How to use Stronger Together in Schools



Stronger Together was written and made by the Year 5/6 children of Henbury Court Academy, in partnership with Purpose Built Films and Integrate UK, in response to a lack of primary-aged resources that didn't trivialise or minimise the impact of racism in schools.

The story follows a Year 6 student who experiences racism on the football pitch, in class and online but eventually gets the support he needs to deal with the situation.

Incidents of racism are complex, broad and nuanced to each situation. The film does not pretend to address the broad spectrum, rather present the experience of one child, born out of real lived experiences, in the hope that it will get children and adults talking and reflecting. The more we talk and open our minds, the more we can learn from and celebrate the rich and amazing diversity in our communities, as well as become allies to those who experience racism and discrimination.

Stronger Together can be used as a resource to open the conversation about how to become an ally and an anti-racist community with KS1 and KS2 children, staff and families. The film and this resource have been made to be used with people of all ethnicities. However, it is important to understand that it will be received in different ways depending on a person's lived experience. For example, it might strengthen someone's understanding of what it means to be an ally. Alternatively, it might strengthen someone's understanding of how to report racism if they are experiencing the trauma themselves, or how to stand in solidarity if they identify with the lived experience of the main character.

There are a range of learning opportunities outlined in this pack. We are aware that as school communities we always have more to learn about how to build anti-racist cultures and this is best done in collaboration. Therefore, we have brought together resources which we have found useful in supporting our journey. We are grateful to all those who have contributed to and given feedback on this resource – thank you.

Henbury Court Primary Academy

Anti-Racism Glossary

Understanding the correct terminology about racism, and being able to use it confidently, is the first step in opening anti-racist conversations. Feedback from our staffing team has been that having the vocabulary and definitions has been extremely useful for their professional development and confidence in dealing with racism in school and therefore we have deliberately chosen to place the glossary at the front of this resource. We have listed some of the key terms which have helped us; this is by no means an exhaustive list or the sole definition of each term.

Term	Definition
Allyship	An ally is someone who is in solidarity with people who are experiencing oppression and injustice. Being an ally involves recognising your own privileges and biases, educating yourself and helping others holding a similar position as you to learn.
Anti-Racism	Actively challenging racism within yourself, in your community and in wider society. Approaching the world in an anti-racist way requires a lot of unlearning. Your anti-racist education can never be complete until the world around you is fully anti-racist.
Anti-Blackness	The systematic denial of Black people's humanity and dignity.
BME/BAME	BME stands for Black and Minority Ethnic. BAME stands for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic. These terms are still commonly used but are increasingly problematic and avoided.
Calling out	It is important to interrupt oppression and injustice when you hear or witness it. The 'calling out' method involves a very clear shutting down of harmful words or actions. It can be uncomfortable to hear but is necessary in some situations.
Colour blindness	The refusal to acknowledge race, allowing people to ignore manifestations of racist oppression and invisibilising racialised people's experiences and identities.
Colourism	Also known as shadeism or anti-darkness. Discrimination based on skin tone, privileging light skin over dark skin. It is rooted in and preserves white supremacy, rewards proximity to whiteness and upholds Eurocentric beauty standards.
Cultural racism	Using cultural differences to justify the unequal distribution of power, for example, white Western cultures being deemed more sophisticated and advanced while other cultures are deemed to be primitive, backward and uncivilised.

Source: Anti-Racist Glossary — Woodlands Community

Anti-Racism Glossary

Term	Definition
Global Majority	The group of people in the world who do not consider themselves or are not considered to be white.
Institutional racism	When organisations, businesses and institutions like schools, the police and the Home Office, discriminate, deliberately or otherwise, against racialised people to limit their rights.
Islamophobia	Bigotry and racism directed towards Islam, Muslims and people perceived as Muslim.
Internalised anti-blackness	The manifestation of anti-Blackness within Black communities is a deeply studied phenomenon often referred to as internalised anti-Blackness or intra-racial oppression. Because global systems of anti-Blackness structurally reward proximity to whiteness and penalise Blackness, these biases can be absorbed, internalised, and weaponised against members of one's own community. When these dynamics intersect with gender and age, they produce specific, harmful behaviours.
Non-white	A problematic term that centres whiteness when describing racialised people.
People/Person of Colour (POC)	A commonly used term to refer collectively to racialised people. It assumes that people who are not white share similar experiences in a predominantly white society
Racism	Racism is the unfair treatment of people who belong to a different race, including violent behaviour towards them, as well as the belief that different races have distinct characteristics and abilities, with some races being better than others. Examples include systemic discrimination, social prejudice, and overt acts of hostility against individuals or groups based on race as well as the inability or refusal to recognize the rights, needs, dignity, or value of people of particular races or geographical origins, and more broadly, the devaluation of traits of character or intelligence as typical of certain peoples.

Source: Anti-Racist Glossary — Woodlands Community

Anti-Racism Glossary

Term	Definition
Tokenism	Making a symbolic or perfunctory gesture to give the appearance of addressing inequality without any real commitment to change. In this context, marginalised people are ‘tokenised’
Whiteness	A system of thought that asserts white superiority and privilege and assumes white people are the norm.
White fragility	When white people perform defensive behaviours, feelings and actions such as anger, fear, crying and silence in reaction to conversations about racism.
White saviourism	The belief that white people are here to teach, save and protect people of other races. It relies on a feeling of superiority and shows up when the feelings, thoughts and opinions of white people are given higher value than those of people of colour. An ally does not engage in white saviourism.

