



**Home Office**



**Department for  
Communities and  
Local Government**



**Department  
for Education**

# **The Government Response to the 2016 Youth Select Committee Report**

**Young people and the issues of racism  
and religious discrimination**

**January 2017**

## Joint Ministerial Foreword

We are very pleased to be providing a formal response to the Youth Select Committee's report on young people and the issues of racism and religious discrimination. This Government is absolutely committed to tackling racism and religious discrimination and to ensuring that we have an inclusive society where everyone is treated with respect and fairness.

The Youth Select Committee and the engagement of its members on the issues of racism and religious discrimination has been invaluable. The recommendations in the report are far-reaching and perceptive. Since the evidence sessions took place the Government has continued to strengthen and expand its work in this area.

One of the issues raised in the report was that of bullying in schools. We are clear that no child should live in fear of racism or bullying. To this end, we have sent a clear message to schools that they need to challenge and tackle all forms of bullying and discrimination, including racism and religious discrimination. We are currently funding a wide range of programmes to tackle bullying, and plan to review the evidence on the prevalence of different kinds of bullying in schools in order to understand the circumstances and how they can be addressed.

Schools play an important role in educating young people about the negative impact of discrimination on individuals. The teaching of PSHE (personal, social, health and economic education) can help to provide pupils with the key knowledge and skills that can ensure future success. We know that many schools already recognise the importance of good PSHE in ensuring that pupils are healthy, resilient and confident. We are actively considering the case for further action on PSHE, with particular consideration being given to improving quality and accessibility to ensure that provision is high-quality and age-appropriate.

Alongside our approach to addressing these issues in schools is our drive to tackle hate crime of any kind, directed against anybody, regardless of their ethnic origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age or disability. In July 2016 we published a new Hate Crime Action Plan<sup>1</sup>, which focuses on reducing hate crime, increasing reporting, and improving support for victims. The True Vision website allows victims to report hate crime directly to their local police force, and we will work closely with young people to develop materials for a bespoke page for them on this website.

We want to build a country that works for everyone. To do this, we have to find ways of fostering understanding and respect between people of different communities, including faith groups. We are therefore funding projects such as the Near Neighbours Catalyst<sup>2</sup> programme, an exciting and inspirational free programme for young people which is aimed at developing creative leaders to act as positive role models in neighbourhoods and communities.

There is still much to do on tackling racism and religious discrimination, and we are keen

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<sup>1</sup>[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/543679/Action\\_Against\\_Hate\\_-\\_UK\\_Government\\_s\\_Plan\\_to\\_Tackle\\_Hate\\_Crime\\_2016.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/543679/Action_Against_Hate_-_UK_Government_s_Plan_to_Tackle_Hate_Crime_2016.pdf)

<sup>2</sup><https://www.cuf.org.uk/catalyst>

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to continue to involve young people in our future work on this. It is to be noted that the recommendations apply solely to England and not the whole of the UK.



**Sarah Newton MP**  
Parliamentary Under  
Secretary of State for  
Vulnerability,  
Safeguarding and  
Countering Extremism



**Edward Timpson  
MP**  
Minister of State for  
Vulnerable Children  
and Families



**Lord Bourne,**  
Parliamentary Under  
Secretary of State for  
Communities and Local  
Government

## Joint Responses to the Youth Select Committee Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** We recommend that the Government should work with young people, the police and race and religion organisations to agree definitions of racism and religious discrimination. The Government should agree definitions within six months and publicise these on gov.uk, through social media and in schools. (Paragraph 10).

1. The Government supports any positive steps which results in young people better understanding of how racism and religious discrimination are defined and ensuring that they understand their rights and protections under the law. The United Kingdom has comprehensive legislation which protects all individuals from racial, religious and other forms of discrimination. The Equality Act 2010 defines both the different types of discrimination (including direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation and harassment) and the various protected characteristics, including race and religion or belief. We think that it should be for the courts and employment tribunals to assess, on a case by case basis, whether or not a particular act constitutes unlawful discrimination, and believe that the current legislative provisions give them a suitable framework to do so. We are working with schools to support them in fulfilling their requirements under the Equality Act 2010. For example, we have produced guidance to help schools understand how the Equality Act affects them and how to fulfil their duties under the Act<sup>3</sup>.

