

# CHAMPION MONTHLY

*A BCA Newsletter brought to you by Brent Schools' Partnership*



## Our changing world

I hope this E-newsletter finds you well and safe and those that you love. We are really living in a challenging time through this pandemic. Our roles as BCA Champions are pivotal as we plan how to support Black Caribbean children in our schools and their families.

I am sure you are extremely busy as you ensure that you are meeting the needs of all of your community.

One of the biggest challenges is sifting through the myriad of information circulating at the moment that can feel overwhelming and unstoppable. With this in mind this newsletter is a way of pointing you in the direction of the research that is a key consideration and thinking about how

this will impact on your role now and in the future. The DFE guidance entitled; '[Opening Schools for more children and young people](#)', says that we must: 'Ensure you have considered the impact on staff and pupils with protected characteristics, including race and disability, in developing your approach'.

**Orlene Badu**

*School Improvement Specialist*

*'A key consideration may be investing a significant amount of time in rebuilding relationships to ensure the right support for all children on their return, when they finally return.'*

## That Race

One thing that is known already is that the consequences of this pandemic will be far reaching for quite possibly years to come, if not generations. With that in mind I want to remind you of when we did the unconscious bias training together and we started with the \$100 race. How poignant is that now as we consider the widening gaps that get wider for the disadvantaged as every day passes? Please take the time to watch it [here](#).

I think the statements that we would do well to

consider now would be: take two steps forward if you had access to a laptop/ computer whenever you needed it, take two steps forward if you did not have a caring responsibility in the holidays, take two steps forward if you always had somewhere quiet to work uninterrupted, take two steps forward if you had unlimited access to the internet, take two steps forward if your parents were able to spend a significant amount of time with you completing tasks, and on and on.

## Recovery Programme

The next step is for us to think about a recovery programme for our young people as they return to their school that focuses on the whole child and their emotional, physical and academic needs. Critical to this would be reflecting on the mental health and well-being of the child and the following think piece entitled, 'Loss and Life for our children and schools post pandemic' can be found [here](#). Written by Barry Carpenter, CBE, Professor of Mental Health at Oxford Brookes University and Matthew Carpenter, Principal, Baxter College; they discuss the loss many of our young people may have witnessed (including what

they see on the news!) and how they rebuild their lives. It will definitely be a recovery as we move away from the idea of merely 'catching up'. There is a great deal in the media at the moment about the over- representation of black people dying of COVID 19 and we must think deeply about the impact this information can have on our youngest and most vulnerable. This pandemic is not the great leveller, it is the great magnifier and has highlighted the inequalities in our society. Another article which thinks about the practicalities of a recovery curriculum can be read [here](#).

***It is essential that we ensure our curriculum continues to highlight and celebrate the BAME contributions in the UK to overcome this very concerning data which is covered in this Guardian article. Not just in October, but now and all year round.***

## Behaviour and Well-being

Behaviour system reflection will be critical when preparing for the children's return as they will be relearning routines having spent a significant and unprecedented amount of time at home, away from the school setting. The previous recommended reading discusses the loss of structure and that is just for the children! When considering how our children will respond to having experienced the three dynamics that

impact on mental health, that of anxiety, trauma and bereavement; it is imperative that we consider what this might look like and how it may be communicated verbally and in actions. The loss of routine, structure, friendship, opportunity and freedom will have an impact and our role will be to ensure that the best systems we can offer are in place to meet the needs of some/ all of our children whom may need further support.

*A vital piece of work may involve investing a significant amount of time in rebuilding relationships to ensure the right support for all children on their return, when they finally return.*

What might that look like for staff training? Is there further reading that could be shared for a joint discussion? Could we look at the behaviour policy again to ensure it is fit for purpose after the pandemic? Should we reinvest in building, sharing and discussing the behaviour policy and supporting children in understanding not just the

‘how’ we do behaviour but ‘why’? See the following hyperlinked document which is fairly dense but page 40 of the document entitled; ‘Education in times of crisis’ considers the impact of changes on children and staff and ways to manage them.

## Belonging

There is a great deal for you to consider in this time and your role is pivotal in those discussions about next steps to support a healthy and supportive return to a school that the children love. Their sense of belonging will be crucial to any return to school and will support the long road ahead in terms of recovery and next steps. Research by McLellan and Moran, 2008,

highlighted the indicators to identify a student’s sense of belonging at school and I would encourage you to remind yourselves of them from our previous training (see below) and think about key children and how they would score. You may even want children to do the survey when they first return and again after their first term/ year to see any developments.

- Q1 I feel like a part of the school
- Q2 People notice when I am good at something
- Q3 It is hard for people like me to be accepted here
- Q4 My opinions are taken seriously by other students
- Q5 Most teachers are interested in me
- Q6 Sometimes I feel as if I don't belong here
- Q7 I can talk to a teacher or adult about a problem

- Q8 People at this school are friendly to me
- Q9 I am treated with as much respect as other students
- Q10 I feel very different from most students
- Q11 The teachers here respect me
- Q12 I am very proud of belonging here

## Parent Contact

Have you managed to speak with your BC students or talk to the teachers that have? This feedback would be crucial for their return and ensuring that the recovery plan meets need. As always, engagement with parents, carers and families would further support the provision going back. Parents/ carers have spent a significant amount of their time supporting their learning, working from

home or away from home and trying to manage. **A support group for parents**, upon returning may be useful in gaining their insight into what their children need on their return and what were some of the challenges they faced. Also to **value and celebrate** the skills children will have learnt at home from their families.

I hope you have found this information useful and I look forward to working with you in the future. Take care of yourselves and loved ones and all the best as we build the future for our children.

Orlene

*BCA Champion Network Meeting via Zoom  
Tuesday 9th June 2020  
4pm- 5pm  
We hope to see you all there to continue  
the conversation.*