



Cymru
National Day Nurseries Association

Factsheet

A photograph of a woman with long brown hair, wearing a green cardigan over a yellow top, sitting at a table and interacting with two young children. The children, a white boy on the left and a Black boy on the right, are looking at something the woman is holding. They are in a bright, modern nursery setting with large windows in the background.

Anti-racist practice in early years settings in Wales: Information for parents and carers

Curriculum for Wales



Ariennir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Funded by
Welsh Government



Cymru
National Day Nurseries Association

Anti-racist practice in early years settings in Wales: Information for parents/carers

In early years settings across Wales, every child deserves to feel safe, valued and included. This factsheet shares how childcare and play settings work in partnership with families to promote anti-racist practice. It also highlights what parents and carers can do to support this work. By working together, we can create welcoming environments where all children feel proud of their identity and learn to celebrate the differences in others.

Why is anti-racism important in the early years?

Children's ideas and thoughts are reinforced by their surroundings and influenced by what they see and hear every day; this includes ideas about diversity, skin colour and identity. Children begin to notice differences from a very young age, including those related to race:

- As early as 3 months, a baby's brain can notice racial differences in the people around them
- By age 2, children repeat stereotypes about race
- By age 4, children can directly express bias regarding race by teasing
- By age 8, children are aware of social norms and can express bias in more subtle forms
- And, by age 12, many children become set in biased thoughts, actions, and decisions.

Anti-racist practice in childcare helps all children:

- Feel safe, respected and valued
- Build self-esteem and confidence
- Develop kindness, empathy and respect for others
- Understand and appreciate diversity
- Identify and implement fairness and inclusion.

The Welsh Government have set an ambitious target of eradicating racism in Wales by 2030. In order to realise this ambition, everybody within Wales must make changes to de-root racism from our lives and communities. To support the course of this work, Welsh Government have published the Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan. This plan sets out recommendations for settings and practitioners for supporting anti-racism in the childcare sector.



What is anti-racist practice?

Being anti-racist goes beyond just "not being racist." It means taking active steps to challenge racism, discrimination and bias in all its forms.

In childcare settings, this includes:

- Celebrating diversity in books, music, stories, food, dress and language
- Creating an environment where every child belongs
- Encouraging children to speak about fairness, kindness and difference
- Ensuring all families feel welcomed and valued
- Providing staff with training to challenge bias.

How can you help your child to understand race and racism?

Do not be afraid of talking about diversity and inclusion 'too early' in a child's learning and development. Talking about it regularly and positively is the first step towards making a positive social change.

You can support your child's learning and development by:

1. Encouraging questions and honest conversations
2. Exploring books, TV shows or music that show positive, diverse role models
3. Talking openly and often
4. Teaching fairness, respect and the importance of celebrating differences.





Tips for supporting children by age:

Under 5s:

- Talk about kindness, fairness and accepting others
- Celebrate how people are the same and different
- Use books and stories to explore the above themes.

Teenagers and older children:

- Let them lead the conversation
- Provide a safe space for their experiences
- Listen without judgement.

Primary-aged children:

- Use books or videos to start discussions
- Let them ask questions and share what they've noticed.



Diversity in Curriculum for Wales

Diversity is a cross-cutting theme within Curriculum for Wales. The 'Curriculum for funded non-maintained nursery settings' incorporates appropriate opportunities for learning about diversity, recognising and celebrating diversity within society and communities. The curriculum specifies the importance of inclusive practice within settings, which should reflect diversity, and be responsive to the experiences of diverse communities.

Working Together

Early years practitioners recognise you as your child's first teacher.

Settings will welcome:

- Your cultural celebrations and family traditions
- Conversations about your child's identity, language or heritage
- Feedback on how to improve inclusion and representation.

If you would like to know more about the approach your child's setting takes to diversity, inclusion and anti-racism, ask them how they:

- Celebrate diversity
- Promote fairness and equity
- Support children to be confident, kind and inclusive.

Your voice matters. Working together builds a better, fairer Wales for all children. It can create a sense of belonging – or *Cynefin* – where every child is proud of who they are.



How to be an anti-racist role model:

- Acknowledge that we all have biases and commit to growth
- Challenge racism when you see it
- Keep learning about racism and its impact
- Listen to people who have experienced racism
- Talk about what you learn with friends and family.

What should you do if you think your child has experienced racism or bullying?

- Listen calmly and take them seriously
- Let them know: it's not their fault
- Thank them for telling you
- Talk to the childcare setting or school and ask about next steps: support, training or policy changes
- Consider professional support (e.g. counsellors) if needed.

Racism is illegal. If you believe a hate crime has occurred, report it to the police via 999 (emergency) or 101.

Closing thought...

Together, we can help make Wales a nation where every child is celebrated, protected and empowered.

Further support and NDNA resources

- NDNA Cymru FREE Guide to Good Practice - Tackling Racism: www.ndna.org.uk/TacklingRacismWales
- DARPL and CWLWM Creating an anti-racist culture in settings toolkit: www.rebrand.ly/DARPLAnti-RacistGuide
- CWLWM newsletter, Spring 2022 focused on racism and promoting race equality: www.rebrand.ly/CwlwmNewsletter
- Books Council for Wales diversity booklists: www.rebrand.ly/BooksCouncilsForWalesList
- MIND charity supporting resources for 'Racism and mental health': www.rebrand.ly/MINDRacismResources





National Day Nurseries Association

★Brighter thinking
for early years

Factsheet

Our factsheets are written by early years experts for the early years workforce. Most NDNA factsheets are free to our members.

NDNA is the national charity and membership association representing children's nurseries across the UK. We are a charity that believes in quality and sustainability, so we put our members' businesses at the very heart of ours.

We are the voice of the 21,000-strong nursery sector, an integral part of the lives of more than a million young children and their families. We provide information, training and advice to support nurseries and the 250,000 people who work in them to deliver world-class early learning and childcare.

See the full range of NDNA factsheets at www.ndna.org.uk/factsheets

The information provided in this factsheet is for use by early years practitioners only. It has been written by early years experts but is not intended to be, and should not be relied upon, as a substitute for professional advice. NDNA has endeavoured to ensure the accuracy of the information presented in this factsheet. NDNA assumes no legal liability or responsibility for your interpretation or use of the information contained within it.

National Day Nurseries Association

3 Connaught House, Riverside Business Park, Benarth Road, Conwy, LL32 8UB
tel: 01824 70 78 23 wales@ndna.org.uk www.ndna.org.uk