2. There are also clear definitions of hate crime offences which are set out in the Hate Crime Action Plan and in the College of Policing Hate Crime Operational Guidance<sup>4</sup>. While we consider that there are already clear definitions of hate crime in use, we recognise that it is important that young people understand these definitions and their rights. The Department for Communities and Local Government has, therefore, supported a number of social media campaigns to raise awareness of hate crime and to encourage reporting, including *#Betterthanthat* (with Polish communities), *#Stophate* (after the EU referendum vote in June 2016), and *#WeStandTogether* (run by the police to encourage reporting of hate crime).

3. The Government has also funded a free hate crime resource<sup>5</sup> for schools that was developed by the Crown Prosecution Service. This resource, which was developed with young people, looks specifically at the potential impact and consequences of racist and religious hate crime on victims and on perpetrators.

4. The UK Government is the first European Union country to formally adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of anti-Semitism, defined as: a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/543679/Action\\_Against\\_Hate\\_-\\_UK\\_Government\\_s\\_Plan\\_to\\_Tackle\\_Hate\\_Crime\\_2016.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/543679/Action_Against_Hate_-_UK_Government_s_Plan_to_Tackle_Hate_Crime_2016.pdf) (see paragraphs 11-15 and Annex A)

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.cps.gov.uk/northwest/working\\_with\\_you/hate\\_crime\\_schools\\_project/schools\\_project\\_racist\\_and\\_religious\\_hate\\_crime/](http://www.cps.gov.uk/northwest/working_with_you/hate_crime_schools_project/schools_project_racist_and_religious_hate_crime/)

religious facilities.

**Recommendation 2:** Teachers should receive better support to give them the confidence to tackle and report incidents of such behaviour and to educate parents and the community on the issues of racism and religious discrimination. (Paragraph 21).

5. Raising awareness of, preventing and dealing with racism or any form of discrimination is extremely important. This Government has made tackling poor behaviour and bullying, particularly when motivated by prejudice such as racism, a top priority. We acknowledge that every school is different and that each school will, therefore, face its own challenges. This is why schools have the autonomy to tailor their approach to tackling these issues and to take action according to their individual requirements and the capacity available.

6. To provide teachers with the basic grounding needed, all Initial Teacher Training (ITT) courses must ensure that trainee teachers can meet the Teachers' Standards, which set the minimum requirements for teachers' practice and conduct. The Standards specify that teachers must maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour by treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing the proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position. Teachers must also show tolerance of and respect for the rights of others, have regard to the need to safeguard pupils' wellbeing, and not undermine fundamental British values, including tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

7. Teachers are able to draw on a range of specialist resources, including:

- The Government's Educate Against Hate website<sup>6</sup>. The website provides resources such as the Crown Prosecution Service's resource pack for schools and teachers on addressing hate crime, encompassing racist, religious and LGBT hate crime. This contains lesson plans and easy tips for teachers to use.
- The Citizenship Foundation has also produced guidance on "Teaching controversial issues"<sup>7</sup>. This resource supports teachers with some of the practical classroom challenges.

In addition to this, in September 2016 the Government announced £4.4 million of funding to tackle bullying<sup>8</sup>. £2.8 million of this funding is supporting projects specifically tackling homophobic, transphobic and biphobic bullying. This programme focuses on primary and secondary schools in England that currently have no, or ineffective, measures in place. It will involve voluntary sector organisations engaging with teachers and schools through training. These organisations will work with schools to develop a whole school approach to tackling these issues. The remaining £1.6 million is funding organisations to support schools in tackling bullying, including hate-related bullying. Activities funded through this programme include working with vulnerable groups such as looked-after children and young carers, using peer-to-peer approaches where young people work together collectively to tackle bullying and discrimination, and using an online tool for reporting

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<sup>6</sup> [www.educateagainsthate.com](http://www.educateagainsthate.com)

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.citizenshipfoundation.org.uk/lib\\_res\\_pdf/0118.pdf](http://www.citizenshipfoundation.org.uk/lib_res_pdf/0118.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/thousands-more-children-to-benefit-from-anti-bullying-app>

bullying incidents.

**Recommendation 3:** We recommend that every school should involve young people directly in raising awareness within the school environment of discrimination, including racism and religious discrimination, and how to report and address such discrimination. We further recommend that the Government should produce guidance for schools within the next 12 months on possible ways that schools could develop such a partnership with their students. This guidance could include proposals to involve young people in developing a school's anti-discrimination policy and a proposal to discuss the issues of racism and religious discrimination in existing forums such as school councils. (Paragraph 25).

