

**The discourse of 'race' in majority
white schools; from official
racialised discourse to the
everyday understandings of
teachers and pupils**

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Abstract

This thesis asks questions about how cultural diversity is perceived in majority white schools both by teachers and pupils and in the official discourse of guidance and recommendations. The positioning of official discourse in relation to how cultural diversity and racist incidents are understood in schools is critiqued in the literature review as are suggested interventions based on this understanding. The empirical research is set in two majority white schools in southeast England. It explores the racialised intervention approaches that take place in these schools and the way that they are made sense of by teachers and pupils. Selected samples of official written discourse are critiqued on the basis of their recommended approaches to diversity.

Teachers and pupils in the schools were asked about the content and perspective of cultural diversity delivery in Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) lessons; in addition the researcher positioned herself to deliver PSHE lessons which addressed cultural diversity. Two lessons on cultural diversity were carried out with two Year 9 classes and two Year 11 classes in each school (making a total of eight lessons). Each class consisted of an average of 30 pupils. Interviews were carried out with three teachers from each school and three pupils. The teachers were interviewed to gain their views about what should be taught and from what positions they formed their understandings. Pupils were asked in interviews and focus groups about their views regarding learning about cultural diversity. Focus groups were carried out with two groups of six Year 9 pupils and one group of six Year 11 pupils. All of these research interventions were carried out in order to develop an understanding of pupils' and teachers' views and experiences about the delivery of cultural diversity education and the handling of racist incidents. Some analysis was also carried out on films that the researcher had co-produced, which address young people's identity positionings.

The analysis of the research data focuses on emergent themes following a framework model (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994). The findings suggest that whereas teachers may view cultural diversity as an important subject area to be addressed in the curriculum, there appears to be little actual intervention about cultural diversity in the classroom. The pupils spoken to stress the importance of learning about cultural diversity and suggest that there should be more input in lessons to explore this. In both the literature review and the empirical research the classroom-based difficulties of teaching about cultural diversity are highlighted. The research suggests that despite expressing some contradictory views and reticence regarding the actual composition of the cultural diversity curriculum, the teachers in this study are confident about using sanctions to deal with racist incidents.

The thesis offers a critique of the way that racist incidents are understood as being the site of the manifestation of racism. Troyna and Hatcher's (1992) theory of racism as present in a wider context than the fact of the incident itself is explored. Ifekwunigwe's (1999) concept of bi-racialization is used to support an understanding of racialised positioning, paying attention to ways in which the social fact of 'race' impacts on the experience of young people. It is argued that in majority white schools, there may be need of a more rigorous investigation of the cultural diversity curriculum, and for teacher competencies in this area to be developed so that they can better engage pupils with the experiences and consequences of racial and cultural difference in the context of social justice.

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Chapter 1: Racialised discourse and the thesis outline

1:00 Introduction

In this opening chapter I introduce the remit of my thesis by discussing the terminology used to talk about racial and ethnic differences. My proposed research focus is an investigation of the discourse of 'race' in majority white¹ schools. In particular I set out to investigate how the construction and influence of official racialised discourse in British education relates to the way that the 'cultural diversity curriculum' and racist incidents are understood by teachers and pupils.

This chapter makes the claim that the use of terminology of 'race' has undergone major conceptual shifts since the early 1980s which have been related to social and political forces, and that these shifts have influenced and been influenced by the racialised discourse in which this terminology is located. ***My contention is that the shift in the terminology of 'race' from the 1980s mirrors a discursive movement away from a political racialised critique of the dominant power basis towards a more highly bureaucratized 'race equality' perspective, in which key terms are depoliticised and become part of institutionalised practice.*** How 'race' is theoretically understood in educational discourse is contingent upon the political and social context of the time. There is a level of interplay between the official racialised discourse of policy and legislation and the way that racialised understandings are acted out in practice, particularly in formal and work-related settings. A sketched history of changes in racial terminology, illustrated through the job title chart below, shows this connection between the racialised social and political climate of the time and the way that 'race' is officially constructed. My thesis hopes to make sense of this interplay in the context of cultural diversity education in schools which are located in areas that are seen to be 'majority white'. Qualitative research is carried out to deconstruct meanings that teachers and young people in such schools attach to 'race' as it impacts on their

¹ For the purposes of this research 'majority white' schools are taken to refer to schools in which only 4-6% of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. This is the definition used in *Aiming High: Understanding the Educational Needs of Minority Ethnic Pupils in Mainly White Schools, A Guide to Good Practice* (DfES, 2004)

experience, and to investigate the relationship between their understandings and the context of official racialised discourse.

