

Cross Party Group on Tackling Islamophobia
The Fairfax Somerville Room, Scottish Parliament
27th February 2019 6-8pm

Attendance

Zarina Ahmad	CEMVO Scotland
Rabya Akhtar	Standard Life
Ifty Ali	Scottish Ahlul Bayt Society
Safia Ali	CEMVO Scotland
Sarah Ali	
Jackie Baillie	Scottish Parliament
Caroline Bonditch	Action for Children
Fraser Budge	
Jenny Cairns	Bellahouston Academy
Paul Carberry	Action for Children
Michael Connarty	SEA Scotland
Shona Cotterill	Action for Children
Sameena Dean	
Farah Farzana	Scottish Parliament
Katie Ferguson	Respective
Marika Franceschi	
Arun Gopinath	CSREC
Andrew Hellyer	Scottish Parliament
Peter Hopkins	Newcastle University
Gillian Howatson	Fixers
Asifa Hussain	Herriot Watt University
Ishrat Hussain	Scottish Ahlul Bayt Society
Zaina Islam	Scottish Parliament
Aoife Keenan	University of Edinburgh
Imran Khan	Standard Life
Suby Khan	
Helen Mavor	Edinburgh City Council
Fulton McGregor MSP	Scottish Parliament
Nina Munday	Fife Centre for Equalities
Khaleda Noon	Action for Children
Geoff Palmer	
Hassan Rabban	Herriot Watt University
Paul Renz	Action for Children
Sarah Robinson Galloway	Youthlink Scotland
Anas Sarwar	MSP (Chair)
Sandra Scott	
Narinder Singh	
Mary Smith	Action for Children
Stevie Stuart	Edinburgh City Council
Fiona Williams Hulbert	Coalition to Combat Islamophobia
Nikhat Yusuf	Edinburgh City Council
12 young people from Action for Children	
Apologies	
Angus McDonald MSP	Scottish Parliament

Introduction

Anas Sarwar welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined some of the activities that the CPG has been involved in to date. The CPG are in the process of putting together some guidelines for journalists about reporting about Islam and Muslims. The CPG on 20th March will focus on gender and Islamophobia and we have a further session planned for 23rd April.

It was noted that education is an important vehicle for challenging racism and Islamophobia and that this was one of the reasons for the focus today.

Paul Carberry, the Action for Children Director for Scotland thanked everyone for coming. It was noted that the Charter Mark was created by young people and will recognise the hard work done by schools involved in the process. Paul introduced Khaleda Noon who talked about the work of Action for Children in schools in Edinburgh and Glasgow. Khaleda shared the Action for Children video. A Y Young people of diverse nationalities discussed the benefits of being involved in the work of the Charter Mark. Some of the advantages of being involved included:

- Improved confidence about cultural identity and belonging
- Increased chance to have your voice heard
- improved mental well-being
- engagement with the Duke of Edinburgh award
- access to and engagement with new experiences and opportunities
- emphasis on the importance of equality
- education and awareness raising about cultural diversity
- awareness raising about how to report prejudice
- addressing senior teachers and managers about these issues
- preparation for moving on to study at university
- opportunities to engage in new cultural activities
- ways to rethink and challenge their experiences of education

Nikhat Yusaf discussed the importance of cultural proficiency and the cultural proficiency continuum (cultural destructiveness, cultural incapacity, cultural blindness and cultural pre-competence, cultural competence, cultural proficiency). Cultural proficiency is about responding positively and being engaging and adaptable. It is about interdependence, personal change and transformation, and alliance for groups other than one's own. Cultural humility is an ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the person.

Anas Sarwar thanked everyone for their contributions and opened the floor to questions.

Questions and discussion focused on:

- Lived experiences of children and young people
- How to build confidence amongst young people to raise issues?
- How to keep young women engaged in the process?
- Do teachers discuss Islamophobia in classroom?
- What can we do to find role models for young people?
- The need to focus on diverse schools as well as schools with very small numbers of ethnic minority young people

All participants were thanked for their contributions and it was agreed to draft a letter to send to leading educational decision makers in Scotland.