

# Welcome to our Racial Literacy Parent Forum



# The big picture...

To give confidence to everyone to disrupt inequality and bias, embedding a culture of belonging and opportunity for all.



# Belonging

How do you feel when you come in to school?

# Research shows belonging boosts pupil outcomes



## Attainment

Improved grades,  
engagement,  
and motivation



## Wellbeing

Better mental  
health, self-esteem,  
and resilience



## Attendance

Reduces  
absenteeism,  
disengagement,  
and drop-out risk



## Harm reduction

Buffers against  
the negative impacts  
of bullying and  
social exclusion

# But not all students feel that they belong



1 in 4

young people feel they do not belong  
in school.

95%

of young Black people have heard or  
experienced racist language in school.

87%

of educators have not received training  
on the specific issues affecting children  
of Black, mixed or other minority ethnic  
heritage in education.

# Hemisphere video on bias

What are your immediate thoughts?

<https://learn.hemisphereapp.io/start?contentLibraryId=89>

## **Bias: a recap**

Biases are natural. We all have them. They are formed by our background and experiences.

Left unchecked, they can have very serious consequences. Fortunately, it's possible to identify and disrupt your own biases.

# What does bias sound like in school?



Biases are natural. We all have them. They can't be "cured" but they can be disrupted.

"Where are you from?"

"Can I touch your hair?"

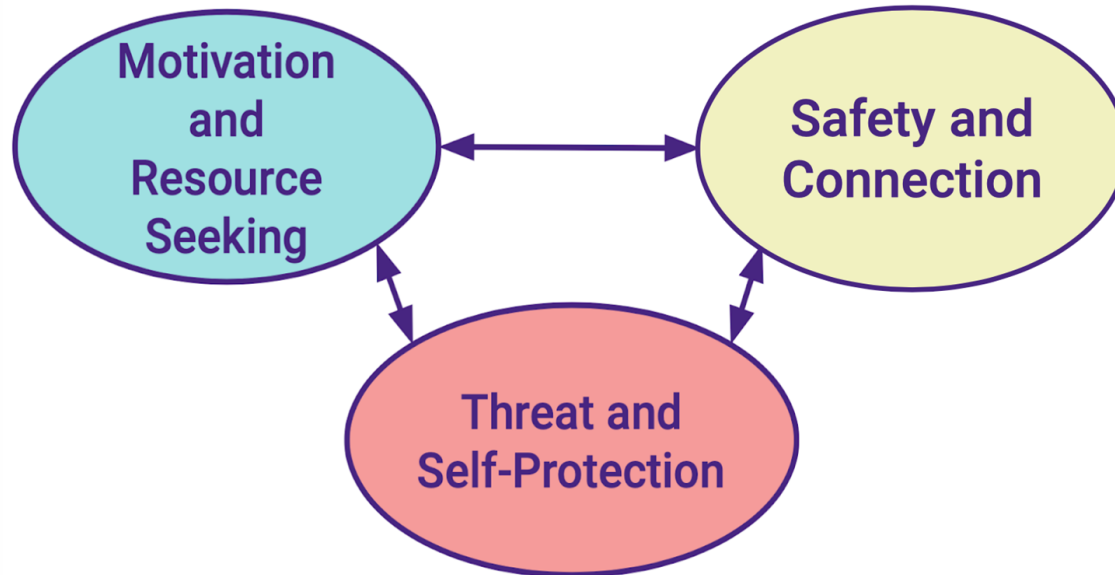
"Oh that's a long name!"

"You speak English so well!"

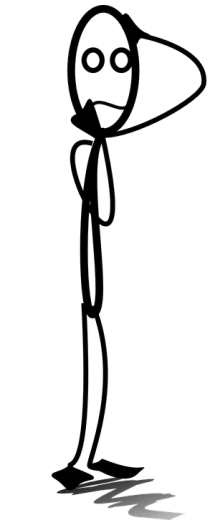
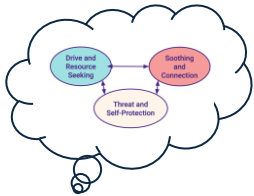
Bias informs all our decision making - We are all biased

## Why are we all so biased?

### Decision-making neuroscience



[Panksepp, J. \(1998\)](#). Series in affective science. Affective neuroscience: The foundations of human and animal emotions



### What is Bias?

Bias comes from our drive to make **decisions** based on the expectation of, or our desire for, an **outcome** which is good for us.

Everyone's emotional system, has these decision-making drivers

**We are all biased.**

# How biased are you?

## Scenario:

You arrive at a party and walk fully into the main room, to find.....

