



Anti-Racist Education

A Children's Parliament Investigation
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About Dens Road Primary

Dens Road Primary School is situated in the centre of Dundee. The learning environment welcomes a broad and diverse range of children and families from around the local area, the school community speaks 27 different languages, and celebrates six different religions. “Our school allows children to be understood as individuals with individual needs.”
Welcome to Our School — Dens Road Primary School .



About Intercultural Youth Scotland



Intercultural Youth Scotland (IYS) is Scotland's leading charity for young Black People and young People of Colour. It is a community, a service and a voice for young people, providing a safe space and place to nurture their growth. Find out more about its work and upcoming projects [here](#).

About Children's Parliament

Children's Parliament is dedicated to the realisation of children's human rights in Scotland. Our dream is that children grow up in a world of love, happiness and understanding. Our mission is to inspire greater awareness and understanding of the power of children's human rights and to support implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

We have worked with the children at Dens Road Primary School in central Dundee for the last two years on Dignity in School.



A Children's Rights Approach

Scotland has now incorporated the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into domestic law, with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill receiving royal assent on 16 January 2024 and coming into effect from July 2024. This legislation provides a strengthened framework for the realisation of children's rights and drives culture change where children are acknowledged as valuable and equal in our society.

A children's rights approach furthers the knowledge, understanding and realisation of children's rights as laid down in the UNCRC and other international human rights instruments.

A children's rights approach:

- Builds the capacity and agency of children as rights-holders to claim their rights.
- Supports children to defend their own rights and those of others.
- Builds the capacity of duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations to children.
- Recognises that relationships based in human rights values are necessary for realising children's rights.
- Includes children's knowledge of what it is like to be a child, their ideas and their opinions.
- Establishes the environment and support that enables children to advocate effectively for themselves.
- Enables adults to benefit from the rich learning intrinsic to these approaches.
- Recognises children's rights as (inherent), cannot be taken away (inalienable), do not come with any conditions attached to them (unconditional) and are all equally important (indivisible).

Rights-based practice provides children with opportunities to share their views, experiences, and ideas so that they can influence positive change in their lives at home, in school and in the community. Using creative, participatory and play-based methods to support children to meaningfully engage in decisions that affect them.







A Children's Rights Approach to Anti-Racist Education

Through specific articles, the UNCRC aims to guarantee equal rights for all children, regardless of race, ethnicity, or background, which is an essential foundation for adopting an anti-racist approach. It gives you a grounding from which to consider what it means to be anti-racist- to actively identify and oppose or challenge racism. This includes:

Article 2 – Non-Discrimination; Article 7 – Identity & Nationality; Article 8 – Preservation of Identity; Article 12 – Respect for Views; Article 14 – Freedom of Thought & Belief and Article 30 – Minority & Indigenous Rights. However, for these rights to be fully realised, the environments and settings surrounding children must also be actively anti-racist across all areas of a child's experience within the school setting.

A children's rights approach to anti-racist education involves children in the process of shaping their own education and school experience by supporting them to design their own curriculum. It encourages them to critically identify racism, inclusion, and diversity. This ensures that their learning experiences are relevant, empowering, and rooted in their lived experiences.

This participatory model not only fosters a deeper understanding of anti-racism, but also equips children with the tools to challenge injustice and create a curriculum that reflects their needs, promotes equality, and upholds the rights of all children, regardless of their race or background.

"I THINK WE SHOULD HAVE A BIG DAY OF LEARNING ABOUT WHAT RACISM IS AND GO AROUND AND TEACH THE CLASSES." – MCP, DENS ROAD PRIMARY





ANTI-RACIST EDUCATION

Breaking The Mould: Anti-Racist Curriculum Principles

The original “Breaking the Mould: Anti-Racist Curriculum Principles” were published in June 2023. They are part of a wider school focus on social justice, rights, and equalities. These principles were co-designed with young people, educators, and anti-racism experts to articulate and embed anti-racism in the curriculum. They aim to challenge outdated and Eurocentric perspectives, introducing modern, relevant, and responsive contexts for learning. More information can be found [here](#).

- 1. Children will experience a curriculum that meaningfully recognises and fairly represents the rich and diverse communities in Scotland and beyond.**
- 2. Children will understand and enquire into Scotland’s role in historical world events, including transatlantic enslavement and colonial histories, and their continuing impact today.**
- 3. Children will learn about and investigate past and present events in a way that amplifies under-represented perspectives and stories.**
- 4. Children will feel safe and confident to co-design their curriculum from their personal perspectives and those of the wider world.**
- 5. Children will be critical thinking global citizens who challenge discrimination and prejudice through an understanding and awareness of the behaviours, practices and processes that create injustice in the world.**
- 6. Children will learn the difference between individual and systemic racism, their impacts, and how they intersect or connect with other types of injustice.**
- 7. Children will be supported to reflect on positionality, privilege and power, and to unlearn bias, prejudice and divisiveness.**
- 8. Children will learn that everyone has a right to be safeguarded from racism and discrimination, and will be empowered to challenge any infringement of this right.**
- 9. Children will be empowered to bring about new ways of being together in the world by valuing and promoting empathy, solidarity and shared humanity that is often disrupted by systemic racism.**



ANTI-RACIST EDUCATION

Breaking the Mould: Anti-Racist Curriculum Principles -

Adapted for The Primary Setting

Through the consultation and research period, children adapted the “Breaking The Mould- Anti-racist Principles” for practical application within primary school settings.

