

A message to out of school care services in Scotland

Congratulations to those of you beginning to provide much needed summer holiday services for children do please send in photos of stories of your holiday fun to SOSCN and we will post them up on the website and put in our newsletters. Finlay will also be out and about, visiting some services to gather your stories. For those stopping now for the holidays, enjoy your well-deserved break!

Some notes on the EU Referendum result:

In terms of the referendum result it is important that staff working with children are aware and attuned to how the uncertainty around this might be affecting the children, families and indeed colleagues. Children, indeed staff, from EU or wider immigrant backgrounds might be especially fearful, and children from any backgrounds may parrot unacceptable things they hear from adults around them, or TV. It's your job, as you know it well, to offer them stability, care, learning, guidance and reassurance, as well as the play, fun and friendships they enjoy in your provision.

Here are the facts:

- It will take a long time for the UK to leave the EU at least 2.5 years, or much longer, so in the meantime:
- Everything will stay the same until new laws are made.
- If you're an EU citizen living in the UK, your rights to live, work or get benefits won't change unless the government passes new laws.
- If you're a UK citizen living in the EU or travelling to the EU, your rights won't change yet either.
- You don't need to take any action now. Changes to the law will be announced before they happen, so you'll have time to prepare if you're affected.

If you think you've been discriminated against since the referendum, for example if you've been unfairly refused work or housing, or told your rights have changed, you should [contact your nearest Citizens Advice](#).

Potential Racist incidents:

In Scotland thankfully there has not had many incidents such as leafleting schoolchildren with "get home" propaganda, but there have been Nazi stickers, in public places in cities, which children could see. And we know part of summer holiday services involves taking children out on trips, on public transport, and to public places. I must stress that really do not think that in Scotland we will see a large increase in racist behaviour at all. Nevertheless here is some guidance just in case services are affected.

I know, not just in following codes of SSSC practice and CI standards, and indeed the law, but in the fact you care about children, that no person working in a service would ever treat a child, a fellow staff member or a parent, in a discriminatory manner. I would advise, just as a caution, that everyone makes sure they know their equality policies and what steps to take, in any breach of such policies, and this is also known to all staff and volunteers, as well as ensuring your social media policies, in terms of responsible, public conduct of personal views, are followed.

When you are out and about:

There is a firm line between political belief or right of expression, and illegal behaviour. Acts of racial hate are crimes and should be reported to the police.

You can report racist incidents to Police Scotland by visiting your local police station, filling out a [form online](#) or by calling 101. If it's an emergency you should call 999. When you report the incident you should ask for the incident reference number. If you have difficulty speaking or understanding English, you can ask the police to provide an interpreter - they must provide you with one.

For more advice on reporting hate crimes visit the Citizen's Advice Scotland website. <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/discrimination/hate-crime-s/>

I want to make it quite clear that SOSCN knows and appreciates the many staff from other countries, who make valuable contributions to our society, are welcome here. We fully support equality and inclusion of local children, families and communities, in out of school care, as a matter of course, and again, welcome how such diversity enriches us all. So thanks again for all the wonderful work you do in providing out of school care and holiday clubs welcome to all children, families and communities and being a place of security, extra care, reassurance and calm for children.

Below is some information from Young Scot which can be adapted for the children in the service, and a link to RespectMe resources as support to your anti-bullying policy too. If you think it is needed.

Enjoy your summer and do get in touch with SOSCN if you need help or advice and to share stories of your holiday fun and games.

Irene Audain MBE
Chief Executive

Information from Young Scot for young people

<http://young.scot/information/rights/8-ways-to-help-beat-racism/>

Ways to Help Beat Racism in Rights

Check out ChildLine's eight actions we can take to help combat racism.

1) Don't take the abuse

Everyone, no matter what their nationality or race, has a right to live happily and free from discrimination.

2) Know you're not the one with the problem

Remember you're not the one causing the trouble, you've done nothing wrong.

3) Tell someone

Speak to your teachers, friends and family about what's going on, so that you can get their help and support. Speak up now before the problem takes over.

4) Keep evidence

Keep a diary of what's been happening, to show others how it is affecting you and what support you need. Then, take action. You can do it!

5) Be prepared to speak out

Be prepared to speak out and tell people just how it's affecting your life and your well-being.

6) Keep safe and aware

You can't spend your life looking over your shoulder, but it pays to be aware of dangers. Stick with groups of friends if you feel vulnerable.

7) Never give up!

You might not be able to tackle racism by yourself. Seek out support and accept help where you can. Remember racism just isn't cool and no one should have to put up with it.

8) Get others involved

You could start an anti-racism project or newsletter at your school or youth group or set up a discussion group to talk about relevant issues and what you can do to help.

If you need to talk to someone, you can call ChildLine for free on 0800 1111.

If you witness racism or are a victim of racism - report it.

Anti-Bullying guidance: <http://www.respectme.org.uk/>