



Biddenham

International School & Sports College

Principal: Mr David Bailey

Head of School: Ms Eleanor Grylls

June 2020

Dear Biddenham Students, (and Parents and Carers),

We are writing to you in the wake of the shocking death of George Floyd and the ongoing wave of anti-racist protests that have followed. We know that this is not an isolated incident in America and across the world, including the UK and we want to express how profoundly this has affected us, as it has everyone.

As Head(s) of Biddenham - our wonderfully diverse community - where over 50 different nationalities of staff and students come every day to live, learn, support, grow and become friends together across all possible racial, class, ethnic and religious divides, we are greatly upset that such a thing could occur in 2020. It is shameful.

So we wish to express our support for, and solidarity with, all our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students, especially those from our Black community and unequivocal support for the peaceful Black Lives Matter movement - we hope that where our generation has failed, the present generation will succeed in the fight against the evil scourge of racism, discrimination and inequality in all its forms.

We are aware that we hold privileged positions in society and we have not done enough with our status to achieve change, and we know that you all will hold us to account and inspire us to do more, listen more, hear more and speak out more. Do not underestimate your ability; you have the passion and determination to deliver a better society where we, our generation, has not.

Like all schools across the country we are asking ourselves what more we can do to campaign against racism and all forms of prejudice. So we need to review each and every subject area to ensure that we highlight the contributions of BAME people to human development and our society and teach about our 'local' history and understand how we evolved to become the community we are in Bedford today.

It seems intolerable that a culturally diverse city such as Bristol allowed a commemorative statue of a reprehensible slave trader to remain on display, knowing his history. In Bedford we commemorate Bedford born John Howard (our original school name), John Bunyan and Trevor Huddlestone all of whom's legacy we should be proud - but how many of us know their history? Indeed, how many of us know about [Joe Clough](#) ...?

Indeed, the life and work of Trevor Huddlestone is particularly pertinent to now as his work in South African townships and within the Anti-Apartheid movement was all about fighting for Black equality.

We will be using the 'Advice for being an ally' guidance produced by Dr.Muna Abdi, [here](#), with our staff team to interrogate all we do and be proactive as we move forward. But, we would like all of you to confront this issue by actively engaging with one of many organisations campaigning against prejudice - but you could start by expressing your views and feelings to our local MP mohammad.yasin.mp@parliament.uk. To that end we are listing below details of some of the organisations you might wish to contact; most relate to the BAME community, but others link to equally important campaigns which are also ensuring that hatred is exposed for what it is, wherever and whenever it appears. Real change is not easy and requires hard work and sustained commitment; we pledge to do more, please do the same and we know we can rely on you to hold us to this pledge.

Yours sincerely,

Mr D Bailey
Principal

Ms E Grylls
Head of School

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Black Lives Matter
blacklivesmatter.com

Race on the agenda (Rota)
<https://www.rota.org.uk/CORE>

Runnymede
<https://www.runnymedetrust.org/>

Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust
<https://www.stephenlawrence.org.uk/>

Race Equality First
<http://raceequalityfirst.org/>

Amnesty International
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/>

The Fawcett Society
<https://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/>

The Malala Fund
www.malala.org

Stonewall
<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/>

Human Dignity Trust
<https://www.humandignitytrust.org/hdt-resources/>

Community Security Trust
<https://cst.org.uk/>

Holocaust Educational Trust
<https://www.het.org.uk/>

Aegis Trust
<https://www.aegistrust.org/>

A useful guide to BLM for parents/students can be downloaded here:

<https://yooopies.co.uk/c/press-releases/blacklivesmatter>