These principles outline what learning settings need to think about when **co-designing learning around anti-racism** for children and adults. These **are not stand-alone topics** or in any particular order; they are instead **part of a wider school focus on rights**.

CHILDREN LEADING THEIR LEARNING IN SAFE SPACES

- Children having the knowledge to be able to **co-design** an engaging curriculum
- Allowing children to understand their **rights to have a say** and **partake in designing their learning**

GLOBAL CITIZEN - FIGHTING RACISM, DEFENDING RIGHTS

- Understanding the **UNCRC**
- Understanding racism and **how to fight it**
- Understanding **allyship** and standing up for people's rights
- Developing **critical thinking** skills in the curriculum

WHAT RACISM IS, UNDERSTANDING POWER AND PRIVILEGE

- Learning about what **direct and indirect racism** is and how it might affect people
- Understanding **stereotyping** and how that leads to **discrimination and prejudice**
- Gaining an understanding of **power and privilege**
- Learning that everyone has a **different perspective** from their different experiences

THE HISTORY OF SCOTLAND AND ITS CONNECTION TO RACISM

- Understanding the **international impact** of Scotland on the racism we see in the world today
- Connecting the **impact of colonialism** to the cities and villages we live in today
- Learning about **Transatlantic Slave Trade** and Scotland's role within it

REPRESENTATIVE CURRICULUM, WITH DIVERSE VOICES

- Learning about history of their **communities' cultural identities** – past and present
- Learning more about **different languages**
- Providing texts that reflect the **diverse communities** of Scotland
- **Amplifying voices** of stories that are overlooked

ANTI-RACIST EDUCATION

Children's Calls For Action

At the end of the consultation, children from Dens Road Primary gathered to reflect on their learning and experiences, sharing their key insights and ideas. Through this process, they developed seven essential Calls to Action. These complement the “Breaking the Mould- Anti-Racist Curriculum Principles” and should be carefully considered by educators when shaping anti-racist education in their settings.

1. LET US HELP DESIGN OUR LEARNING SO IT'S FUN AND FAIR, AND TEACH US ABOUT OUR RIGHTS.
2. HELP US IDENTIFY RACISM AND HOW IT HURTS PEOPLE.
3. HELP US UNDERSTAND POWER AND PRIVILEGE SO WE CAN MAKE THINGS FAIR FOR EVERYONE.
4. TEACH US HOW TO STAND UP TO RACISM AND HELP OTHERS.
5. MAKE SURE WE LEARN ABOUT DIFFERENT CULTURES, LANGUAGES, AND STORIES.
6. TELL US THE REAL HISTORY OF SCOTLAND, INCLUDING ITS ROLE IN SLAVERY AND RACISM.
7. WE WANT TO LEARN, SPEAK UP, AND HELP MAKE THE WORLD A KINDER, FAIRER PLACE.





Laying the Foundations

Prior to working with children to investigate the “Breaking The Mould: Anti-Racist Curriculum Principles,” Children's Parliament set out to lay the foundations of the project by reflecting on and researching the current landscape of Anti-Racist Education (ARE) already being developed and delivered on a national level across Scotland.

This proved crucial to understanding and identifying gaps within ARE provision, as well as ensuring that Children's Parliament, in partnership with Intercultural Youth Scotland, was able to create a brave children's rights space that ensured children felt comfortable enough to discuss often complex and challenging subjects relating to race and identity. The expertise and contribution of IYS in sharing their knowledge, leadership, and experience were paramount to this approach. The following steps were taken to support this process for the Children's Parliament team.

Reviewing the ARE landscape:

The initial research phase reviewed Education in Scotland, focusing on primary schools. By examining existing organisations, resources, and activities, Children's Parliament positioned itself to lead this work and identify meaningful contributions and talents including collaboration with IYS.

Partnering with Dens Road Primary School:

A key part of the research was partnering with Dens Road Primary, a school with a strong UNCRC focus. Their recent collaboration with Children's Parliament and Dr. Amy Hanna (Strathclyde University) highlighted the need for a stronger anti-racism focus in schools. In response, they integrated anti-racism into their School Improvement Plan, reinforcing their commitment to children's rights and making them an ideal partner for piloting 'Breaking the Mould' principles.

Establishing an Expert Panel:

Children's Parliament brought together a diverse range of voices, including academics, third-sector partners, policy leaders, and educators. Their specialist knowledge and perspectives helped shape the project's direction, ensuring it was grounded in expertise and practical insights.

Building on Existing Work:

The project team also drew on insights from Intercultural Youth Scotland and other established resources and organisations (WOSDEC/ Scotdec) and Anti-Racist Education Scotland. This approach ensured that the work built upon the wealth of knowledge already available in the field, while also addressing gaps and new opportunities for learning.

