



Archbishop Tenison's

CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

June 2020

A statement from our school Governors:

For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. (Ephesians 2:14-16)

In the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd, the Black Lives Matter movement and others have, over recent weeks, shone a light on issues of racial inequality and injustice, particularly against people in the black community, in the US, the UK and around the world. As a result there has been intense scrutiny of all parts of society, our institutions and, of course, our education system. As a school we are determining what more we can do to confront any sort of racism, prejudice and inequality wherever they exist.

The passage above from Ephesians reminds us that Christ has created in himself one humanity, no matter what our tongue, colour or creed. As a school community we have all been appalled, and many will have been grieving, over the recent events in the US and we understand that the death of George Floyd and other events will have generated strong emotions in our own school community. As a Christian school community, we particularly offer our full support to our black students and staff at this time and stand with them under Christ's uniting banner in opposing inequality in all its forms.

As a Christian community we, at Archbishop Tenison's school, have always sought to reflect the love of Christ and his acceptance of everyone as children of the same Heavenly Father and as brothers and sisters together. Any form of discrimination is absolutely opposed to our Christ-based values wherever and however it takes place. Each of us must understand how racism is manifested in our society or our school community and be bold in calling it out. In doing so, we must continue, as a school and as individuals, to strive to foster sensitivity, tolerance and an appreciation of the thoughts, feelings and opinions of others.

However, we know that words are not enough, and in keeping with schools across the country, this has prompted us to look at our own school community again and asking ourselves what more we can be doing to tackle racism and all forms of prejudice.

We are currently taking action in a number of areas. We have asked two members of our teaching staff to form a Racial Equality and Empowerment working group to consider "What Next?" in this area. This group is working independently to examine all that we do as a school for manifestations of conscious or unconscious inequality or bias and has already made its initial recommendations for improvements and actions to our Senior Leadership Team and Governing Board. A video about these issues is also being prepared by some of our staff and students and should be available on our school website soon. At the same time we are reviewing our policies - particularly on Racial Equality, Recruitment and Curriculum to ensure that they are up to date and non-discriminatory. But we acknowledge that this is just the start and that there will be more to do. We have also asked our Governors committee responsible for our School Ethos and Pastoral Care to regularly look at what we are doing to tackle

inequality and diversity and to receive updates from a representative of this Racial Equality and Empowerment working group.

So, to return to some other words from St. Paul, *“In Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faithThere is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:26, 28)* - and we pray that as a school community we would truly all be one in Christ – standing side by side together as children of the same Heavenly Father. ”