

Hackney Education
Hackney Council
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20 June 2023

Dear parent/carer,

Child Q update report

It's now more than a year since the devastating details of the Child Q review was made public.

That independent investigation described how Child Q - a Black schoolgirl - was stripsearched by police officers.

That search involved the exposure of Child Q's intimate body parts, took place on school premises in Hackney, and was conducted without an appropriate adult present.

The [safeguarding review](#) concluded that Child Q should never have been stripsearched. That the professionals involved did not apply a 'safeguarding-first' approach. And found that racism and 'adultification bias' - where Black children are treated more harshly than their white peers - were 'likely' factors in what happened.

The review made a series of recommendations to try to ensure lessons were learned.

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The Council led the response to ensure children are safe in their schools, and to help rebuild the trust and confidence of the borough's children, families, carers and communities in the institutions that serve them. This intense and wide-ranging work is outlined [here](#).

Following the publication of the review, the Mayor of Hackney and Deputy Mayor Bramble asked the CHCSP to undertake a further independent update on the progress being made.

[This follow-up report was published today.](#)

As we did before we'll be holding parent sessions in the next few weeks to present the findings of the report and let you know the next steps.

We'll also be meeting with headteachers to discuss the report, and listen to them, and agree what actions are needed together to take forward the recommendations.

We welcome the progress made with the local police, and look forward to the establishment of a new community scrutiny panel who will work together with the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) to hold the police to account for their use of police powers such as stop and search, handcuffing, use of tasers and intimate searches.

We're also happy the local borough commander has accepted and welcomed, in his response to the update report, the need for his officers to adopt a child-centred approach to policing.

The report is also positive about progress made and applauds the work of some schools and their leaders. The report also acknowledges examples of 'exceptional' anti-racism work.

The Council worked closely with schools to ensure children had the space to be heard; had the resources they needed to process the trauma to which they were exposed as a result of the report; and had a much better understanding of their rights. We also accelerated adultification bias training.

The report recognises that most children in Hackney attend schools where they can learn together and thrive. And are educated and cared for by committed teachers and other school staff who are good at their jobs and a credit to their profession.

However, there is a significant focus on the lived experience of secondary-aged children and their families. These testimonials share experiences of racism and concerns about disproportionate discipline levels in our schools.

The report concludes that concerns about safeguarding, racism and disproportionality extend to all statutory services, and that all bodies and organisations need to work together in a coordinated way to embed change.

That's why we - the Council - too want to also take this as a further opportunity to continue to examine our own practices. The council recognises its responsibility to act on its own systems to ensure that we treat our residents equitably and respectfully.

We know there is excellent, forward-thinking and growing anti-racist practice in our schools. We recognise and thank them for this difficult work. But we will listen to what our children and parents are telling us:

[The Council has been asked in the report](#) to lead the work with others - such as schools, health and policing - to eradicate racism.

This won't be easy. We have always said that our journey to create an anti-racist borough will take time. The report recognises that lasting, systemic change is a deeply complex issue and that there are no easy answers.

But we are committed to justice, working with the community and lasting change - however long it takes.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Senior', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Paul Senior
Interim Director of Education