Relating the Existing Principles:

Children's Parliament's collaboration with Stirling University and Nuzhat Uthmani was instrumental in creating a strong foundation for the project. Together, developing an understanding of how the existing principles could relate to existing work taking place across the Curriculum of Excellence as well understanding how the concepts in them may relate to the age and stage of the children Children's Parliament would be working with over the course of the consultation process.



Introduction

The "Breaking the Mould: Anti-Racist Curriculum Principles" aims to transform how schools teach and function, ensuring that every student feels included, respected, and valued. These principles seek to update the curriculum by moving away from outdated and often Eurocentric ideas, making learning more modern, relevant, and accessible to all students, regardless of their background. They also focus on promoting fairness, diversity, and teaching children how to stand up against racism and unfair treatment. The aim is to create a learning environment where both teachers and children work together to develop a curriculum that truly reflects and supports everyone, helping students feel that they belong with racial literacy and cultural competency embedded throughout.

In 2024, the Scottish Government commissioned Children's Parliament to review the "Breaking the Mould" principles with children. Working in partnership with Intercultural Youth Scotland and Dens Road Primary School in Dundee, the initiative explored how the principles might look in action, gathering children's views and opinions on the principles and translating them for primary schools. The ultimate aim being to guide the co-design of anti-racist education in primary schools across Scotland.

This project builds on the 2021 calls made by Members of the Children's Parliament (MCPs) as part of the "Children as Human Rights Defenders" project. In 2021, children from across Scotland presented several calls to the First Minister, urging for stronger anti-racist education and better support for those facing racism. More information about this initiative can be found here: [Cabinet Takeover 2021](#).

**"RACISM HURTS CHILDREN AND ADULTS, AND
IT HAPPENS TOO MUCH TODAY." - MEMBER OF
CHILDREN'S PARLIAMENT, AGE 10**

As part of this process, Children's Parliament engaged 50 children aged 9-10 from two primary 5 classes in Dens Road Primary School to hear their thoughts and reflections on the five "Breaking the Mould: Anti-Racist Curriculum Principles". The consultation also included representatives from four other schools in the local authority. The insights from this consultation formed new calls to action from the children and provided a deeper understanding of how they perceive and connect with the principles.





What We Did:

Working with the principles

During the research phase of the project, we explored the depth and scope of the “Breaking The Mould” Principles while also considering Dens Road Primary’s starting point in developing anti-racist approaches within their school community. While children were able to articulate their experiences of unfair treatment and racial discrimination in both school and social settings, a lack of shared racial literacy across the school limited the depth of conversations that could take place around these issues. In response, we implemented a multi-strand approach to provide diverse learning opportunities, led by the expertise of IYS. This approach aimed to ground discussions in children’s rights and the concept of dignity while engaging with the individual principles through practical and creative methods.

“DIGNITY MEANS FEELING IMPORTANT AND BEING TREATED FAIRLY. NO ONE SHOULD FEEL LESS THAN SOMEONE ELSE BECAUSE OF THEIR SKIN COLOUR OR WHERE THEY COME FROM.”

“I LOVE HEARING STORIES FROM DIFFERENT CULTURES. IT MAKES THE WORLD FEEL BIGGER AND MORE INTERESTING.”

Principle Consultation Workshops

Through three initial workshop sessions in collaboration we introduced Anti-Racist Education (ARE). This was explored through the lens of Dignity and the UNCRC, building on children’s existing understanding of rights while expanding their focus to key articles related to discrimination, equality, identity, and culture. This approach created a strong foundation for children and teachers to engage in meaningful discussions within a safe and supportive environment.

“IT DOESN’T MATTER WHAT CULTURE, RELIGION, LANGUAGE OR SKIN COLOUR YOU HAVE, AND THAT ARTICLE 2 IS NO DISCRIMINATION... FOR PEOPLE TO NOT BE MEAN TO PEOPLE.”

“YOU CAN LEARN ABOUT YOUR RELIGION AND IDENTITY AND YOUR POWER AND YOU ALSO HAVE THE RIGHT TO KNOW AND SPEAK YOUR OWN LANGUAGE.”

What We Did:

Working with the principles

Intensive Residency Model

Through a week long intensive residency model, the Children's Parliament created a space for children at Dens Road to engage further with each of the Breaking the Mould principles. This approach provided time and support for meaningful exploration through a series of active and creative activities, ensuring that children could reflect, discuss, and have their participatory rights met. Using arts-based methods, discussion, and interactive workshops, the residency invited children to critically examine issues of race, identity, and inclusion in their school and community.

Key areas of focus included:

Exploring Direct and Indirect Racism – Learning how racism can be both obvious and more hidden, recognising examples in school, media, and everyday life, and reflecting on how discrimination affects people.

"BEFORE, I DIDN'T REALLY UNDERSTAND RACISM, BUT NOW I KNOW HOW IT CAN HURT PEOPLE. IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT WORDS—IT CAN BE IN BOOKS, IN HISTORY, AND EVEN IN HOW PEOPLE ARE TREATED AT SCHOOL."

"SOME PEOPLE HAVE MORE CHANCES THAN OTHERS JUST BECAUSE OF WHERE THEY WERE BORN OR THE COLOUR OF THEIR SKIN. THAT'S NOT FAIR. WE NEED TO LEARN ABOUT THIS SO WE CAN HELP CHANGE IT."