The Government agrees that schools should involve their pupils in raising awareness about discrimination. Generally, schools are best placed to understand the needs of their pupils and the context of the community in which the school is based, and thus involve their pupils appropriately in addressing racism and religious discrimination. Schools do this in a variety of ways, including through citizenship teaching and by using teaching material which helps pupils to understand and build knowledge of the diverse cultures and faiths in modern Britain.

The Government is continuing to support schools in their efforts to provide a safe, disciplined environment where pupils treat each other with respect and tolerance. All schools are required to promote fundamental British values, which include mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. In order to support schools in doing this, we have made resources available to teachers through the Educate Against Hate website<sup>9</sup>.

As announced in our response to the report of the Women and Equalities Select Committee on sexual harassment and sexual violence in schools<sup>10</sup>, we intend to support schools to produce their own codes of practice bringing together the various statutory duties and policies to set out the principles for a whole school approach to inclusivity and tolerance. We will work with a broad range of partners on how schools can identify and reflect the key principles in promoting tolerance and inclusivity, as well as any associated tools or resources that schools may need as a framework to support them to implement a whole school approach. One of the areas we will seek to cover is how schools can engage pupils with the expectations set out in any code.

**Recommendation 4:** In future reviews of the English Baccalaureate's content, the Department for Education should consider that schools are finding it difficult to find time to teach subjects such as RE, which do not currently form part of the English Baccalaureate or school performance indicators. (Paragraph 31).

The teaching of religious education (RE) remains compulsory for all state-funded schools across all Key Stages. According to the School Workforce Survey, teaching time for RE has risen slightly between 2014 and 2015 at all Key Stages. The number of hours spent

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<sup>9</sup> [www.educateagainsthate.com](http://www.educateagainsthate.com)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmwomeq/826/826.pdf>

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on teaching for RE has remained broadly stable since 2010, with schools dedicating around 3.6% of hours taught at Key Stage 3 and 3.5% of hours at Key Stage 4 and 2.6% of hours at Key Stage 5 in 2015/16.

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) comprises the core academic subjects that the vast majority of young people should study to age 16. It has been designed to be limited in its size in order to provide a rigorous academic core whilst leaving space in the curriculum for pupils to study non-EBacc subjects of their choice. To enter the EBacc, pupils must take up to seven GCSEs across five subject 'pillars' - English, mathematics, science, a language and history or geography. Latest data shows that, on average, pupils in state-funded schools enter nine GCSEs and equivalent qualifications, rising to more than ten for more able pupils<sup>12</sup>.

The Government has undertaken a consultation on how the EBacc should be implemented. The consultation closed on 29 January 2016 and a Government response will be published in due course.

There is time in the curriculum for pupils to take GCSEs in other subjects alongside the EBacc subjects if they wish to do so, including religious studies (RS). Entries for RS (full course) GCSE have continued to rise year after year from 2010, and increases in the rates of EBacc entry have not affected GCSE RS entry. For 2015-16, provisional data shows that entries have remained broadly stable with a small decrease of 0.2%, with 47% of the 2015-16 cohort taking RS GCSE<sup>13</sup>.

EBacc entry is published alongside other headline measures of secondary school performance, including Progress 8. Progress 8 is the measure that determines the floor and coasting standards (floor standards represent the Department's minimum expectations for a school in any one year, while a "coasting" school is one where data shows that over a three-year period the school has failed to ensure that pupils reach their potential)<sup>14</sup>. It is a value-added measure based on the progress a pupil has made across 8 qualifications from the end of Key Stage 2 to the end of Key Stage 4 compared to pupils with the same Key Stage 2 starting point. It captures achievements in English, mathematics and three other EBacc subjects as well as any three other approved qualifications, which can include RS (full course).

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2015> (see Table 11 in SFR21/2016).

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/schools-by-type?step=phase&geographic=all&region=0&phase=secondary&for=Key%20stage%204%20performance&basedon=Exam%20entries&show=All%20pupils&&schoolTypeFilter=allSchools>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/gcse-and-equivalent-results-2015-to-2016-provisional> (see "Subject time series tables: SFR48/2016").

<sup>14</sup> Full technical guidance on the floor and coasting standards can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/progress-8-school-performance-measure>

Ofsted inspectors examine whether schools are providing a broad and balanced curriculum which meets statutory requirements and the needs and interests of pupils.

