

Education Committee, 5 February 2019

**Meeting with Education Scotland: Anti-racist and Holocaust education**

**13 December 2018, Optima, Glasgow**

Ex-President and Equality Convener Nicola Fisher and National Officer Jenny Kemp met with representatives of Education Scotland (ES) on 13 December 2018, to discuss anti-racist education and Holocaust education, in light of AGM resolutions urging the EIS to promote these.

The meeting followed on from an ES / EIS liaison meeting in September at which discussion topics had included professional learning for Holocaust education and anti-racist education. The December meeting was intended to enable a more detailed conversation about the current position and future possibilities.

Two representatives of ES were present at the meeting, namely Nick Morgan (Development Officer, Citizenship), who has a long-standing interest in Holocaust education, and recently took on a project to review anti-racist materials; and Lynne Robertson (Senior Education Officer, Social Studies). Lynne clarified that her role is to assist the curriculum unit in the Scottish Government with implementation; to support schools and departments individually, helping them with BGE planning (she can offer one day of her time and some follow-up); and to work with relevant NGOs e.g. Remembering Srebrenica. In practice she works mostly with secondary schools where she has existing contacts. She is also doing a PhD on the narrowing of the curriculum.

***EIS position***

The EIS representatives set out the Institute position; highlighting:

- our current policy, as articulated in AGM resolutions
- our current equality resources, such as new briefing papers and the 'Myths of Immigration' booklets
- long-standing concerns about the lack of support for teachers in taking forward equality matters, including a lack of teaching resources and materials, a lack of guidance and few professional learning opportunities, both during ITE and when in post
- our concerns about a collective feeling of racism 'having been sorted' by earlier efforts, which have now receded significantly
- staff anxiety about saying the right thing and about engaging with the parent body on these matters
- the wider political context, that being a lurch to the right in politics, both nationally and internationally
- the wider educational context, and especially the unequal attention paid to learners' health and wellbeing, with more focus having been placed on literacy and numeracy despite the design of CfE which gives all three areas equivalence

- the inappropriateness of reliance on the third sector to provide educational materials for schools
- that there has been a huge demand for our SUL funded professional learning, on e.g. equality and human rights and Holocaust Education, but we have limited capacity to expand our offer.

### ***Education Scotland position***

ES reported that they had finished reviewing available anti-racism resources 5-6 weeks prior, and had sent their findings to the Scottish Government. The review formed part of an SG commitment under its Race Equality Framework. Having found that while there are 'bits and pieces' freely available that are "quite good", no single resource met all the criteria developed by CRER to assist the reviewers. This deficit, and the CLPL deficit, was highlighted in the report to SG; there was no known timescale for SG to reply but it was anticipated that they might commission a new resource.

They also reported that:

- our Anti-Racist Education (ARE) briefing paper included the same messages that ES had given to SG in recent weeks
- they have just finished developing a new resource on 'fake news', linked to the 'You Decide' project
- they see citizenship education as an important aspect of teaching literacy and numeracy, as children find the issues engaging, interesting and controversial, so it makes an ideal context for teaching these skills
- the Holocaust Education Trust (HET) and the Anne Frank Trust all produce lots of resources for teachers about the Holocaust, and Holocaust education appears to be well embedded, in their view
- they are much more concerned by the significant lack of resources for anti-racism education, especially as Show Racism the Red Card (SRTRC) resources are not free to schools, as they used to be, and also in an ES survey no-one identified SRTRC as a resource producer so they may be less well known than in previous years
- the steer staff have been given is that "Education Scotland is no longer a resource producing organisation", although some staff continue to develop things
- in term of professional learning, "we do much less than we used to" – still offering PL on e.g. the attainment challenge, but not on human rights issues
- the British Council had funded modules on Learning for Sustainability run by Moray House and DECs, but these had a high drop-out rate – Betsy King at Moray House could probably give us access to the materials if useful.

### ***Discussion***

Discussion then followed, on a range of issues, namely:

- **Holocaust Education.** We discussed whether Holocaust Education is or is not well embedded in schools; there was some disagreement about the extent to which this is the case. There was also some discussion of the possibility of HET being asked to show evidence of impact of e.g. HET-funded

trips to Auschwitz across a cluster, so that upper primary pupils would also be drawn in to the peer-led learning that follows such trips. It was suggested that ES could seek to influence the terms of any new contract with HET (funded by SG Curriculum Unit to run trips to concentration camp sites), to ensure that upper primary pupils would be involved in the learning. It was also reported by ES that a new Holocaust Education Centre with a UK-wide locus is in development, and this will be offering online materials.

- **Online CLPL:** We discussed whether an online CLPL resource would be useful (mainly providing entry-level information, about the legal framework for equalities work, the policy context etc); it was felt by all parties that this might have some merit but not as a substitute for face to face training exploring the issues.
- **Glasgow's anti-racism Pack.** Nicola queried whether Glasgow City Council's anti-racism pack for schools had featured in the resource review; it transpired that it hadn't. Nicola described it as a systematic, progressive resource offering 3 lessons per year, that has had a noticeable impact on participants' attitudes, and offered to share it with ES.
- **PSE review and campaigners' influence.** We noted that the recent PSE review hadn't mentioned anti-racist education, but did mention LGBT issues. This led to a discussion of the different power and influence of campaigning and advocacy groups, and the marginalised voices of e.g. migrants, gypsy travellers etc.
- **Inspections.** We discussed the role of inspections, with ES noting that fewer than ten had mentioned social studies, and that there is no systematic means of getting intelligence about practice from inspection reports. Nicola also shared EIS concerns about the emerging 'Young Inspectors' work.
- **ES expansion.** In response to a query by Jenny about the new staff joining ES, and what capacity that might add, it transpired that none would be working on equality matters, although a few would have an inclusion focus.
- **Bullying.** We discussed the recording of bullying, and whether improved practice might be helpful (although there was some discussion of the differences in understanding re: what constitutes bullying). It was suggested that different pieces of work e.g. on bullying, resources, the diversity of the teaching profession, etc. might all converge and create a new impetus for action.
- **Teachers' experiences.** We noted EIS survey findings re: teachers' experiences of racism within schools and Jenny offered to share a digest of our survey findings by email after the meeting.
- **Leadership.** When questioned on who within ES could offer leadership on these matters, ES reiterated that the relevant leads were Mary Hoey and Mary Berrill.

### **Next steps**

ES concluded that they could probably give some staff time to the development of an online training resource, and so this may be the most fruitful area to explore in any follow-up discussions. There do not appear to be many other avenues to explore at this time.