Understanding Power and Privilege –

Exploring how some people have advantages while others face barriers, discussing real-life examples, and thinking about fairness and equality in their own experiences.





What We Did:

Working with the principles

Every approach we took in this process was intentionally designed to provide the community with an entry point for exploring positionality and privilege—complex and deeply rooted concepts.

Looking at the History and Impact of Racism, with Links to Dundee – Learning about Scotland's role in colonialism and the transatlantic slave trade, understanding how Dundee's history connects to global trade and migration, and discovering how people in the past and present have fought against racism.

"NOBODY TOLD US BEFORE ABOUT SCOTLAND'S HISTORY WITH SLAVERY. NOW WE KNOW THAT SOME OF THE BIG BUILDINGS IN OUR CITY WERE MADE FROM MONEY THAT CAME FROM UNFAIRNESS. WE SHOULD LEARN THE TRUTH."

"WE SHOULD GET TO HELP MAKE OUR LESSONS FUN AND FAIR FOR EVERYONE. LEARNING ABOUT OUR RIGHTS MADE ME FEEL IMPORTANT, LIKE MY VOICE MATTERS."

"I LOVE LEARNING ABOUT DIFFERENT CULTURES BECAUSE IT SHOWS THAT SCOTLAND ISN'T JUST ONE THING—IT'S LOTS OF PEOPLE WITH DIFFERENT STORIES, AND WE SHOULD CELEBRATE THAT!"

Examining Representation and Diversity in School Learning Materials – Looking at books and classroom resources to see if they reflect different cultures and histories, identifying missing voices, and thinking of ways to make learning more inclusive.

"IF SOMEONE IS BEING TREATED UNFAIRLY, WE SHOULD KNOW WHAT TO DO. STANDING UP TO RACISM ISN'T JUST ABOUT SAYING IT'S BAD—IT'S ABOUT DOING SOMETHING TO STOP IT."

Understanding What It Means to Be an Ally – Learning how to support others, discussing ways to respond to racism, and exploring actions children can take to stand up for fairness and inclusion in their school and community.





What We Did:

An arts based approach

Visual Arts Workshops

Children's Parliament worked with artist and researcher, Khadea Santi, in the development of an arts-based learning strand running in parallel to the explorations of the anti-racist principles. These sessions were an opportunity to provide reflective space for the children as well as provide an outlet for them to express their own ideas, thoughts and feelings about the themes being explored. The creative outputs were displayed as part of the final celebration event.

Examples of sessions included:

Self Portraits: children created self-portraits, reflecting on their cultural identities and how these relate to race and representation. Discussions centred on individuality, diversity, and the importance of seeing themselves within the school and learning materials/resources.

Allyship Silhouettes: children created silhouettes and generated text to help them explore what they believe it means to be a good ally. Children identified the actions, attitudes, and values necessary to support others and challenge racism.

"WE TALKED ABOUT BEING AN ALLY, AND I LEARNED IT'S NOT JUST BEING NICE - IT'S HELPING WHEN SOMEONE IS TREATED UNFAIRLY. MY SILHOUETTE HAS WORDS LIKE 'SPEAK UP!' AND 'BE BRAVE!' BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT I WANT TO DO."

"MY SELF-PORTRAIT SHOWS WHO I AM. I HAVE CURLY HAIR, AND MY SKIN IS BROWN LIKE MY DAD'S. I WANT EVERYONE TO FEEL PROUD OF WHO THEY ARE."

Manifesto Film: Power, Privilege, and Anti-Racism - children worked collaboratively to create a manifesto film capturing children's reflections on power, privilege, and what they believe should be in an anti-racist school manifesto.

"I LIKED MAKING THE CLAY MODELS BECAUSE WE GOT TO SHOW WHAT MAKES US FEEL SAFE AND HAPPY. I THINK SCHOOL SHOULD FEEL LIKE THAT FOR EVERYONE, NO MATTER WHERE THEY'RE FROM."

Clay Model-Making Activity: Children were invited to create clay sculptures that represented objects, people or places that they personally associate with feeling either happy, healthy, and safe, while reflecting on dignity and their rights under the UNCRC.



What We Did:

A whole school approach

Recognising that racism manifests in various forms - often hidden and embedded within structures and environments where children learn and grow - Children's Parliament adopted a whole-school approach to exploring anti-racism. This involved working collaboratively with teachers, senior leadership, the wider school community, and other schools within the local authority to ensure a comprehensive, multi-layered consultation process. The following strands were developed as part of this effort.

Anti-Racism Forums: A Cluster Approach

Through an established network of school partnerships within the local authority, Children's Parliament worked to broaden the impact of the Anti-Racist Education (ARE) consultation. By inviting staff from local schools including Glebelands Primary, Dens Road, Clepington and Rosebank to participate in a series of facilitated forums, the aim was to create opportunities for sharing experiences, reflecting on anti-racist practices, and collaborating to address challenges and plan for future improvements.