**Recommendation 5:** We recommend that in any PSHE syllabus developed, either by the UK Government or by individual schools, the issues of racism and religious discrimination should form part of the compulsory content. (Paragraph 39).

The Government supports schools in ensuring that issues of racism and religious discrimination are themes throughout school life. The new national curriculum already provides many opportunities to raise awareness of racial and religious diversity and tolerance, and to celebrate the success of individuals from a range of diverse backgrounds. For example, the history curriculum includes opportunities to learn about different cultures, and about how different groups have contributed to the development of the United Kingdom. The Government currently has no plans to review the national curriculum.

Teaching about racism and discrimination can also be included as part of the statutory programme of study for citizenship education at ages 11-16 in maintained schools. The aim of citizenship education is to help provide pupils with the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to prepare them to play a full and active part in society. Citizenship education should include the development of pupils' understanding of:

- The diverse national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding.
- The different ways in which a citizen can contribute to the improvement of his or her community, including the opportunity to participate actively in community volunteering.

Schools also have further opportunities to teach about racism and discrimination in PSHE, where pupils can reflect and challenge notions of prejudice and discrimination.

**Recommendation 6:** We support calls from other Committees, organisations and representatives of teachers that PSHE should be a compulsory subject in schools, with protected classroom time and statutory guidance. To develop a balanced and appropriate syllabus with a clear system to ensure quality across schools we recommend that the Government undertake a consultation within the next 12 months with teachers, representative teaching, faith, race and community organisations, parents and young people, on the teaching and content of PSHE, including whether young people should be required to sit a GCSE in PSHE. (Paragraph 42).

**Recommendation 7:** We recommend in the case that the Government fail to provide schools with clear and definite PSHE syllabus guidance and leadership; Local Authorities should fill this role and establish local guidance, in consultation with local schools, on teaching PSHE. We recommend that should the PSHE syllabus fall to Local Authorities to develop, they should develop the teaching and content of PSHE using the same process as we have recommended to the Government. (Paragraph 43).

The Government wants all young people to be taught a curriculum that prepares them to succeed in modern Britain. We believe that high quality teaching of PSHE is central to this. We also want to give teachers the freedom to decide how to cover important topical issues. The national curriculum provides an outline of core knowledge around which teachers can develop age-appropriate lesson plans for their pupils. Schools can build on the national curriculum, including by providing PSHE lessons that are appropriate and relevant to their pupils.

PSHE is an evolving and vital area of education that needs to be fit for children growing up in modern Britain. The Department for Education is actively considering the case for further action on PSHE, with particular consideration being given to improving quality and accessibility to ensure that provision is high-quality and age-appropriate.

**Recommendation 8:** We recommend that as part of teachers' initial training they receive significantly more dedicated training on handling and teaching young people about racism and religious discrimination, as well as other forms of discrimination. We recommend that within the next three months the Government and teacher training organisations should meet to determine the hours of teacher training and resource which should be dedicated to preparing teachers for handling and providing lessons on discrimination. Furthermore, teachers' continuous professional development should include annual refresher training on dealing with racism and religious discrimination. (Paragraph 47).

Providing the best possible training is at the heart of the Government's drive to improve teaching standards and ensure that children from all backgrounds have the opportunity to achieve their potential.

All Initial Teacher Training (ITT) courses must ensure that trainee teachers can meet the Teachers' Standards, which set the minimum requirements for teachers' practice and conduct at the appropriate level. The Standards specify that teachers must uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school. They include:

- Treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional

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position.

- Having regard to the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions.
- Showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others and not undermining British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

To further improve the quality of ITT, in July 2016 the Government published a new framework of core content for ITT developed by an independent expert group chaired by Stephen Munday CBE<sup>15</sup>. The new framework emphasises the importance of ITT providers *“instruct[ing] trainees on the legal responsibility they have as teachers with regard to safeguarding, including how to refer safeguarding concerns within a school. Opportunities should be provided for trainees to consider how to respond to challenging ethical issues that teachers might encounter. Trainees should develop and demonstrate an understanding of how fundamental British values can be upheld in schools.”*

The new framework will ensure that trainees are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to meet the Teachers' Standards. The Government, however, does not determine the structure or content of ITT courses. It is for training providers to tailor their programmes to meet the needs of their trainees.

