

St Matthias Church of England Primary School

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Monday 8th June

To our school community,

At St Matthias we have been deeply affected by the death of George Floyd at the hands of a police officer in America. It has shown the inequality, racism and discrimination that continue to blight the lives of black people across the world. For our black staff, children and community it is a painful reminder of the parallels in the systemic racism here in the UK.

We are categorical that we will not tolerate racism and we acknowledge the role that schools can play in dismantling systemic inequality. St Matthias school stands as one with our black pupils, staff, parents and the entire black community in condemning racism.

As a staff we recognise that:

- We have the tools and the platform to actively challenge racism- ensuring our teaching practice is anti-racist
- We must reflect and recognise our own prejudices and privileges and be aware of unconscious bias
- We must continue to review and question our curriculum. Our community is diverse. Our National Curriculum is not. We want a curriculum that allows all our children to see themselves reflected in the books we read, in stories we tell of history, in the people we celebrate. We want children who love learning as they see themselves mirrored in what they learn. We call for representation.
- We need to speak honestly, but carefully of the imbalances in our society. We want our children to enjoy their world and be empowered to make a change within it.
- Our children will face struggles- we want to equip them with the tools, skills and mindset to face these struggles with confidence.

The education we attempt to offer in our schools seeks to enable children to flourish with life in all its fullness. (John 10.10) As staff at St Matthias we continue to learn, listen, check ourselves, take action and be brave. We need your help to do this. We are committed to listening to our community and to working to drive change. We need to continue to support an ongoing dialogue and engage in respectful and honest conversations.

Please see the resources we have put together to support both our staff and families to talk to our children about race. At St Matthias we pledge to educate ourselves further and speak up in the face of any attacks on humanity. We want to continue to foster a space where everyone is seen and heard. Black lives matter.

Together, we need to be strategic in our activism. We need to begin to use our institutional power to change structures and systems. Actions speak louder.

Together, let's take action.

Lucy Blewett
Headteacher