



## IAPS statement on diversity

It is our view that IAPS schools should lead the way in educating young people of today about diversity and equality and, crucially, foster an anti-racist culture. We recognise the importance of the role played by IAPS schools in establishing these principles within children in their formative years and urge our member schools to take proactive steps to ensure this learning and culture is prominent within all areas of our schools.

The independence enjoyed by IAPS schools enables freedom in the curriculum. This gives schools the opportunity to promote diversity within learning and to ensure that pupils are taught about the atrocities of the past, the injustices that continue but, importantly, about the need to engender change in attitudes and behaviours.

It goes without saying that IAPS schools should promulgate an environment of acceptance and understanding, where racism of any kind, whether subtle or overt, is not tolerated. Pupils and staff should feel able to raise concerns, know they will be listened to, and be confident that appropriate action will be taken. Unconscious biases should be explored, challenged and overcome.

While we anticipate all IAPS schools will have a policy on equal opportunities, we encourage our schools to do more than promote equality, to go further than this by acknowledging that racism exists, developing their pupils' understanding as to how it manifests itself and empowering pupils to speak out boldly against racial injustice and prejudice.

We also recognise that staff who are black, Asian and minority ethnic are not sufficiently represented within school leadership, either in the education sector generally, or in IAPS schools. We encourage member schools to take active steps to develop diversity within leadership, through recruitment processes, ensuring equality of opportunity, but also by encouraging more people who are black, Asian and minority ethnic to go into teaching.

We know that many IAPS schools have initiatives in place to address these issues. But there is still more that can be done. We believe it is important for IAPS heads to encourage their trustees to be more aware of the issue and to work with them to improve the situation. IAPS schools will be encouraged to survey their school community to note how others view the current position of the school and progress it is making, or otherwise, in this area of school life. It is to be celebrated that high numbers of IAPS pupils go on to powerful and influential positions in society. These successes of independent education make it all the more important that our schools recognise the opportunity this brings to truly make a difference to the next generation, by changing perceptions and eradicating bias in young people.