

The City Classroom

The Black Curriculum Leicester/Shire - The First Steps

Report for The City Classroom, Leicester/Shire's Cultural Education Partnership

By Carol Leeming MBE FRSA

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The Context

Following a discussion around #BLM and The Black Curriculum between Adel Al-Salloum, Chair of The City Classroom, Leicester/Shire's Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP) and myself I was appointed to work with and support The City Classroom at the start of their journey around BLM and the Black Curriculum. The City Classroom LCEP, was *"at the start and of an important and urgent conversation and recognises that this commission needs to be the first of many"* (Adel Al-Salloum). The commission was to scope out the ground locally and nationally. (See Appendix 1)

The Brief

The focus of the work for 6 days, is specifically Black Curriculum, across Early Years, Primary and lower Secondary (Key Stage 3).

- Have conversations with Head Teachers, Leicester City Council Leads/Black Led Organisations /DMU University of Leicester, Leicestershire Music Hub, in order to ascertain what is happening in relation to Black Curriculum.
- Consultation with schools around skills gaps and need, resulting in recommendations for Teacher CPD Training Autumn 2021. Consideration of a possible survey to identify needs.
- Conversations with members of The City Classroom including arts organisations/artists, about to what they are doing, resources needs - consideration of a possible survey.
- Conversations nationally e.g. The Black Curriculum / Hackney Council
- Collate a suite of learning resources and useful links that The City Classroom can signpost to Teachers at the start of the new academic year 2022.

May/ June:

- Consultation with Heads/LCC/Organisations. Schools in Leicester/Shire break up July 9th and most teachers take leave directly after this date.

July

- Short report on activity including recommendations for future work discussed at LCEP partner meeting
- Recommended suite of learning resources for inclusion on the TCC website in preparation for new academic year

Activity Findings & Development

(See list of Contacts /Details Appendix 2)

The Consultant prepared, with Gemma Bhagalia, The City Classroom Programme Coordinator, an introductory letter on behalf of the Consultant. To be mailed out to all Member Schools and all Schools/Academies in Leicester, via Leicester City Council Education Department. To request they register their interest, in the following: firstly, a citywide meeting in the Autumn/Winter 2021, to begin an important conversation, as to how to embed Black Curriculum in Leicester Schools. For the age ranges of Early Years, Primary and early Secondary school (Key Stage 3). Secondly, to access a range of Black Curriculum Information, CPD Training, Learning Resources & Information Links, to be made available to Members of The City Classroom and Schools/Academies in Leicester.

The Consultant made contact with Cllr Sue Hunter, who linked her with Leicester Council Officers: Brian Lisowy, Jason Graham, Sue Welford. In order to send out the Consultant's Introductory letter, to request that they register their interest. As initial telephone consultations by the Consultant, with a number of individual Teachers, indicated that Teachers in general, they rarely read or responded to emails. This is due to the large number of emails they receive, due to pressure of work, along with the additional burden of Covid 19 measures. It was suggested that Heads, Principals and Teachers, were more likely to read E-bulletins from Leicester City Council Education Department, distributed by School/Academies Secretaries, Heads and Principals.

The Consultant supplied the introductory letter to Leicester City Council for the Mail Out in good time, with several weeks in hand, to get responses from Schools, and do any necessary follow up, before Schools Break up July 9th 2020. Due to unforeseen circumstances, there was a delay in the distribution of this, however a meeting was held with Leicester City Council, Cllr Elly Cutkelvin, Cllr Sue Hunter and Gemma Bhagalia. This meeting provided an opportunity, to brief Leicester city Cllrs. further on the next steps, of a city-wide meeting to discuss Black Curriculum for Leicester Schools.

It was overall, a very positive meeting with Leicester City Council, and the Introductory letter would be mailed out as previously agreed with Officers. Leicester City Council, as a further outcome of the meeting, is now looking to include Cultural Education, as part of its agenda for its ongoing Education Task Group led by Cllr Elly Cutkelvin. As well to have a closer links, with *The City Classroom*, with the proposal, that Adel Al-Salloum meet with the Task Group very soon.