Source: Anti-Racist Glossary — Woodlands Community

How to use Stronger Together as a Teaching Resource

Using Stronger Together in Response to an Incident of Racism in School

Stronger Together can be used as an educational tool in response to incidents of racism by a child or group of children. This is often most powerful when done alongside parents/carers and a member of the senior leadership team.

Discussion questions following viewing of the film could include:

- How did the incidents of racism affect the main character?
- Why did the main character feel he couldn't say anything?
- Why did the perpetrator of racism laugh at the main character based on the colour of skin?
- What choices did the main character's friend make, positive and negative? How did this impact the main character?
- If you were in that situation, what would you do?
- Who let the main character down? Why?
- Who was an ally at the end of the film? And what did they do that made you think of them as an ally?
- What changes can you make now to stop someone in our school feeling like this?

Using Stronger Together for Training for Staff Teams

In the film, you will see the teacher not supporting the young person who has experienced racism. She is conscious of time and pressures of the job and therefore minimises the situation, not through a lack of wanting to do the best by the child but by her own lack of understanding of how best to support and the fear of getting it wrong. Therefore, following viewing of the film, key discussion points with staff could be:

- How do we show we are listening to and supporting children who experience racism in our school?
- How do we adequately report incidents and monitor trends?
- How are school families part of this conversation?
- How do we empower our staff to be able to respond to racist incidents in the way that was seen at the end of Stronger Together?
- What systems at school level support restorative conversations and consequences for perpetrators of racism in school?

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How to use Stronger Together as a Lesson Resource

Stronger Together has been written to explicitly show the impact of racism on a child through his experience on the football pitch, social media and classroom. It also deliberately shows racist incidents being perpetrated by a group of his peers, as well as how his friend responds in different ways.

Within the film, you will also see the teachers responding in different ways. This is to illustrate the learning and progress that needs to be made in responding to racist incidents and creating anti-racist school communities.

It is pitched so that it can be understood and used from KS1 upwards as a teaching resource. It is essential the teaching around this is done sensitively and with the context and lived experiences of the cohort in mind. The lesson ideas below therefore can and should be adapted as appropriate.

KS1 Circle Time Questions:

- How was the main character feeling at the start/during the football match/in the lesson/when he was on his phone?
- Why was he feeling like this?
- Why did the other children treat him like this?
- What did his friend/mum/teacher do differently to help him?
- If someone makes a joke about someone's skin colour, is it still racist if they said they were joking? Is it sill racist if they are of the same racial identity?
- What can you do if you saw someone being racist to someone?

KS2 and KS3 Discussion Questions

- What emotions does the main character have throughout the film and how and why do these change?
- The film is in two halves. Why do you think it been designed this way?
- What would you do if a friend told you they had experienced racism?
- What would you do if you witnessed racism?
- What can we do to make someone feel like they belong in our school?
- What does a truly inclusive classroom look and feel like?

Possible Activities:

- Conscious alley for the friend/teacher/young person experiencing racism* (this should be done taking the sensitivities in the classroom into consideration)
- Role on the Wall for the friend/teacher/children perpetrating or enabling racism/group leader from Integrate

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Creating Anti-Racist School Communities

FUELS RACISM

- Blaming individuals, not systems
- Fear of difference
- Ignoring history
- Colourblindness
- Misinformation
- Defensiveness
- Echo chambers
- "Just a joke"
- Scapegoating
- Stereotypes
- Complacency
- Tokenism
- Silence
- Apathy

FIGHTS RACISM

- Voting
- Empathy
- Humility
- Listening
- Education
- Curiosity
- Community
- Speaking up
- Fair hiring
- Accountability
- Representation
- Learning history
- Challenging jokes
- Befriending people unlike you

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TWO THINGS CAN BE TRUE WHEN UNLEARNING BIAS.

This isn't permission.
It's a prompt to do the work.

I HAVE BLACK FRIENDS	I CAN STILL MISS MY OWN BIAS
I'M AGAINST RACISM	I CAN STILL ACT IN RACIST WAYS
I BELIEVE IN FAIRNESS	I CAN STILL PROTECT UNFAIR SYSTEMS
I HAVE MIXED KIDS	I CAN STILL CARRY PREJUDICE
I'M A GOOD PERSON	I CAN STILL CAUSE HARM
I DIDN'T MEAN IT	IT STILL HAD AN IMPACT

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THINGS PARENTS THINK... BUT DON'T ALWAYS REALISE.

"OUR HOME ISN'T RACIST."	YOUR CHILD ALSO LEARNS FROM THE WORLD OUTSIDE YOUR HOME.
"MY CHILD KNOWS RACISM IS WRONG."	KNOWING RACISM IS WRONG DOESN'T MEAN RECOGNISING IT WHEN IT HAPPENS.
"I'LL TALK ABOUT RACISM WHEN THEY'RE OLDER."	THEY'RE LEARNING ABOUT RACE BEFORE YOU START THE CONVERSATION.
"IF I DON'T MENTION RACE, IT WON'T BECOME AN ISSUE."	SILENCE DOESN'T STOP CHILDREN FROM NOTICING RACE.
"I WOULD NEVER TEACH MY CHILD TO BE RACIST."	BIAS CAN BE LEARNED WITHOUT ANYONE EXPLICITLY TEACHING IT.

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WHEN SOMEONE TELLS YOU SOMETHING YOU SAID WAS RACIST