Activities of the Anti-Racism Forums:

- Facilitated cross-school visits to encourage schools to reflect on and learn from the work undertaken during the ARE consultation.
- Established a structure for ongoing collaboration by supporting the creation of child-led "anti-racism groups" within each school, ensuring a child-centred approach to continuing the work.
- Provided resources to support the anti-racism groups, including rights-based practice materials developed by Children's Parliament to guide their activities.

What was explored through the cluster model?

Responding to Racist Incidents - schools reflected on their current approaches to addressing racism, including formal reporting mechanisms and how these aligned with the lived experiences of learners.

Inclusive Language - a session exploring the importance of using inclusive, sensitive language when communicating with and about learners and their communities.

Future Steps - students identified areas for improvement in their schools, focusing on embedding anti-racist practices into curriculum design, selecting inclusive texts, and updating teaching materials.



What We Did:

A whole school approach

Capacity Building with Dens Road

Children's Parliament and Intercultural Youth Scotland, delivered an *Introduction to Anti-Racism* training session for all teachers and staff at Dens Road Primary School. The session was led by an Intercultural Youth Scotland facilitator who lead the discussions, with the Children's Parliament's support. Staff were encouraged to engage with existing materials in the sector and join the Building Racial Literacy programme designed and led by Education Scotland. Further support and training are being provided on an ongoing basis in Dundee City Council and the schools.

The aims of the training were to:

- Introduce staff to the anti-racist principles, providing space to explore key terminology and consider how it aligns with current school practices.
- Engage teachers in discussions on appropriate responses to various scenarios involving racial incidents in a school environment.
- Provide dedicated time for Dens Road staff to reflect on next steps and identify areas for improvement in their anti-racist action plan.

"WE DON'T WANT TO JUST LEARN - WE WANT TO DO SOMETHING! IF WE SPEAK UP TOGETHER, WE CAN HELP MAKE OUR SCHOOL AND OUR WORLD A KINDER PLACE FOR EVERYONE."



What We Shared

Celebration and Reflection Event

The ARE residency culminated in a child-led celebration event, showcasing artworks, reflections, and key learnings, along with children’s thoughts on the importance of anti-racist education within their school. The event provided a platform for children to directly engage with policymakers, local MPs, members of the Scottish Government and Education Scotland, and representatives from cluster schools, amplifying their voices in shaping anti-racist practices. Through this child-led approach, they took ownership of the conversation, demonstrating their understanding of the ARE principles and reinforcing their role in co-creating an inclusive school culture. The event also marked the official launch of the children’s campaign, “Defending Rights, Fighting Racism,” as a framing for ongoing ARE work within the school.





What We Shared

Anti-Racist Education Resources

Through the project a requirement for further learning around race, identity, and anti-racist education was identified for both adults and children. Responding to this, Children's Parliament has developed a series of resources that seek to provide an introduction to Anti-Racist education through a rights-based perspective. A sample of these resources can be found [here](#).



Anti-Racist Education: Children's Calls for Action

Drawing together various reflections on the existing ARE principles, children looked to develop the “Breaking the Mould: Anti-Racist Curriculum Principles” into “calls for action”, ensuring clarity on what actions children believe should be taken by duty bearers and adults within their own school community and on a national level.

- 1 LET US HELP DESIGN OUR LEARNING SO IT'S FUN AND FAIR, AND TEACH US ABOUT OUR RIGHTS.
- 2 HELP US IDENTIFY RACISM AND HOW IT HURTS PEOPLE.
- 3 HELP US UNDERSTAND POWER AND PRIVILEGE SO WE CAN MAKE THINGS FAIR FOR EVERYONE.
- 4 TEACH US HOW TO STAND UP TO RACISM AND HELP OTHERS.
- 5 MAKE SURE WE LEARN ABOUT DIFFERENT CULTURES, LANGUAGES, AND STORIES.
- 6 TELL US THE REAL HISTORY OF SCOTLAND, INCLUDING ITS ROLE IN SLAVERY AND RACISM.
- 7 WE WANT TO LEARN, SPEAK UP, AND HELP MAKE THE WORLD A KINDER, FAIRER PLACE!



Reflections on Anti-Racist Education

The following reflections from teachers and senior leadership staff capture their experiences and insights from participating in the project. The staff shared how the project has influenced their approach and understanding to anti-racism, from embedding inclusive practices into the curriculum, to encouraging critical thinking about fairness, to nurturing a safer and more inclusive environment for all. These reflections highlight the progress made and the continued commitment to creating lasting change within Dens Road Primary.

"OUR PUPILS HAVE TAKEN REAL OWNERSHIP OF THIS WORK. SEEING THEM START THEIR OWN ANTI-RACISM GROUP AND SUPPORT EACH OTHER HAS BEEN INSPIRING. THEY ARE THE ONES LEADING THE WAY!"

"FOR ME IT'S A LOT TO DO WITH BELONGING AND THE CHILDREN FEELING THAT MORE, THIS WORK IS SO IMPORTANT TO SUPPORTING THEM TO DO THAT."

"THERE'S ALWAYS A WORRY OF MAKING A SITUATION WORSE OR UPSETTING PEOPLE, BUT NOW I FEEL MORE CONFIDENT TO REFLECT ON WHEN A SITUATION ARISES IN CLASSROOM. HAVING OPEN DISCUSSIONS, AND CLEAR GUIDANCE AROUND RACISM IS REALLY IMPORTANT AND HELPS."