The introductory letter, was mailed out, and received by Schools, disappointingly just a few days before the Summer Break. This therefore accounts, for the low numbers of Schools that have directly responded to the Consultant. The Consultant has discussed with Adel Al-Salloum, sending the Introductory Letter, to be mailed out via The City Classroom and Leicester City Council Education Department, again when Schools etc. re-open, at the end of the Summer, to gain a much greater response.

Across Leicester Schools for the age ranges in question, it is the case that there is much work yet to be begin. This is also the case for many arts organisations, with many unclear, as to what initial steps they should make, as they feel there is a need for more information and training, as to what approaches to take e.g. being anti -racist, how to become white allies, to de-colonise their curriculums or programmes of work etc. There are some arts organisations, e.g. Leicestershire Music Hub (LMH) have begun a process of De-Colonising the Music Education Curriculum with their Music Leaders and other Staff.

The LMH organisation, have instituted a specific model of change/transformation, unconscious bias, use of a consultants-alongside work within an organisational context, of implementing, a robust Equalities policy and action plan. With #BLM, Black Curriculum and De-Colonising Curriculum, many Schools, Arts organisations, and

Artists, now have clearer understanding, as to the need for urgent change and action. However, there is a real hiatus, as to how they can begin to effect the required change-what in fact are the first steps? Critically, to be able to start, getting the right informed, appropriate information and expertise being paramount.

The Consultant found due to the ongoing crisis compounding capacity pressures, there was insufficient time, to prepare with The City Classroom a survey, to identify, skills gaps and specific needs. There is however, a consensus for there to be surveys in the future. To gather the necessary quantitative and qualitative information. The Consultant speaking with Teachers, Educationalists, Arts Organisation and Practitioners, all indicated and agreed that more information/training, is required. In order to meet the challenge, of embedding Black Curriculum. Allied with the Decolonising Education Curriculums overall in Leicester.

NB. The Consultant was advised by Leicester City Council that in fact an Autumn/Winter 2021 City wide meeting to discuss Black Curriculum for Leicester Schools etc. was welcome and would in fact be for the academic year 22/23. As 21/22 Schools Curriculums were already set. Therefore, CPD Training for Teachers Leicester Schools as suggested by The City Classroom for Autumn 2021, may need a re-think, as regard time lines, and in terms of identifying, more broadly the financial resources for such training.

The Consultant in conversations with Black Academics, Teachers, Educationalists, noted that The City Classroom commission was welcomed overall. They also had the opportunity, to share their hopes and concerns, about the type of Teacher CPD training, and how appropriately Black Curriculum going forward, would be delivered, by primarily White Heads, Principals and Teachers in Leicester Schools. As their individual and collective experience to date, was this had been most difficult to achieve to make progress.

Furthermore, a number of them had further concerns, as to the work going forward, after the Consultant's commission was over. It was therefore, suggested that a cohort, a consultative group of local, Black Academics, Educationalists, Teachers and Community Activists, would be able to assist with the successful embedding of Black curriculum in Leicester.

An example was given by these individuals and groups, to highlight and demonstrate the need for such a cohort. During the period of the commission, Leicester City Council Libraries issued a Windrush Learning pack, for the annual Windrush Celebration, June 22nd, which was delivered directly to all schools. Leicester Black Academics, Teachers, Educationalists and Community Activists, have criticised Leicester City Council Libraries, for their lack of consultation, with the local Black community in preparing the Learning pack. Along with the glaring absence, of any actual information on Leicester's Windrush Community. (See Black Curriculum Resources Collated file submitted to TCC)

An interesting question was posed to the Consultant, by Sonia Davies, Academic and Head of Black Studies Assoc. to raise with The Black Curriculum (TBC) organisation: do they, TBC, adapt National Curriculum or do they offer, what is understood as general Black Studies Curriculum? The Consultant was able to confirm with TBC that they actually do both, i.e. to adapt National Curriculum and do offer broader Black Studies.

The Black Curriculum, (TBC) London, supplied their current Brochure of Services to the Consultant. After meeting with them the consultant noted they are interested, and keen, to work with The City Classroom, Leicester City Council and Schools in Leicester. The Consultant asked for Case Study information, examples of work with specific schools. However, no Case Study information, was available to the Consultant at the time of writing this report.