1:01 Ideological loading of the language of ‘race’

The meaning of terms is seen to be contingent on the social, historical and political contexts in which they are used as well as the intention and understanding of those involved in the dialogue. Stuart Hall (1997, p.235) in discussing ‘why difference matters’, refers to Bakhtin’s idea of meaning being located within discourse, to suggest that the imagined significance of differences of ‘race’, ethnicity and culture come into existence through the discursive process. In this framework, difference is understood as being constructed and constantly negotiated and renegotiated, rather than grounded in an objective reality. It is my contention that policy and legislative discussions about ‘race’ in education have created an ‘official discourse’ that influences and relates to the way that young people and teachers understand and experience racialised difference. The language of ‘race’ is heavily loaded, culturally and politically, to the extent that even to choose the terms that will be used to discuss ‘race’ becomes an act of alignment to a particular political or ideological position. There is a huge difficulty therefore in writing about these discourses. In an attempt to forefront the problems and nuances of the language of ‘race’, this chapter will begin with a review of key terminology in the debate, including an exposition of and rationale for my own choice of terms

1:02 Use of the term ‘race’ in this thesis

For the purposes of this thesis, I will use ‘race’ as shorthand to refer to the spectrum of ‘race’, ethnicity and culture, which forms the focus of this research. Using quotation marks around ‘race’ stresses its unreliability as a social fact (Banton, 1998, p.13; Parekh, 2000, p.XXIV). The choice of ‘race’ as the term used to forefront these discussions is to support my thesis that there may remain in official discourse an emphasis on the idea of ‘race’, albeit disguised at times in discussions of ‘culture’ (Gilroy, 1992; Malik,1996). When it is necessary to signal *culture* or *ethnicity* specifically, those terms will be employed, but ‘race’ remains the shorthand that will be used in this thesis, with the acknowledgement that it is a highly problematic term.

1:03 Use of the term ‘racialised’ in this thesis

The term 'racialised' will be used in a similar encompassing way in relation to the type of discourse that is created and sustained in relation to this area of human experience. I will draw a distinction between the differing contexts of this discourse, using the term 'official racialised discourse' when referring to the policy and advisory documents which form one relational aspect of this thesis. The other aspect of discourse that I will be paying attention to is that constructed by the young people and teachers who feature in the research; of particular interest are the interactions between 'official racialised discourse' and the racialised discourse of the teachers and young people.

1:04 Shifting meanings in the discourse of 'race'

In considering how 'race' is discussed, I am interested in drawing attention to some of the shifts used to formulate strategic interventions around 'race', culture and ethnicity that have taken place from the early 1980s to 2008. The framework through which I propose to explore these shifts is through a consideration of some of the jobs in which I have worked since 1983 which can be seen as being linked to the 'race' industry. To put myself into this context, I am a woman of 'mixed race', having had a German mother and a Ghanaian father. Having grown up in 'Pestalozzi International Children's Village' in East Sussex, I studied Sociology at the University of Sussex and then in 1981 entered the job market, being immediately drawn to community work with 'non-white' community groups. Through the process of recording some of the positions that I held, I will make a reflective exploration of the changes of emphasis and terminology that have occurred in positioning and describing formalised racialised interventions during this period (the terms in the job titles alluding to conceptions of 'race' appear in italics).

