

Rugby School and Bilton Grange (together, Rugby) responded to the tragic and terrible death of George Floyd with deep sadness and horror. The injustices and iniquities, of which that death is so appalling a symbol, have gone on too long not just in the United States but also in the UK and elsewhere. Racism is abhorrent and utterly unwanted at Rugby, where the starting point is the ability of every member of its community to feel safe and to become the best version of themselves.

We believe that Black lives and Black voices matter. Rugbeians, ORs and parents have acted with courage and dignity in the last two weeks in making it clear to us that we are not doing enough and we are grateful for this exhortation. We are determined to ensure that we eradicate all forms of racism within our community - casual, unconscious or otherwise.

Rugby values a diverse and inclusive community because this is morally right and because we know such communities produce better learning and more curious, kind, resilient, agile people. We are proud of our many BAME students. Diverse, inclusive communities are more attractive to the best people and more accurately reflect the world in which we want to live and for which we are preparing our students. At Rugby, we will live and communicate the values of diversity and inclusion as a central pillar of our mission.

To uphold these values requires both culture change and focussed actions. We are listening to our students, parents and ORs, and reflecting amongst ourselves. Our first intent is to widen and deepen this listening, with open hearts and minds. And there is much learning and much work to do. Above all, we must ensure that our BAME students have safe spaces and role models throughout the school, like the rest of the community, and that our imagery reflects this diversity.

We are reviewing our curriculum, not with the aim of tearing up so much that is of value but of ensuring that the substantial contribution of different peoples to the world we live in is celebrated, without the taint of victimhood. We are launching a significant research project into the relationship between our own institutional history and race, including re-assessing the role of ORs in Britain's complex history. We believe that our community should learn from this complexity, rather than ignoring or excising it. At the same time, we celebrate the passionate involvement of Thomas Hughes and other ORs in the abolitionist movement. We will ensure that our recruitment is diverse, accurately reflecting society at large and our desire to be global leaders in education. We will develop the training of our staff, so that their understanding of diversity and inclusion is instinctive and robust. We will regularly assess and evaluate our adherence to these fundamental values.

Rugby recognizes the voices of its BAME students, ORs and parents and stands in solidarity with them. We will review our governance at Governing Body and Committee level to ensure that the voices of our BAME students, past and present, parents, teachers and staff are properly represented.

We are determined to make our community the diverse, inclusive place which will ensure that all its members can grow to be their best, and we will use our voice to speak out on behalf of racial justice and equality.

*Lucinda Holmes – Chair of Governing Body.*

*Barry O'Brien – Chair of Governing Body Elect.*

*June 2020.*