Recommendations & Conclusion

- Follow up contact by The City Classroom with those Leicester Schools that have registered their interest in the work of the commission to date ie .Black curriculum Learning Resources Teacher Training CPD City Wide Black Curriculum Meeting
- Further activity to send out the Introductory Letter to The City Classroom Members and Leicester Schools/Academies via Leicester City Council after the Summer Break 2021 with follow up contact
- The City Classroom to Link and join Leicester City Council Education Task Group
- The City Classroom with e.g. Leicester City Council to discuss the creation of a Cohort of, local, regional & national, Black Academics, Educationalists, Teachers, Black History Community Activists, as a resource of long standing expertise & knowledge, to draw on for consultation, to oversee Black Curriculum in Leicester Schools etc.
- To also ensure, consultation, with an open, transparent, joined up approach, between all interested parties/partners, organisations, groups etc. with regard to an interest, as to the successful embedding, of Black Curriculum for Leicester overall. In particular consultation with the Leicester Black Community individuals, groups and organisations to instil confidence in the process
- Distribution by The City Classroom of the Black Curriculum Information Learning Resources Links to Members Schools & Academies (See Appendix 3)
- Further work commission of detailed surveys, to identify needs skill gaps of Heads, Teachers, Arts Organisations & Arts Practitioners
- To plan an Autumn /Winter 2021 Leicester City Wide Meeting Event to discuss Black Curriculum for Leicester Schools/Academies etc. with The Black Curriculum National, Regional and Local Speakers, with expertise, knowledge, long standing experience, track record of achievement, with regard to Black Curriculum, Black Studies/History, Education & Pedagogy

To conclude, most of the brief, has been met by the Consultant within the time frame, notwithstanding challenges around Covid19, Annual Leave, the delays, with some limited responses, from Schools/Academies etc. The fact is, a good base of relevant information, important contacts have been acquired. Along with a good degree of a general consensus, amongst interested parties/partners in Leicester, as to the nature of the commission for the future. For The City Classroom therefore, this provides a strong basis, to confidently to proceed, to go forward to the next phase.



The City Classroom

Appendix 1

Background Information

Context:

Local Cultural Education Partnerships (LCEP) is a national programme led by ACE in partnership with DFE <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/children-and-young-people/working-partnership>

The City Classroom is Leicester/Shire's LCEP <https://www.cityclassroom.org/>

We are a membership partnership and have 60 members. The partnership is led by The Spark Arts for Children.

Nottingham LCEP - <https://challengenottingham.co.uk/>

National Agencies leading the conversation:

The Black Curriculum are really leading the way, young and dynamic offering resources, training, opinion, advocacy. We haven't yet connected with them but think they would be a good place to start in terms of understanding what is happening nationally <https://theblackcurriculum.com/about>

Orlene Badu of Hackney Education led the development of an anti-racist *Diverse Curriculum* which has more than 600 schools signed up to. The curriculum is for 5 - 14 years which is a perfect fit for The City Classroom. I would love to find out more about this. I have no contact I just read about it in the news. I found this link through google https://www.hackneyservicesforschools.co.uk/meet-the-team?field_school_improvement_team_re_target_id=All&page=2

Our Migration Story is a useful resource bank <https://www.ourmigrationstory.org.uk/>

Appendix 2 - Meetings & Contacts

During the course of the commission, the Consultant met either online, or offline or had telephone conversations, and/or exchanged emails with the following contacts:

Leicester City Council (LCC)

Cllr. Sue Hunter portfolio #BLM: Tackling Racism & Disadvantage across all LCC Departments & Services

Cllr Eli Kutkelvin Chair LCC Education Task Group

Brian Lisowy Leicester City Council

Sue Welford Leicester City Council

Jason Graham Leicester City Council

Marcia Brown Services Delivery Manager, Neighbourhood Services Area East

& Leicester Windrush Community Archivist

Sherilyn Pereira Stephen Lawrence Research Centre, Public Engagement Manager, & Co-Chair BAME Network De Montfort University & Member LCC Education Task Group

Leicester/shire County Council & Leicestershire Music Hub

Sharon Jagdev Powell Deputy CEO Leicester Music Hub Lead for De-Colonising the Music Education Curriculum

