

Email (8th June)

Dear Dame Alice Hudson,

I am writing to you with an attached open letter which in the space of 4 days has gathered over 700 signatures from your current students, former students, and parents of students. Together we are asking that you use your position as a respected educational institution to be the breaker of change and not only work to actively diversify your curriculum for the coming year but to lobby the Department of Education to enforce change on a national scale.

You are in a position to be a change for good and break down the structural racism that is so embedded in our education system. We look forward to hearing your thoughts on how the Twyford curriculum can change to further reflect the diversity and culture that a school in Acton should embrace.

Yours sincerely,

Jemima Swindells, and 705 of your current, former, and parents of, students

Petition : Open Letter

Dear Dame Alice Hudson and all Twyford CofE High School staff,

I am sure you will be aware of the international outcry sparked by the murder of George Floyd at the hands of a police officer in Minneapolis last week. Many of us are taking this opportunity to think reflectively about the entrenched racism in our society, and how we can work to enact change within our own communities and the wider world. During such a crucial time of personal development at secondary school, children are forming their opinions and making choices about their futures. The white narrative of our curriculum creates a vicious cycle where education is understood as a field only for white people, demonstrated by the fact that only 140 of the UK's 21,000 university professors are black. It is vital that young people understand the United Kingdom's history of global colonisation, racial oppression and role in the slave trade. It is vital that they understand the contribution of other countries and races to arts, science and academia. We believe that a decolonised curriculum should:

- Teach the UK's true history, not just the "highlights," that includes the reality of Britain's role in colonialism and slavery, and how this links to modern racism in our society. Slavery and 20th century racism should not be taught as a solely American issue.
- The texts studied in English lessons should be balanced to include texts by Black, Asian and POC authors - both those who grew up in Western countries and those who grew up in other parts of the world. This balance should be reflected in the literature available in the school library
- Politics, geography and sociology should include perspectives from other countries, religions and cultures, encompassing each continent
- Science lessons should include the contributions and perspectives of scientists from across the world

- Music/art/drama/textiles/dance lessons should appreciate the cultural influence Black, Asian and POC artists have had throughout history, and how they have used their medium to amplify their voices .

We ask that you work to make these changes within Twyford's curriculum, and use your voice as a well-respected institution to lobby the Department for Education to make decolonising the curriculum a national priority. Public agencies, foundations, school districts, leaders, and activists across the world have been taking a vocal stand, and we feel that Twyford should speak out as well. We ask that you publicly state your support for the Black Lives Matter movement, your commitment to ending racism within the Twyford community, and your promise to create a curriculum that supports our goal of a decolonised and anti-racist society. We thank you in advance for your support on these issues.