

Ethnic Minority Pupils: Off Site Activities

Recommended guidelines for school off site activities stress that the 'safety of pupils is paramount'. This should include being safe from emotional and physical abuse as a result of racist behaviour, language and attitudes.

DCSF guidelines do indeed refer to preparing students for different cultural attitudes and behaviour however these issues are only referred to in the context of visits abroad.

The key points from the 'race equality guidelines', or the RRAA (2000), relevant to school off site activities, are supported and monitored by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (E.H.R.C).



Equality and Human Rights Commission (E.H.R.C)

The amended Race Relations Act gives public authorities a new statutory duty to promote race equality.

Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 (RRAA)

The Statutory code of practice on the duty to promote race equality for local authorities came into effect on 31st May 2002.

General Duty

There should be due regard for the need to:

- Tackle racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations

In summary: Five of the ten key points affect schools within Cambridge Education @ Islington regarding school off site activities.

The RRAA 2000:

- 2. Defined "public authority" widely so that it includes public functions carried out by private sector organisations*
- 3. Places a general duty on specific public authorities to promote race equality*
- 6. Gives the E.H.R.C powers to enforce specific duties imposed on public authorities*
- 7. Gives the E.H.R.C powers to issue Codes of Practice to provide practical guidance to public bodies on how to fulfil their general and specific duties to promote race equality*
- 8. Allows race discrimination claims to be brought against educational bodies, without as previously, a two month 'cooling off' period of notification to Central Government*

Advice from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service

- 1) A school's 'Race Equality Policy Guidelines' apply to school off site activities - normal procedures should be followed during school off site activities.
- 2) Schools should ensure that a reporting system is in place to allow pupils to report racist incidents whilst taking part in off site activities
- 3) Teachers accompanying pupils on these activities should be aware of normal practice and should have clear ways of dealing with racist incidents etc.

External service providers are not necessarily required to have a 'Race Equality Policy' nor is it statutory that their staff have undergone 'Race Equality' training. Race equality training for external service providers is, however, clearly desirable.

4) Schools should establish:

- i. whether external providers are public bodies - if they are, they should have race equality policies that schools could ask to see.
- ii. whether the service provider has race equality policies in place.
- iii. whether race equality training has been given to non LEA staff (both external e.g. site staff and coach drivers and internal e.g. school volunteers).

5) External providers need to be briefed on:

- i. the ethnic composition of schools from which the pupils are coming.
- ii. school reporting systems that will apply during the trip.
- iii. the dietary requirements of all members of the group - staff and pupils.
- iv. the need for some students to pray at certain times of the day if necessary.
- v. what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate language.
- vi. special dress requirements where clothing is provided.

6) In preparation pupils should be told that:

- i. racist language or behaviour is unacceptable and illegal at any level.
- ii. diversity and tolerance are features of metropolitan life and not necessarily universal.
- iii. students should not accept language and behaviour that they would not accept in their normal daily lives.

Pre-trip role-plays are advocated as a means of preparing pupils for potential hazards and emergency situations on school visits and trips.

This type of activity can be adapted and used to prepare pupils for situations involving racist incidents to clarify and reinforce procedures.

Involve pupils in the process. Ask them to think of situations to role-play.

Possible role-plays can be found on the EMAS section of http://www.islingtonschoolsemas.net/race_equality_training.htm