Table 1, Reflections on shifts in the use of racialised terms

Job title & description	Significance of terminology	Context
1983- 1985 <i>Black</i> working party coordinator for the National Childcare Campaign	'Black' was used in this context in its political incarnation to encompass any group or individual who was not white	Working with a group of Black parents to promote antiracist childcare, through campaigning activities which included publishing a monthly newsletter
1984 – 1987 Founder and co-ordinator of 'Kids in Space', an <i>anti-racist</i> mobile crèche	The promotional leaflet made claims for the crèche offering an anti-racist approach to childcare, this approach formed the rationale of this provision	The context was the prominence of the GLC (Greater London Council), which made many of the creche bookings. This initiative could arguably be framed as an example of Gilroy's critique of 'radicalism on the rates' (Gilroy, 1992)
1989 – 1991 Tutor at Goldsmiths College, on a 'return to study' course for <i>Black</i> women	Again 'Black' was used as a political term, allowing access on the course only to women who were not white	This course was offered before the mass migration from Eastern Europe. The course was positioned as a positive action initiative, disadvantage being qualified by skin colour
1993 – 1995 <i>Race Equality</i> Officer at a local Council	The term 'race equality' was devised from the discourse of equal opportunities to mean working towards an absence of discrimination	The work included providing 'Race Awareness Training' critiqued by Sivanandan (1985), to service providers to raise awareness of prejudice, stereotyping and racial discrimination
1995 – 1997 Action Researcher investigating health and social care needs of <i>BME</i> residents	The term BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) replaces 'Black' in much official discourse	This work highlighted the experiences of 'BME' people (mainly Bangladeshi and Cantonese) living in a majority white area and involved campaigning for 'cultural sensitivity' and inclusive practice in health and social care provision

2000 – 2002 <i>Specialist BME</i> community development worker	The term 'specialist' stresses the idea of positive action in working specifically with BME groups, this idea has since been challenged by the community cohesion agenda	Working to a neighbourhood community development model with the concept of supporting marginalised and disadvantaged groups towards self-determination. In practice the work focused on speakers of English as an additional language
2002 – 2004 <i>Specialist BME</i> youth worker	As above but in the context of working with young people	Youth work in a small project with two 'generic' workers on an estate with high record of 'racist incidents'. Despite the title of the post which suggests working specifically with the BME community, I focused on working with racially mixed groups of young people to challenge perceptions of the 'other'
2007 – 2008 <i>Cultural Diversity</i> support tutor at a university	Cultural diversity is a term acknowledging diversity but without suggesting a context of oppression, as in the use of the term 'Black'	Contracted to offer support to BME students and raise the profile of cultural diversity within a university teaching department

1:05 The term 'Black'

My work experience as shown in Table 1, gives evidence of a shift from the early 1980s in which community activist groups in the third sector, such as the Black Working Party within the National Childcare Campaign, were mobilising to draw attention to institutional racism, to a time in which large institutional bodies, such as university departments, recognised their obligations to manage and fund racialised interventions towards ensuring equal opportunities. In the early 1980s 'Black' was used as a political rather than a descriptive term, uniting people on this basis. Rattansi suggests:

...the category 'Black' became...an important focus...for mobilizing the growing communities of Afro-Caribbean and Asian descent. 'Black', here, denotes not simply an often successful political alliance against racism. It operates as a profoundly cultural category, an attempted representation of particular experiences and a particular construction of unity around those experiences. (Rattansi, 1992, p.40)

Similarly with the Black Working Party within the National Childcare Campaign, 'Black' was used to refer, not specifically to skin colour, but to a political identification. Hall effectively illustrates this crucial distinction in the significance of the term 'Black':

...my son, who was two and a half, was learning the colours. I said to him, transmitting the message at last, "You're Black." And he said, "No. I'm brown." And I said, 'Wrong referent. Mistaken concreteness, philosophical mistake. I'm not talking about your paintbox, I'm talking about your head.' That is something different. The question of learning, learning to be Black. Learning to come into an identification." (Hall, 2000, p.150)

