



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP
Secretary of State for Education
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

5 June 2020

Re: The teaching of black history in schools

In light of the recent protests sparked by the tragic death of George Floyd across the US, UK and the world, many constituents have contacted me regarding the teaching of black history in our schools. They believe that the curriculum currently does not paint a balanced depiction of Britain's past, nor reflect the achievements of our diverse population.

My constituents have pointed out that the curriculum omits the contributions black people have made to the UK. As a result, young people who learn from the national curriculum are not given a full or accurate version of British history, which limits their opportunities and futures in an increasingly diverse landscape. Our curriculum should not be reinforcing the message that a sizeable part of the British population are not valued.

As you know, black people have been in Britain since Roman times, and have contributed to and shaped the foundation of our society. Therefore, my constituents are asking that black histories be specifically included in the national curriculum from KS1 - KS4 in history, citizenship, English and PSHE. They point to the DfE Strategy's first principle as highlighted in 2015-2020 World-class Education and Care: *"Our first principle is to ensure each policy puts children and young people first. We must not let anything detract from improving the lives and opportunities of those who rely on the education and children social care systems."*

Other constituents highlight a lack of focus on the civil rights movements in the UK and US, some of the realities of the British Empire, Britain's role in the slave trade and the struggles faced by BAME groups today. My constituents wish to celebrate our varied heritage in a way that reflects the proud diversity of our country and areas like my own in Croydon. A reformed curriculum could reduce racial prejudice and provide a more realistic history.

I would appreciate hearing your views on how we ensure our schools reflect the complex history of the UK and the contribution of our BAME citizens, as well as celebrating the rich diversity of our country.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Jones MP