High-quality professional development is crucial for teachers at all stages of their careers to ensure that they receive appropriate support and to enable them continuously to improve their practice. We published a new Standard for Teachers' Professional Development in July 2016<sup>16</sup>. The Standard was produced by an expert group of academics, teachers and head teachers, and is designed to enable schools and teaching staff to make the best possible choices about the development they need.

The Government also supports the development of a self-improving teaching profession, which means that decisions relating to professional development rightly rest with schools, head teachers, and teachers themselves. Schools, not the Government, are in the best position to judge their own requirements and to take into account their needs and the needs of their pupils. It would not be appropriate for the Government to introduce mandatory annual development on discrimination or on any other specific area, but we would support schools in doing so should they deem it appropriate for their teachers and pupils.

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<sup>15</sup>[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/536890/Framework\\_Report\\_11\\_July\\_2016\\_Final.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/536890/Framework_Report_11_July_2016_Final.pdf)

<sup>16</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standard-for-teachers-professional-development>

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The Government funds a number of projects which are active in schools. For example, we have committed £1.2 million over the next three years to Remembering Srebrenica, which works to help raise awareness of the Srebrenica genocide and to promote lessons to be learned for future generations. In 2015, Remembering Srebrenica reached 18,000 children through information packs for schools and organised 200 memorial events throughout the UK involving 20,000 people. 650 UK citizens have visited Srebrenica to date.

The Government is also funding a number of community projects aimed at helping people participate in commemorating the personal contributions made by their relatives and communities in the First World War. One such project is *A Soldier's Tale* which, through social media, captures the imagination of 13-18 year olds by educating them about the First World War. We also support the First World War Centenary Battlefield Tours Programme, which sends two children from every state school to the First World War battlefields of France and Belgium. On their return, the pupils share their experiences through the excellent Legacy 110 project by sharing their story or working on a local community project.

The Government's Hate Crime Action Plan includes a number of hate crime prevention projects that work with young people<sup>17</sup>. One of the actions included in the Hate Crime Action Plan was the development of the community demonstration fund. The aim of the fund is to work with affected communities to fund the development of innovative projects that:

- Prevent hate crime.
- Respond to hate crime in our communities.
- Increase the reporting of hate crime.
- Improve support for the victims of hate crime.
- Building our understanding of hate crime.

Through this fund a total of £300,000 was made available for community groups. One of the nine projects selected, "Challenging Conversations" by Voluntary Action Leeds, focuses solely on racist hate crime. The project seeks to help prevent hate crime by challenging the beliefs and attitudes that can underline such crimes. A toolkit of interventions will be developed to assist practitioners in working with young people who have been or are likely to be perpetrators of racist hate crimes.

Good-quality religious education can develop children's knowledge of the values and traditions of the United Kingdom and other countries, and foster understanding among different faiths and cultures. Subject to the recent consultation, *Schools that work for everyone*, the Government is proposing that any new faith free schools be required to meet additional requirements to support inclusivity and community cohesion, including an expectation that they establish twinning arrangements with schools of a different faith or none. This will help these schools to bring together children of different backgrounds and help build greater understanding and tolerance.

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<sup>17</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hate-crime-action-plan-2016> (see paragraphs 39-47).

**Recommendation 10:** We recommend that Local Authorities place a legal duty on schools to require them to record and report data on incidents of discrimination, including racism and religious discrimination. This would provide Local Authorities with better information on the prevalence of racism and religious discrimination in schools, and would provide Ofsted with information to inform their assessments of schools. (Paragraph 56).

The Government takes all forms of bullying, including racism and religious discrimination, very seriously. Tackling these issues is one of our priorities. Our approach to bullying and discrimination is to strike a balance between legal requirements, school freedom and clear accountability.

We think it is right that schools should develop their own approaches to tackling bullying and discrimination within the parameters of their legal obligations. Recording and monitoring of incidents can be part of the approaches schools take to address these issues. Whichever methods schools use, we expect schools to review the effectiveness of them to address bullying and discrimination. Ofsted will also hold schools to account on how well they deal with behaviour and bullying. The Ofsted Inspections Framework includes five criteria for inspections, one of which is personal development, behaviour and welfare; this covers discriminatory behaviour.