As the co-ordinator of a mobile crèche, from 1984 to 1987, and working for the National Childcare Campaign previously to that (1983-1985), myself and my colleagues felt that it was important to offer resources to children and childcare workers' reflective of diverse cultures, with books, puzzles and toys which featured children of different races and showing different cultural norms. In the context of living and working in London, this multicultural dimension was a part of everyday life. And yet, at this time, such a multicultural ideal was not yet the norm in Early Years settings, and many establishments presented a white only experience in terms of resources offered to young children. As well as using and campaigning for multicultural resources, the work I was involved with at the National Childcare Campaign promoted an anti-racist awareness, which critiqued the educational structures of society as institutionally racist, and suggested approaches to childcare and early year's education that would directly challenge this racism. Such an antiracist approach was adopted in the policies of left wing, mainly inner city local authorities during the early 1980s, particularly as a result of the inner city uprisings of 1981 and 1984 as suggested by Gilroy:

Anti-racism in this sense is a phenomenon which grew out of the political openings created by the 1981 riots. (Gilroy, 1992, p.51)

and yet it was still seen as being radical rather than being fully institutionalised, located as it was in the oppositional context of Thatcher's right-wing national government. The 'Working with People' course at Goldsmiths College, Lewisham, on which I taught between 1989 and 1991, was a 'return to study' course for Black women only and as such can be seen as an illustration of positive action in a climate in which such a clearly segregated 'Black only', as well as 'women only', initiative

was seen as a legitimate way to address structurally determined under-achievement. In this way structures such as educational institutions were beginning to embrace theoretical constructs of black deprivation and to initiate strategies to address this issue on a local basis. By the early 1990s, service providers outside the inner cities were also addressing issues of race equality. In 1993 I secured employment in a council in south-east England as a part-time, race equality officer. Within this position, I was responsible for carrying out Race Awareness Training (RAT) for Council staff. Sivanandan (1985 p.30) offers a critique of RAT, suggesting that it distracted political focus from class-based oppression and that black trainers in becoming involved with delivering RAT, 'degraded black struggle'. With the implementation of RAT training, which later became more commonly known as 'race equality' training, the recognition of Black social and economic disadvantage became instituted in local authority policy initiatives on a nationwide scale to include majority white areas. (Bhavnani, 2001, p.85)

1:06 BME (Black and Minority Ethnic)

By 1995 when I was commissioned to carry out action-research in a majority white district in south-east England, the term used in much official discourse to describe those who were the subject to institutional racial and ethnic disadvantage was 'BME'. By the mid 1990s, the term 'Black' to describe any individual or group of non-white ethnicity was being used less in official discourse. *Institutional racism* was defined in Macpherson's report into the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence as:

The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin, it can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes or behaviours which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people. (Macpherson, 1999)

Thus institutional racism turns the focus of official discourse from the individual to the organisation. As this acknowledgement of institutional racism became integral to official racialised discourse, the community-led impetus of the antiracist debate seemed to become weaker as documented in Gilroy's account of 'The end of antiracism' in referring to the growing distance between the idea of antiracist initiatives and black community movements:

There has been little support from independent black defence organisations and authentic community groups whose actions go far beyond the narrow categories in which antiracism can operate (Gilroy 1992 p.49)

The trend of a growing acknowledgment of institutional racism in official racialised discourse culminated in the aforementioned Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (Macpherson,1999) which led to the passing of the Race Relations Amendment Act in 2000 by the Labour Government, with duties for public bodies including schools to provide documented evidence that they were enforcing race equality through the implementation of policies and schemes. In my role as a BME specialist community development worker in 2000, I was designated to work with BME residents in a local neighbourhood, which in that particular context involved working mainly with people who spoke English as an additional language, to address social isolation and access to service provision. The shift from the term 'Black' to 'BME' would seem to signal a shift from a radical critique of society to a more consensual approach which positions minority ethnic communities as essentially victims on whose account social intervention is seen as necessary to redress the balance, rather than a community initiated impetus to change the system (Gilroy, 1992, p.49, p.60). My argument is that 'BME' is a more corporate term than 'Black'. It focuses on the minority nature of racialised 'otherness' rather than reflecting an underlying discourse which recognises the integral nature of racism in society as in the usage of 'Black'. I am suggesting that as institutional structures officially recognise the concept of institutional racism, the very fact of this recognition as official may weaken the pervasiveness of interventionist strategies to effect fundamental change. This apparent paradox arises from my assertion that official intervention to address racism has only made surface-level changes, whereas the social and cultural systems through which racism is reproduced, have tended to remain intact. This claim will be further investigated in considering the impact of official racialised discourse on how 'race' is addressed in schools. This reflective sketched journey through key moments of my career in the 'race industry' illustrates changes in the way that 'race' is talked about and acted on in the public sphere and how employment on a 'race' equality platform has become an increasingly bureaucratic task. As a final example of my work experience, which gives a clear illustration of the bureaucratic perspective that is being critiqued, is my employment as a Race Equalities Consultant, for a local education authority for seven months in 2004.