- 5 people you don't know.
- 3 people are avidly talking about West Ham, their difficult season and their chances on Saturday.
- 2 people are standing a bit further apart, talking quietly to each other.

## POLL: Would you:

- Join the football chat,
- Introduce yourself to the silent people,
- Take out your phone and stand in the corner
- Do an instant "Oh! Did I hear someone call my name?" 180, and leave the room

**Pairs/on tables: 4 mins**

How is the choice you make supporting your emotion systems?

Threat - Reward - Safety

We all have something to learn



“

Language, experiences and social contexts are always evolving, racial literacy is something we all need to keep strengthening, no matter our background or past training.

Staff are human beings; if we don't address bias, they may fall in to same behaviours that they experience in their own contexts.

Scenarios link to bias are  
present every day

Especially with  
names.

When we hear an  
unfamiliar name...

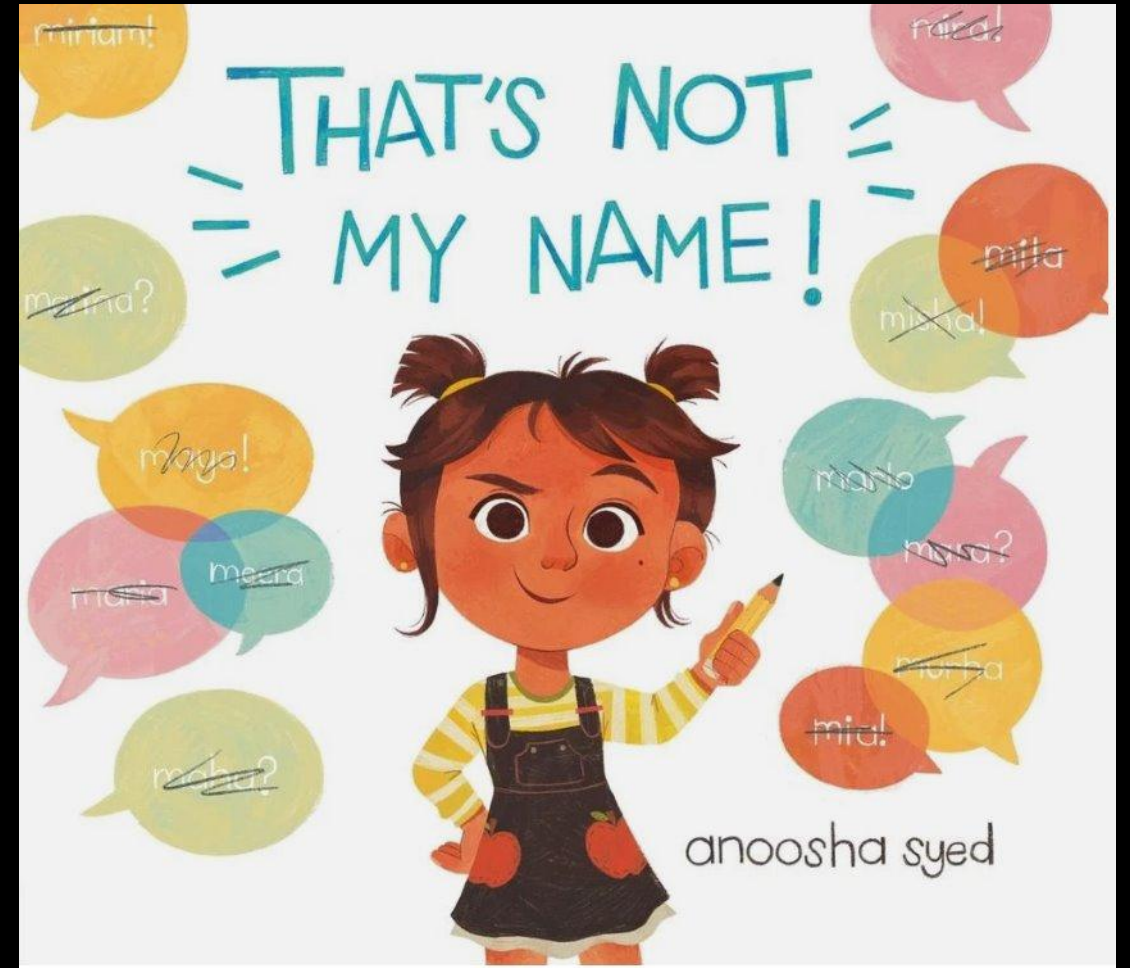
**Start stereotyping**

**Start assuming**

**Try to place where we  
have heard something  
similar**

# Why this matters

- Names are part of identity
- Confidence and inclusion
- Empowering respectful challenge



# Role play Scenario 1- Meeting someone new



**Characters:** Two children meeting for the first time

**Setup:** One child introduces themselves with a name that's unfamiliar.

**Prompt:**

Child A: "Hi, my name is xxx."