"HAVING A PROPER ACTION PLAN MEANS THIS ISN'T JUST A PASSING PROJECT - IT'S SOMETHING WE'RE COMMITTED TO LONG-TERM. WE'LL KEEP REVIEWING AND IMPROVING IT SO THAT ANTI-RACISM STAYS A CORE PART OF OUR SCHOOL."

"WORKING WITH OTHER SCHOOLS HAS BEEN SO VALUABLE. WE'RE LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER, SHARING IDEAS, AND MAKING SURE WE ALL MOVE FORWARD TOGETHER ON THIS."

"THE CHILDREN HAVE BRILLIANT IDEAS ON HOW TO MAKE LESSONS MORE INCLUSIVE. WE'RE MAKING SURE WE'RE INCLUDING A RANGE OF BOOKS FROM OUR LIBRARY THAT THE CHILDREN HAVE SHOWN INTEREST IN OR A CONNECTION TO, THIS LEADS TO MORE DIVERSITY WITHIN WHAT THEY'RE LEARNING."

"OUR CHILDREN ARE ASKING BIG QUESTIONS - ABOUT FAIRNESS AND HOW THINGS AFFECT DIFFERENT PEOPLE THAT HAVE DIFFERENT RACES, SOME OF THEM ARE REALLY APPLYING THESE IDEAS AND THAT CHALLENGES BOTH THEMSELVES BUT ALSO ME AS A TEACHER."

"CHILDREN NOW FEEL SAFER SPEAKING UP WHEN THEY SEE RACISM. I THINK THEY KNOW THEIR VOICES MATTER, AND THEY TRUST THAT WE'LL LISTEN AND TAKE ACTION."



Reflections on Anti-Racist Education



HOW IT MADE CHILDREN FEEL

"I feel confident telling people about direct and indirect racism."

"I felt included, I also liked to know this stuff. It made me feel like a bigger person, and I do matter."

"I feel it sometimes feels a bit weird, like I know racism is bad but we don't talk about it a lot, I don't know why but it's weird."

"The Children's Parliament listened to us and made sure we felt safe to say what we think."

"Anti-racism is really important! So, we created a backdrop and had a TV to express our feelings and ourselves, to express that we are all different and think differently. We had a map too, to show the history to get to anti-racism, and to show what we want the future to look like."

RESPONDING TO THE PRINCIPLES



"We should get to help make our lessons fun and fair for everyone. Learning about our rights made me feel important."

"Before, I didn't really understand racism, but now I know how it can hurt people. It's not just about words - it can be in books, in history, and even in how people are treated at school."

"Some people have more chances than others just because of where they were born or the colour of their skin. That's not fair. We need to learn about this so we can help change it."

"If someone is being treated unfairly, we should know what to do. Standing up to racism isn't just about saying it's bad - it's about doing something to stop it."

"I love learning about different cultures because it shows that Scotland isn't just one thing - it's lots of people with different stories, and we should celebrate that!"

"Nobody told us before about Scotland's history with slavery. Now we know that some of the big buildings in our city were made from money that came from unfairness. We should learn the truth."

"We don't want to just learn - we want to do something! If we speak up together, we can help make our school and our world a kinder place for everyone."