1:07 Race equality consultancy

My work in this post involved encouraging schools in the local authority to record on-line, on a termly basis, the number of racist incidents that had occurred, together with the details concerning the gender, ethnicities and year groups of the victims and perpetrators, and further details such as where the incident took place and whether the pupils involved appeared in any specific cohorts, for example 'gifted and talented', 'free school meals', 'English as an additional language' or 'special needs'. These details were supposed to be filled in by the schools' representatives on a specific electronic spread sheet and returned to the local authority. The schools were able to submit a 'nil' return if no racist incidents were known to have occurred during the previous term. In sending a 'nil' return, the schools were only obliged to tick one box, whereas if they were reporting any incidents, there were numerous details, as outlined above, that needed to be recorded. Part of my role included making telephone calls to all those schools that had not submitted any returns and asking them to do so. It was also my job to write a termly report, which picked up on any trends regarding the occurrences of racist incidents in schools using the data that had been provided. These reports were published on-line on a local authority website that schools received to encourage those schools that had not yet completed their racist incident reporting forms to do so. There were many weaknesses which I saw as being attached to this system and the understanding of racist incidents on which it was based, which have in some part initiated my interest in framing this thesis to critically engage with the process of interventions in racist incidents in schools. Much of this has to do with the context of the reporting procedure itself, as a bureaucratic exercise which most of the schools in the local authority schools responded to by ticking the 'nil' returns box. In relation to this I was interested in whether the response to racism in schools becomes reduced to a tick-box exercise. Another concern that I have is the over-simplified way in which a racist incident is conceived of in official discourse, in which it is the contingencies surrounding the incident that get reported, rather than reporting on the context which gave rise to the incident. I was interested in how teachers and pupils made sense of racist incidents having recently worked on a filmed resource, also in 2004, involving pupils sharing their experiences of racism. The emphasis in my local authority job of recording and describing these outward details of racist incidents did not seem to address the more pertinent issue, which was why the incident had

occurred and how further racist incidents could be prevented by working with the pupils to address and discuss 'race', culture and difference.

This thesis emerges from such questions based on many years of experience and questioning, not only as a worker in the 'race industry', but as a woman of mixed-race, residing in a majority white area, working as a tutor and grappling with issues of 'race' and ethnicity with my students, and importantly as a mother trying to support my children to make sense of 'race' and ethnicity in their own lives as well as being able to learn from them. This introduction has traced changes that have occurred in my own reflective experience in the voluntary and statutory contexts, signalling key terms and reflecting on how they have been used, to frame an argument that interventions towards race equality have become increasingly bureaucratised since the early 1980s and discussing the implications of that.

1:08 The arrangement of the chapters in this thesis

The remainder of this introductory chapter will consider the organisation of my thesis, which sets out to investigate what is going on in terms of the official and lived discourses of 'race' in majority white schools. The thesis is organised as follows:

Chapter 2: 'Multi-cultural Education for All?'; framing the Swann Report.

In this chapter I reflect on the development of a multicultural curriculum, investigating the concepts underlying Swann's Report, *Education for All* (1985) as the first national report calling for multi-cultural education to take place in all schools, not just those in the inner cities but in schools nationwide. I ask questions as to the extent to which 'racial difference' is defined as a problem in official racialised discourse. A critique is offered of Swann's framing of multiculturalism, making the argument that official racialised discourse in the 1980s, as exemplified by Swann, presents multi-cultural education in a frame which takes for granted the perspective of British culture as being 'normal'. The chapter ends with a consideration of the tensions in the perspectives of multicultural proponents that range between seeking to dispel ignorance to advocating the adoption of a radical antiracist approach. This discussion leads into Chapter 3, which continues discussions of the location of antiracism.