Sarah Barton Head of Music Leicester/shire Music Education Hub focus on Leicester City

Black Trainers, Academics, Principal/Teachers & Educationalist Black Book Seller/s (Local & National)

The Black Curriculum Catherine Learning Team London

Sonia Davis Lecturer & Black Studies Academic & Lead Black Studies Association based in Nottingham

Camille London -Mayo MBE. NPQH Educationalist Doctorial Research Student De Montfort University, & Principal Phoenix Agenda Black Supplementary School

African Caribbean Centre Leicester

Julie Walters Nisbett Teacher City of Leicester College, Vice President National Education Union, former Chair

Black Teaches Network Leicester & Phoenix Agenda Black Supplementary School

Natasha Boyce Teacher Winstanley School Leicester

Nelista Cuffy Teacher Founder & Former Member African Caribbean Education Group Leicester Supplementary

School African Caribbean Centre Leicester (NB now defunct – handover to Phoenix Agenda Supplementary School

Donna Jackman Former Black Studies Tutor African Caribbean Centre Leicester

Val Fisher Black Books Seller Leicester

Leicester Schools & Academies Heads Principal/s

David Hansen Hazel School Leicester

Liz Latham Principal Queensmead Primary Academy

Bruce Wells Head Teacher Folville Junior School

Charlie Pearson Highfields Primary School Leicester

Arts Organisations, Art Practitioners & Creatives

Gemma Bagalia *City Classroom* Programme Coordinator

Pawlet Brooks Director Serendipity Arts Leicester Black History Month, Black Arts, local Windrush Community, National & International Archives

Davina Wilson Music Therapist Atonal, Drum & Brass Equality

Inclusion Diversity in Music Therapy & Executive Board Member Leicester/shire Music Education Hub

Beth Shouler Head of Creative Programmes Curve Theatre Leicester

Kay Hardiman Creative Programmes Manager Curve Theatre Leicester

Roger Wilson Blim Black Lives in Music (National

Stuart Isaacs EMJAZZ (East Midlands Jazz)

Issie Barratt Executive, Artistic Director National Youth Jazz Collective

Greg Smith Kaine Gospel Arts Leicester

Appendix 3

List of Black Curriculum Resources File

Collated by Carol Leeming
The City Classroom Consultant

1. Various Links: Black Curriculum Early Years Primary & Early Secondary Key Stage 3 various
2. Paper: Integrating Black British History for Teachers into National Curriculum Dan Lydon
3. Lesson Plans: KS2 KS3 Windrush Foundation
4. Various Links: Black Curriculum Resources Downloads Black History Month, Language of Race Under 5's
5. Paper: Decolonising Education National Education Union Conference
6. Paper: The Black Curriculum Mission Pedagogy
7. A3Poster: Celebration of Caribbean Windrush '21 A3 Books Leicester City Council
8. A5 Booklet Resource: Celebration of Caribbean Windrush '21 Leicester City Council
9. Report 2009: Building Futures, Believing in Children National Strategies for Early Years: Black Children's Achievement Early Years
10. Booklet Windrush Foundation 70 Windrush Pioneers & Champions
11. Various Links: Information Resources Early Years, KS2/3, Serendipity Arts Black History, #BLM, Costings Consultancy Primary School, Books: Black History, Black Curriculum, Black Cultural Archives (National)
12. Various Links: British Black History supplied by Leicester Teacher Nelista Cuffy
13. Booklet Activities Resources: Celebrating Black History Month Early Years
14. Brochure: The Black Curriculum: School Sessions Training & Consultancy
15. Website Shop: Black Cultural Archives, Merchandise, Black Book List
16. Web Course: Young Black Leaders Wandsworth Council
17. BBC Web: Black History Teacher Resources Primary & Secondary Schools
18. TES Web: Resources Black Experience Hub
19. Course: Family Studies Black History Studies
20. Article: Report Findings Implicit Bias of Teachers starts in Pre-School Guardian
21. Blog: Going Beyond black history Month Integrating Black Historical Figure into Mainstream Primary Curriculum through Literature Farrah Serroukh
22. Books Black History Month books Waterstones
25. Web: & Creative ways to Mark Black History Month New Direction