Child B: "I've never heard that name before. Can you help me say it right?"

**Discuss:** How does it feel when someone asks politely?





# THE NAME CHARTER

A name is more than just a word; it is an essential part of a personal identity, culture, and sense of belonging. The way we recognise and address one another shapes our relationships, fosters respect, and builds inclusive communities. This charter affirms the significance of learning, remembering, and correctly pronouncing names as a fundamental act of respect and dignity.

## SIGNIFICANCE

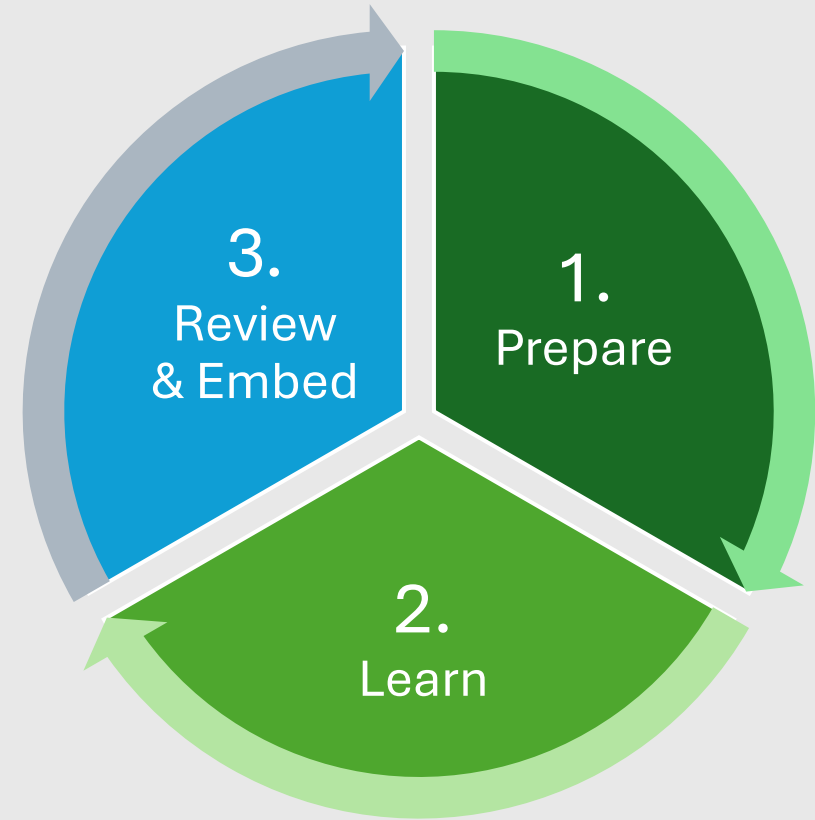
- A name carries deep personal, cultural, and familial significance. It is often a reflection of heritage, values, and traditions.
- Addressing a person correctly by their chosen name fosters a sense of respect, belonging, and validation.
- Mispronouncing, shortening, or disregarding a person's name whether intentionally or not can contribute to feelings of exclusion, frustration, or erasure of identity.

# Annual, cyclical training – same themes, new lens

Hemisphere is completed every year, by everyone.

Each year focuses on the specific experiences of a different ethnic minority:

- **Y1: Black heritage**
- Y2: South Asian heritage
- Y3: Chinese heritage
- And beyond ...