Chapter 3: 'The Race Relations Amendment Act, 2000'; is this legislative anti-racism?

The critique of official racialised discourse continues in Chapter 3, with attention focussed on the 'official racialised discourse' of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (RR(A)A) and the accompanying guidance documents that set out duties for schools. A critique of policies around racist incidents looks critically at how racist incidents are understood in the school context, developing the argument that policy guidelines do not allow for a contextual approach to understanding and dealing with the causes of racism. Questions are asked as to the extent to which this discourse can be understood as being antiracist. The positioning of key legislative and guidance documents is reviewed, particularly in terms of whether racial difference is essentialised in these examples. In this chapter attention is given to the different positioning of majority white schools in comparison to those in the inner cities, paying particular attention to the greater need for majority white schools to ask questions through the curriculum, of how difference is conceived, rather than focusing on the attainment of pupils of minority ethnicity, an emphasis which frames the Duties for Schools under the RR(A)A. The chapter ends with a discussion of the extent to which policy pronouncements have an impact on what 'goes on' in the classroom, which leads on to Chapter 4, which focuses on the delivery of the cultural diversity curriculum.

Chapter 4: Delivering the Cultural Diversity Curriculum; the relation of policy to practice

Chapter 4 begins by returning to the suggestion that official racialised discourse problematises the racialised 'other'. It considers the classroom delivery of cultural diversity in relation to policy. In an analysis of four strategically important guidance documents, the suggestion is made that cultural diversity teaching is still framed in terms of a perspective of 'them and us', little having changed since the publication of the Swann Report in 1985. Despite the implementation of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, 2000, the analysis suggests that the official framing of the cultural diversity curriculum tackles only the fact of difference rather than acknowledging the social processes through which difference is problematised. In this chapter I look at alternative models through which cultural diversity teaching could be more rigorously constructed to take into account the objective to teach about structural

inequality while at the same time facilitating a level of engagement with young people's identities and experiences. This chapter concludes by raising the difficulties of the context of the real, lived classroom and the challenges of actual delivery, which are to be further explored in discussing the findings and making an analysis of the classroom-based research which informs this thesis.

Chapter 5: Research Methodology

Chapter 5 traces the perspective which informs my methodology and my research methods. I explore the philosophical grounding underlying my approach which is to get as close as possible to the construction of meaning through which teachers and pupils in majority white schools negotiate racial and cultural difference. A variety of research methods are used to explore this constructivist perspective. This chapter discusses both the limitations of the research setting, in terms of a full ethnography not being possible and the opportunities that were available for conducting action research in four Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) lessons in two schools, one in a rural area and one in an urban area. Ethical considerations are discussed here. I describe the interview process carried out with teachers in the two schools, and the interviews and focus groups with the pupils.

Chapter 6: Research Findings and Analysis

In Chapter 6, the findings from the research are presented and analysed, showing how thematic analysis was used. The idea of varying perspectives from which to locate the 'problem' attached to 'race' is particularly evident in the interviews carried out with teachers, with some teachers imagining the 'problem' resulting from the presence of non-white pupils, leading to their concluding that they do not have a 'problem' in their school, whereas others identify that they have a 'problem' precisely because of the low ratio of minority ethnic pupils which limits the school's experience of diversity.

The concept of bi-racialization proves to be useful in identifying the perceptions of teachers who take for granted the 'normality' of British Western cultures and values and who clearly see any expression of difference outside of this hegemonic understanding as 'other' and problematic. Bi-racialization binarises black and white

in such a way that white is constituted as superior and black as inferior. Ifekwunigwe suggests that there are subjective as well as social impacts:

The process of bi-racialization dictates that separate inferior Black and superior White social and symbolic designations determine subjectivities and define specific and exclusive group memberships (Ifekwunigwe, 1999, p.13).