Reflections on anti-racist education

ON TAKING ACTION

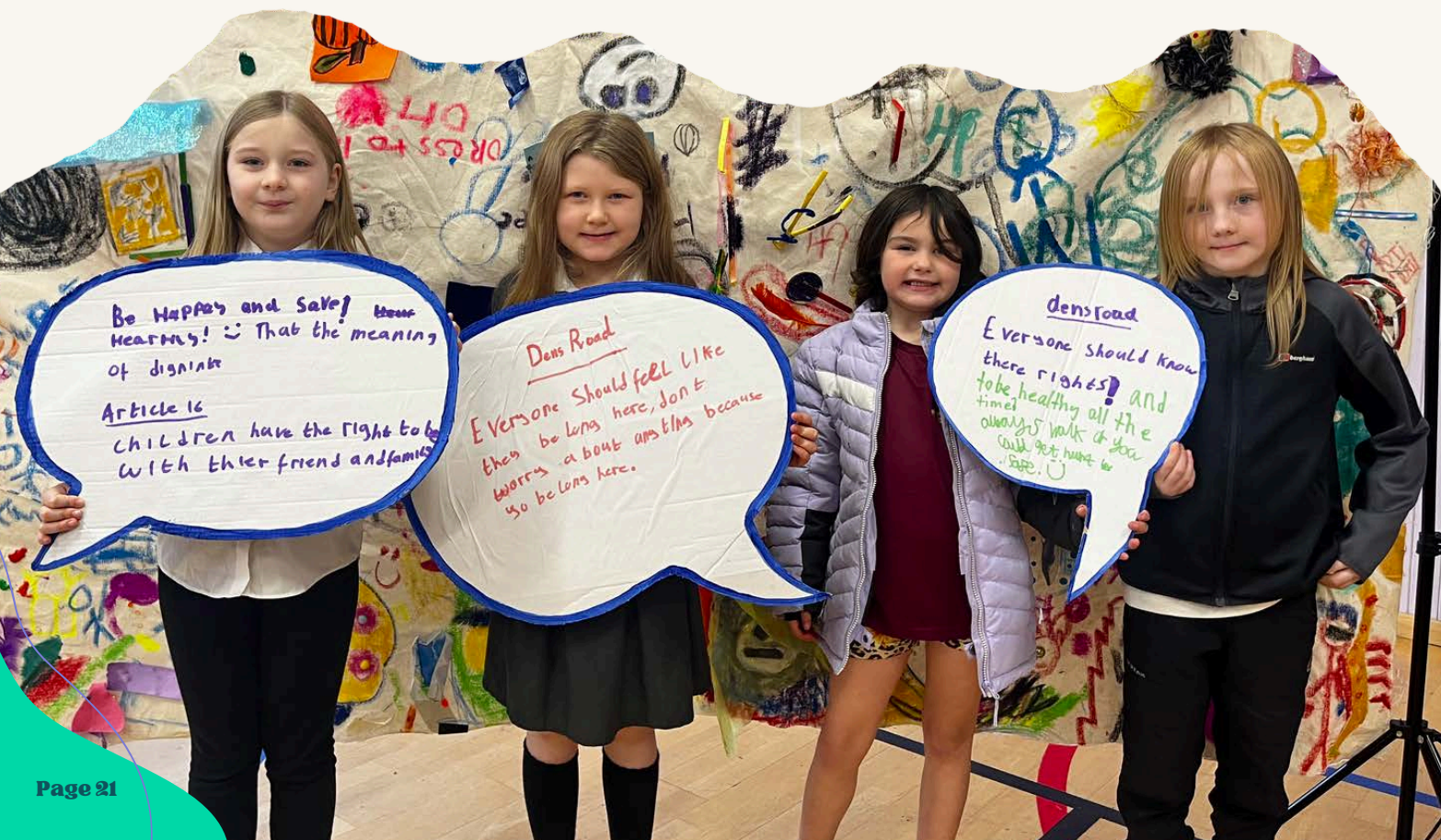
"We need to keep going- still spread the message. Do assemblies, talk to our School, our families and the Government!"

The Importance of challenging racist language:

"If it doesn't stop, racism will grow and grow until everyone thinks its fine in the world."

"Teachers also need to know what to do, they sometimes don't know!"

"We need to do more history lessons and explore the topic more."



Reflections and Recommendations

Through engaging with children, consulting teachers and considering the broader school community, Children's Parliament has gained valuable insights into how schools can effectively embed anti-racism in a meaningful and lasting way. Their reflections highlight the deep connection between anti-racism and children's rights, the importance of a whole-school approach, and the need for long-term commitment. The following presents key recommendations for enhancing anti-racism education in primary schools.



Children's Rights and Dignity

Anti-racism is closely linked to children's rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). These rights are all connected, and understanding the importance of dignity helps create fairness and respect for all children.



A Unified Approach

Everyone in the school community - teachers, leaders, students, and families - must work together in a consistent way. Schools need clear guidance and procedures to help staff handle racism properly and make sure anti-racism is part of everyday school life.



Connecting to the Community

Schools do not exist on their own. Understanding the history and connections between schools, their communities, and even the buildings they use, can help create better solutions to tackle racism. Recognising these links can lead to stronger, more meaningful change.



Long-Term Commitment

Anti-racism work is not a quick fix. Changing school culture takes time, effort, and commitment. Schools must stay committed to embedding anti-racist values into everything they do and across the Curriculum of Excellence.



Using Creative Methods

Creative approaches, like storytelling, art, and discussion, help children and adults talk about racism in a way that feels safe and engaging. These methods make learning about anti-racism more meaningful and allow children to express their thoughts and feelings openly.



Supporting Adults

Teachers and school staff need more support to feel confident in understanding and applying anti-racist principles. Training and guidance will help them use the right language, respond to issues effectively, and lead important discussions about racism.

