

TACKLING RACIAL INEQUALITY

Good Practice Case Studies

LB Sutton

Anti racism in children's social care and safeguarding

As part of its response to tackling racial inequality, Sutton Council's Children's Services has appointed an Anti-Racist Practice Lead to deliver a strategic response targeting children's social care and safeguarding. Read below to find out how Sutton Council is embedding anti-racism practice within the service



Sutton Council's Children Services sought to respond to the Black Lives Matter movement on a local level following George Floyd's murder in May 2020. This movement reignited conversations and action around racism. Across the world, there was an acknowledgement that in order to become anti-racist, actions must meet crucial objectives identified relevant to communities. Subsequently, Sutton Council's Children Services sought to ensure that standing against racism is a core part of its identity and the service it provides.

Sutton Council's Children Services endeavoured to find a dynamic and innovative approach to deliver anti-racism practice by employing an Anti-Racist Practice Lead (ARPL). The ARPL is managed by the Principal Social Worker and integrated at the heart of the service. This step is industry leading and makes Sutton one of only two local authorities in the UK with a lead for anti-racism within social services. Nashan Wilson is Sutton's ARPL and has been in post since January 2021.

The London Borough of Sutton is seeking a dynamic and locally relevant response to racial inequality in all of its forms. As a borough of just over 205,000 residents, it has its part to play in building on anti-racist practices - like other local authorities. Demographically the borough's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic population is estimated at just over 27 per cent¹. With the under-16 population being above the London average², there is a particular importance with targeting children and young people with anti-racist initiatives.

Partners involved

LB Sutton

¹ <https://data.sutton.gov.uk/population/>

² <https://data.sutton.gov.uk/population/>

TACKLING RACIAL INEQUALITY

Good Practice Case Studies

LB Sutton

Anti racism in children's social care and safeguarding

Work towards anti-racist practices at a borough level has been an area that the local authority and partners have worked towards in previous years. [The Sutton Plan](#) and the [Race Equality Scorecard](#) - carried out by the Runnymede Trust, stand as two important legacies of the council's commitment to create a more inclusive borough to live, work and raise a family in.

More recently, the need to respond in a more direct and strategic way has been taken forward by the council in the wake of the summer of 2020. The ARPL role is a prime example of the importance of localised, targeted and strategic delivery to racial equality in a core service area.

The Anti-Racism Action Plan led by the ARPL looks to take this top line data into context and deliver a strategic response targeting children's social care and safeguarding. Supported by its working group, the plan seeks to embed anti-racism within the service. The plan has been informed by the Anti-Racism Working Group, but has also had input from a number of other sources including survey findings, one to ones, team meetings, audits, consultation with senior leadership and feedback from the People Services' Conference amongst others.

The Anti-Racism Action Plan objectives are:

- **Our Workforce** - Increased representation of ethnic minority employees at senior management level that represents the local Sutton community.
- **Our Culture** - A work environment in which staff feel that they can be their whole self and thrive.
- **Our Practice** - Sutton Council's Children Services practitioners who are culturally competent, challenge personal, cultural and structural racial discrimination and embed anti-racism into their practice.
- **Our Community** - For Sutton Council's Children Services to have a trusting and honest relationship with our diverse community.

Sutton Council has a clear commitment to supporting anti-racism and is ambitious with its activities across all of its services areas in challenging racism. The roll-out of targeted anti-racism work led by the ARPL in Children's Services showcases how important it is to build solid foundations, target priority areas head on and work in collaboration across the local authority, with partners and most importantly with residents.

Jonathan Williams, Assistant Director People Services Directorate (Children's Social Care and Safeguarding) said: "Our anti-racism activities are designed to reflect all the key stakeholders of our service, most importantly our diverse children, families and staff. Our anti-racism activities will be a collective effort to shift a culture.

"The expectation is that every staff member participates in a meaningful manner and holds each other accountable. Personal responsibility extends

The Anti Racist Practice Lead role is a prime example of the importance of localised, targeted and strategic delivery to racial equality in a core service area

TACKLING RACIAL INEQUALITY

Good Practice Case Studies

LB Sutton

Anti racism in children's social care
and safeguarding

to our senior leaders to ensure the delivery of the plan in line with SMART principles. We want to be an anti-racist organisation not only because it's the right thing to do, but because in doing so we will provide a better, more effective service for safeguarding children and families, as well as facilitating them to reach their full potential. Anti-racism will enable creativity and innovation by encouraging diversity of thought and allowing previously unheard voices to be amplified and new ideas to be fostered."

Contact



Nashan Wilson

**Anti-Racist
Practice Lead for
London Borough of
Sutton**