It is interesting to note that those teachers who had only lived, trained and worked in majority white areas, were more likely to take a white British perspective for granted and were less inclined to be prepared specifically to teach about cultural and racial diversity, whereas those teachers who had experience of cultural difference tended to be more open and confident in relation to teaching about cultural diversity and to see it as something that it was important to do. The young people from the more urban school, seemed to be comfortable in imagining the position of the 'other' and these pupils made some thoughtful reflections on questions they were asked, such as how to deal with racism. The pupils from the rural school were more restrained in discussing diversity, although they were clear in their disapproval of racist incidents. In both schools very little input of a cultural diversity curriculum seems to have taken place, and in general the pupils' perspective was that there should be more teaching in this area. There was general approval of the film that had been shown as part of the lessons I had taught, particularly as it showed the 'lived' impact of racism, which was felt to be an important learning experience for pupils in majority white schools. All the teachers expressed the idea that cultural diversity education was important, but there was considerable discrepancy about what it should involve, with some teachers feeling strongly that such teaching should not focus just on racial and cultural discrimination. Others, teachers and pupils, suggested that there were difficulties to do with the non-examination status of PSHE as well as the open-ended nature of the classroom discussions, which stopped the subject being taken seriously by the pupils. My own experience in one of the lessons, written up in my field notes, indicates the difficulty of discussing personal opinions and views in what may be a chaotic classroom; however, I also noted good levels of engagement with discussions and activities in all of the PSHE lessons that I taught, which was reflected in the teachers' and the pupils' feedback.

Asked about how their school deals with racist incidents, the teachers were

confident about their schools' ability to deal with racism effectively, in line with clear policy protocols. The pupils too expressed confidence that racism would be punished. Anecdotal examples of racism were given, some of which centred on questions of the intentionality of the person being framed as 'racist'. However, in general racist incidents are seen, particularly by teachers, as an aberration, to be dealt with by firm punishment and few links seem to be made between the lived experience of pupils in majority white schools and the need to offer teaching that explores both institutional injustice and the experience of diversity. The research findings would seem to illustrate the contention made in this thesis that despite the promise of the RR(A)A to uncover and deal with institutional racial discrimination, the idea and practice of multiculturalism in majority white schools may be far from offering education for social change.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

The concluding chapter summarises the thesis, highlights some of the key issues which have emerged and suggests recommended changes to the way that the curriculum is framed and racial incidents are understood, to ensure that 'racial and cultural diversity' is discussed in the classroom. The complexity of contingencies of 'race' and racist constructions are seen as being oversimplified in the framing and disciplining of 'racist incidents' in majority white schools, in which a 'racist incident' becomes seen as being isolated from the social, cultural and structural context in which it has occurred. On the basis of the arguments made and the research carried out as part of my thesis, I suggest that cultural diversity education, in order to be critical should engage with the pupils' own identity formations and life experiences as well as to consider notions of justice and equity in relation to racialised structures and institutional systems. One way of ensuring an engagement with lived experiences of minority ethnicity pupils in majority white schools, as suggested in this concluding chapter, is through the use of resource films, such as *Unfolding Identities* (Asare and Mensah, 2009) through which such engagement can occur and identifications can be made. To support this claim, reference is made to some of the documented classroom work that was produced during the research process, to give examples of how pupils in majority white schools, through their own classroom based work, have indicated a readiness to explore and relate to the contingencies of belonging, racism and cultural exclusion, in ways they may not

have been given previous opportunities to do. This degree of interest in exploring themes linked to 'race' and racism among pupils was widely evident throughout this research process and is seen to contrast with the caution and reticence to focus on 'cultural diversity' expressed by a number of teachers and the concern expressed by some others that such teaching was not being comprehensively carried out.