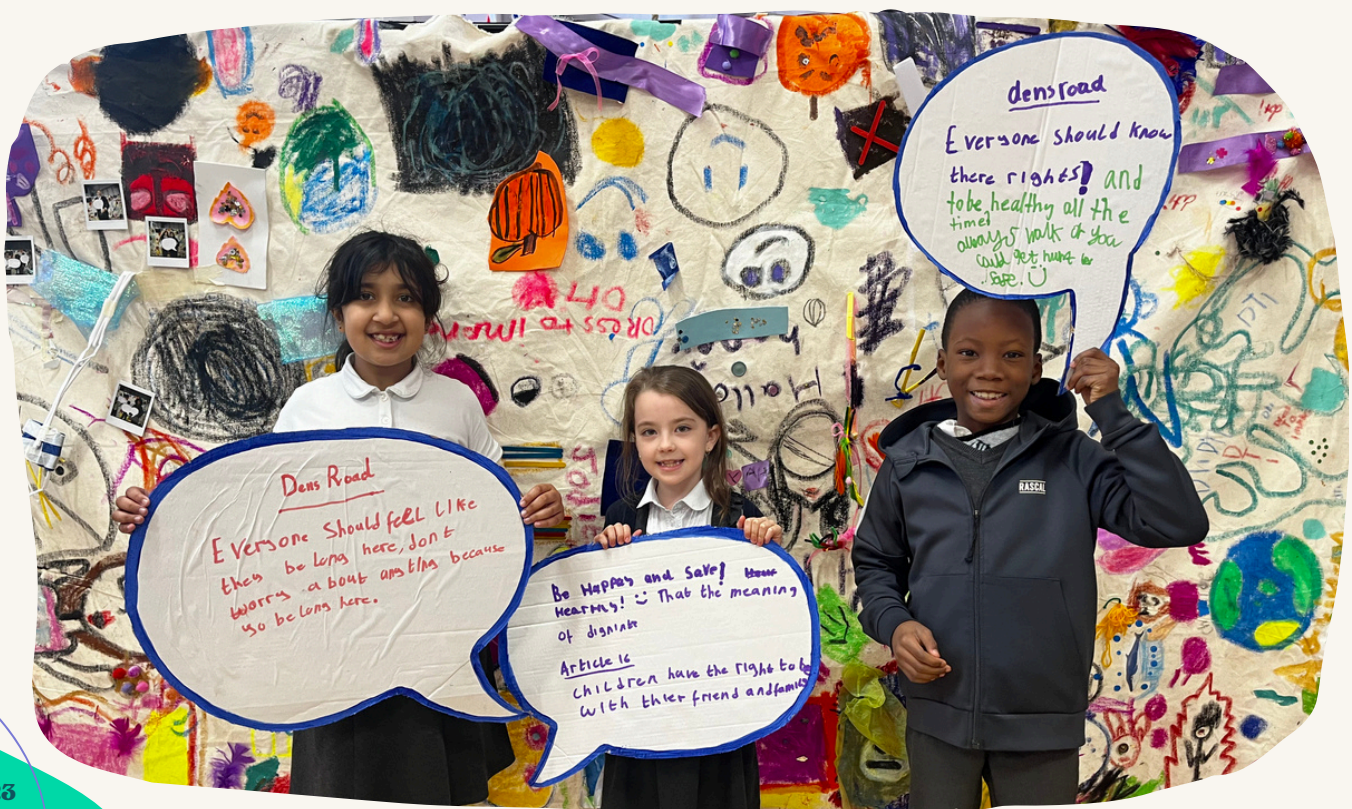
Conclusion

This project has shown us how important it is for children to have a say in shaping their education, especially when it comes to creating an anti-racist learning environment. The children of Dens Road Primary School have shared their thoughts, ideas, and experiences, helping us understand what a truly inclusive and representative curriculum should look like. They have told us that learning about racism, fairness, and inclusion is not just important - it is essential.

Throughout this process, we have seen the power of creative, child-led and rights based approaches in making anti-racism a meaningful part of school life. By exploring the “Breaking the Mould: Anti-Racist Curriculum Principles”, children have developed their understanding of their rights, what racism looks like, and how they can stand up for themselves and others. Their voices have been at the heart of this work, and their ideas will help shape the next steps for anti-racist education in Scotland.

But this is just the beginning. The children’s messages are clear: schools need to do more to make sure anti-racism is not just talked about but actively practiced. Teachers need support to feel confident in leading these conversations, and schools need clear actions in place to make sure every child feels safe, respected, and included.

If we are serious about making Scotland one of the best places in the world to grow up, we must listen to what children are telling us. By working together - children, teachers, policymakers, and communities - we can create a future where every child sees themselves reflected in their learning and where every school is a place of dignity, respect, and belonging.





About Children's Parliament

Established in 1996, Children's Parliament is dedicated to the realisation of children's human rights in Scotland. Our dream is that children grow up in a world of love, happiness and understanding. Our mission is to inspire greater awareness and understanding of the power of children's human rights and to support implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Through our rights-based practice, we provide children up to 14 years of age with opportunities to share their views, experiences, and ideas so that they can influence positive change in their lives at home, in school and in the community. We use creative, participatory and play-based methods to support children to meaningfully engage in decisions that affect them. We demonstrate children's rights in action, we support children to influence policy, practice and legislation, and we build the capacity and win the hearts and minds of adults to realise children's rights.

For more information, please contact info@childrensparliament.org.uk

Dignity In School

Children's Parliament is working with partners to build the capacity of primary schools to take a children's rights-based approach and become hubs of human rights practice. By adopting a rights approach, schools help to make rights real for children by ensuring that their dignity is upheld. Dignity in School means children's voices are heard. Find out more [here](#).

Unfearties

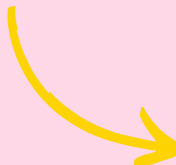
Unfearties are individuals who are courageous in discussing children's issues, are making a difference in children's lives, and who are willing to speak up for, and stand alongside, children. This Children's Parliament initiative has attracted more than 1,000 people to join, including doctors, nurses, teachers, parents, carers, civil servants, local authority workers, third sector practitioners, United Nations deputy high commissioners, and even the First Minister of Scotland. Visit childrensparliament.org.uk/unfearties to find out more.







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