Inspectors take into account a range of documentary and oral evidence based on discussions with, and observations of, pupils at informal times of the day (including break, lunchtime, and when moving between lessons). Inspectors will also consider the views of leaders, governors, staff and parents. In particular, inspectors will look at:

- Records and analysis of bullying, discriminatory and prejudicial behaviour, either directly or indirectly, including racist, sexist, disability and homophobic bullying, use of derogatory language and racist incidents.
- Views of pupils about the prevention of bullying, including online bullying and how the school deals with discrimination and prejudiced behaviour, if they happen.
- The views expressed formally and informally by different groups of pupils of their experiences of others' behaviour and attitudes towards them and their understanding of the importance of such attributes in school and adult life.

As part of the Hate Crime Action Plan, the Government will review the evidence on the level of anti-Muslim, anti-Semitic, homophobic and other bullying in schools in order to understand the circumstances, and will further support projects and programmes to reduce levels of bullying.

In order to build our evidence base further, we have included specific questions on racist bullying, as well as on sexist bullying, in the next wave of the NFER Teacher Voice survey and in the Department's own surveys of post-16 institutions and of pupils and their parents or carers. These surveys are nationally representative and are run twice a year. We expect the findings from these questions to be available in spring 2017. We also propose to establish a programme of qualitative research into the attitudes and behaviours of young people to better understand the underlying drivers of inequality and harassment.

**Recommendation 11:** We recommend that local groups, including, for example, schools, youth groups, community projects and places of worship, should hold regular inter-race and interfaith events with race and religion explicitly explored at these events. Local Authorities should take a role in instigating, overseeing and monitoring this work. (Paragraph 62).

The Government agrees on the importance of local communities coming together and that schools, youth groups, community projects and places of worship all have a role to play in this. The United Kingdom is on the whole a well-integrated society; in the 2015-16 Community Life Survey 89% of people felt that they belonged strongly to Britain and 89% reported that their local area was a place where people from different backgrounds got on well together<sup>18</sup>.

The Government has spent over £60 million on its overall integration programme since 2010, focusing on bringing communities together and celebrating what unites us rather than what divides us. For example, we have provided £9.5 million since 2011 for “Near Neighbours”, which has delivered over 1,000 local projects bringing different faith and ethnic groups together and reaching over 940,000 people. In one project Jewish, Muslim and Christian girls from three faith sixth-forms are learning computer coding together and have presented their project to Twitter.

The Near Neighbours Catalyst<sup>19</sup> programme is an exciting and inspirational free programme for young people. It is aimed at developing creative leaders to act as positive role models in neighbourhoods and communities. Catalyst emphasises the positive contribution which multi-religious and multi-ethnic diversity makes at all levels of society, and aims to help people aged 16-30 to:

- Develop a positive identity for living in a multi-faith, multi-ethnic Britain.
- Develop the skills and experience to play their part in building a strong civil society, and enhance their employability.
- Develop the confidence and the commitment to act as agents of change in their neighbourhood.

During Inter Faith Week 2016, the Department for Communities and Local Government announced £250,000 for small grant projects through the Church Urban Fund to help rebuild trust and address community tensions. The Government also funds the Inter Faith Network, which has a special young people’s section<sup>20</sup>. The Inter Faith Network also supports local inter faith councils, which help to raise awareness of local projects that are available.

The Government agrees with the Committee on the importance of raising awareness and increasing knowledge of projects that work at a local level. In her recent report on opportunity and integration<sup>21</sup>, Dame Louise Casey has recommended a cohesive

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<sup>18</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/539102/2015\\_16\\_community\\_life\\_survey\\_bulletin\\_final.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/539102/2015_16_community_life_survey_bulletin_final.pdf) (see slide 7).

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.cuf.org.uk/catalyst>

<sup>20</sup> <http://youth.interfaith.org.uk/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-casey-review-a-review-into->

communities programme and best practice. We are considering carefully the recommendations of that report and will respond in spring 2017.

**Recommendation 12:** We recommend that these efforts be increased nationwide. We welcome Assistant Chief Constable Mark Hamilton's proposal to establish a national hate crime Independent Advisory Group for young people and recommend that he begin the formal process of setting this up, in consultation with the British Youth Council. (Paragraph 72).

The Government would welcome Assistant Chief Constable Mark Hamilton and the British Youth Council setting up a national hate crime Independent Advisory Group for young people. We would recommend that the Government's Independent Advisory Group on Hate Crime (referenced in more detail under our response to recommendation 16 below) should be consulted on this in order to share its expertise.