# How is the training helping?

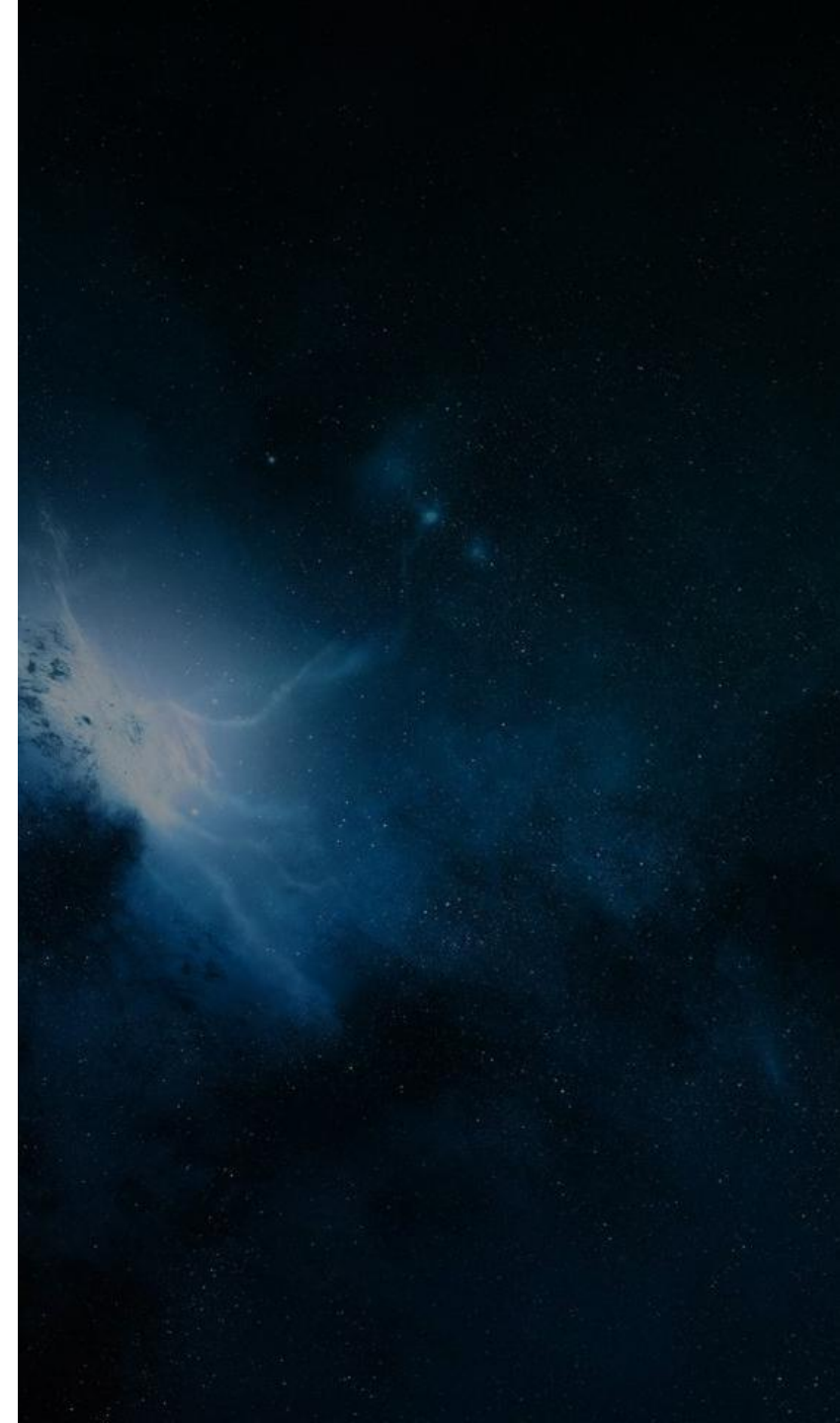
**Personal growth and development**

**Confidence**

**Privacy**

**Individual responsibility**

**Behaviour and culture aims**



# Call to action

Today's  
session

- Hear about the work school is doing linked to racial literacy

Follow up

- Speak to any school leader about the questions that resonate with you

6th March  
2026

- Parent Forum second session

We've developed a list of questions with Hemisphere.

We want to hear about the questions that resonate with you, or anything that falls outside of them

## **Feelings and Experiences**

- *What feelings do you hope your child has when they walk into school each day?*
- *How do you think your child experiences diversity in their classroom?*
- *What does a welcoming school environment look like to you?*

## **Values and Aspirations**

- *What values around race and identity are most important for your family?*
- *What do you hope your child learns about fairness and respect at school?*
- *How do you want your child to feel about their own identity and the identities of others?*

## **Community and Belonging**

- *What makes you feel that your family belongs in the school community?*
- *How do you think the school can better celebrate different cultures and backgrounds?*
- *What does an inclusive school community mean to you?*

## **Challenges and Opportunities**

- *What conversations about race or identity have come up at home because of school?*
- *What do you think are the biggest challenges for children in understanding differences?*
- *How can the school support you in talking about race and identity with your child?*

## **Vision for the Future**

- *What would an ideal school environment look like for your child in terms of racial literacy?*
- *What changes would make you feel the school is moving toward greater inclusion?*