Early Years setting’;* Wingate Community Nursery School –*‘Equality Policy’* and *Birth to Five Matters:* *Non-statutory guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage*.

You should also use our [Celebrating Cultural and Linguistic Diversity Toolkit](https://resources.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/early-years/childcare-practice/outcomes-for-children/eal-and-send) to support you in reflecting on and further developing inclusion within your practice and to enhance your provision.

After completing the audit above, you can use the grids below to record the main priorities you have identified for your setting.

**Action Plan**

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| **Priority 1:** e.g. developing a policy for racial equality | Date: | Persons responsible | Impact |
|  Actions: |  |  |  |

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| **Priority 2:**  | Date: | Persons responsible | Impact |
| Actions:  |  |  |  |

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| **Priority 3:** | Date: | Persons responsible | Impact |
| Actions: |  |  |  |