**Recommendation 13:** We welcome the Government's support of online reporting tools and we encourage the Government to undertake a study into the effectiveness of digital reporting apps and systems. We further recommend that methods to report incidents of racism and religious discrimination, such as an anonymous text line or via an app, be widely publicised, particularly to young people. This should be done through greater publication in schools and on social media to raise awareness of the various trusted apps and sites available to report incidents and also to increase knowledge of how to access the support services available. This publication should be targeted on both a national and local basis so that communities have access to information about services in their local area. (Paragraph 80).

**Recommendation 14:** We recommend that all organisations, including the Government, use online tools to a greater extent to promote existing services for victims and offenders of racism and religious discrimination and methods of reporting such incidents. We further recommend that social media and other online platforms work with organisations to find opportunities to promote the services of support and reporting organisations, free of charge. (Paragraph 81).

As stated in the Hate Crime Action Plan, the police will continue to develop the True Vision website<sup>22</sup>. This is a dedicated hate crime portal and app that allows victims to report hate crime directly to their local police force from their own home, as well as providing information to victims and professionals. On average the website receives between 10,000 and 16,000 visits a month, and between April 2015 and March 2016 4,764 hate crimes and hate incidents were reported to the police via the website. Reports of hate crime to the website have seen a year on year increase<sup>23</sup>.

The True Vision website is going to be refreshed in 2017, and in order to engage young people and increase awareness of hate crime and how to report it, True Vision will be working with the South West Grid for Learning, Childnet and the Internet Watch Foundation to develop a bespoke page for young people on the True Vision website. Young people will be engaged in the development of the website and the materials. These materials will help to identify help and support for young people at both a national

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[opportunity-and-integration](#)

<sup>22</sup> <http://report-it.org.uk/home>

<sup>23</sup> [http://report-it.org.uk/files/reports\\_made\\_to\\_true\\_vision\\_201516.pdf](http://report-it.org.uk/files/reports_made_to_true_vision_201516.pdf)

and a local level.

In April 2015, the Government launched the Victims Information Service<sup>24</sup>, a website which informs victims of crime of their entitlements to support. It also provides information on locally accessible, free of charge services commissioned by Police and Crime Commissioners which are available to victims whether they have reported a crime or not. Users can access the True Vision online reporting tool for hate crime through this website.

**Recommendation 15:** We recommend that an Advisory Group should be established which comprises representatives of the relevant Government departments, at Ministerial and official level, service providers (including schools), representatives of Local Authorities, community groups, race groups, religious groups, and young people. This Advisory Group should be chaired by the Minister with overall responsibility within Government for tackling racism and religious discrimination. (Paragraph 88).

**Recommendation 16:** We recommend that the Government Equalities Office should have a separate Minister who heads up its work and works exclusively on the Government's work tackling discrimination, including racism and religious discrimination, and promoting equality and diversity. This Minister should have the right to attend Cabinet. (Paragraph 91).

The Government has established an Independent Advisory Group on Hate Crime whose membership includes community groups, race groups, religious groups, young people, and Government officials from the Home Office, the Department for Communities and Local Government, and the Ministry of Justice. It has an independent chair. As the Group is independent, a Minister does not sit on the Group. However, Ministers are provided with updates from the Group, and issues that the Group raises are brought to the attention of the relevant Minister.

The current Minister for Women and Equalities and Secretary of State for Education, the RT Hon Justine Greening MP, is responsible for driving forward and championing gender and LGB&T equality across Government and, through her responsibility for the wider Equalities framework (including the Equality Act 2010), for working with her Cabinet colleagues to encourage regular and consistent consideration of equalities issues in policy development. However, it is important that equalities considerations are not seen as the responsibility of just one single Department. Each part of the Government, and organisations within society more generally, needs to be aware of its own, particular responsibilities for tackling discrimination and promoting equality. We believe, therefore, that the best way to ensure that there is clear responsibility for tackling discrimination is to mainstream equalities considerations in policy-making.

This is why we consider that inter-Departmental bodies are the best way to encourage ownership of responsibility and to initiate change. As an example of this, the cross-Whitehall taskforce to help BME workers access the labour market has Ministerial representatives from a wide range of Departments, including: the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy; the Cabinet Office; the Department for Communities and Local Government; the Ministry of Defence; and the Department for Education. Several of these Ministers, including the Minister for Women and Equalities,

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.victimsinformationsservice.org.uk/>

## Government Response to the 2016 Youth Select Committee Report

are already full members of Cabinet.

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