Chapter 2: 'Multicultural Education for All?'; framing the Swann Report

2:00 Introduction

In the first chapter, I looked at the development of official racialised discourse from the early 1980s to the present day, suggesting that although appearing to have incorporated an understanding of institutional racism into its conceptual vocabulary, this may not in fact be the case. This chapter will further explore the extent to which official racialised discourse in education supports a radical analysis of race relations in British society. In this chapter I critique the Swann Report of 1985 (DES, 1985), as the first official racialised guideline that has had significant relevance for majority white schools. The Swann Report can be seen as institutionalising the idea of multiculturalism into the British educational system. I consider critiques of the Swann Report whilst examining the content of the Report itself, in an attempt to understand the meanings that it attaches to racial and cultural difference and its consequent recommendations for schools. The questions I ask concern the Swann Report's understanding of the implications of 'race' and ethnicity in education and the suggested curriculum approaches that schools should take. **At the heart of this discussion is my thesis that the immigration of people of colour and the entry of their children into British schools has constituted a 'problem' to the institutional structures, a position which is, I suggest albeit unwittingly, represented in 'official racialised discourse'.** In the process of my research in schools, which will be reviewed in Chapter 6, I will refer to this 'official racialised discourse', to consider the extent to which it reflects hegemonic understandings of 'race' and 'difference'. I am particularly interested in considering the multicultural approach suggested by Swann in relation to majority white schools, placing this approach in critical relation to other rationales for interventions for educating about 'race' and ethnicity in these schools.

2:01 The context of Swann

A Committee of Inquiry, convened by Shirley Williams, then Labour's Secretary for Education, was set up in 1979, as a response to the recommendations of the Select Committee of 1977 (HMSO 1977) to research the reasons for the educational underachievement of children from 'West Indian' backgrounds. The Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration (HMSO 1977) recommended

holding an inquiry into this matter. This Committee was initially chaired by Anthony Rampton; an interim report entitled *West Indian Children in Our Schools*² (DES 1981) was issued in 1981 (Grosvenor, 1997, p.71). Klein identifies the Rampton Report as the 'first official recognition of racism as a major factor in children's performance' (Klein, 1993, p.87), the report having identified one of the major reasons that Black children were underachieving to be teacher's racism, both intentional and unintentional:

The Committee believes that only a very small minority of teachers could be said to be racist in the commonly accepted sense. However it claims that a teacher's attitude towards, and expectations of, West Indian pupils may be subconsciously influenced by stereotyped, negative or patronising views of their abilities and potential, which may prove a self-fulfilling prophecy, and can be seen as a form of 'unintentional racism'. The Committee concludes that, whilst racism, whether intentional or unintentional, cannot be said alone to account for the underachievement of West Indian children, it can and does have an important bearing on their performance at school. (DES, 1981, pp.70-86)

This conclusion in the Rampton Report can be viewed as a precursor to the findings of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report of 1999 in that it too later acknowledged the influential effect of racism, even if it is unintentional, using the phrase, 'discrimination through unwitting prejudice'. (Macpherson, 1999, paragraph 46:1) The Rampton Committee published its interim Report in 1981 (DES 1981). The Committee was reconvened under the Chair of Lord Swann with a broader remit to include documenting the school experience of children from all ethnic minority groups. The Swann Report, published in 1985 (DES 1985), did not continue the assertion made in the interim Report, that racism played an important part in the poor performance of West Indian children. Instead, it focused on the considerations of the class and cultural background of black and Asian children and the failure of the curriculum to represent their cultures and their histories, thus promoting a multicultural perspective. The Swann Report suggested that this failure to acknowledge cultural differences contributed to the low self-esteem and consequent poor performance of West Indian children in particular (Grosvenor, 1997, pp.72-74). In its recommendations, the Swann Report, *Education for All* (DES, 1985), sets out a rationale and a standard for multi-cultural education for diversity which continues

² The title of this Report signifies the sense that Jenkins 1966 pronouncement that Britain was a multi-cultural country, had not yet become taken for granted in official discourse by 1981.

to inform the intervention of schools, particularly of those in majority white areas. The Swann Report, arguably the most influential report that had been written to date on ethnic and racial diversity in British schools, makes the argument that an approach to address and respond to the diversity that characterised modern Britain should apply to all schools stressing “the relevance of multi-cultural education to all children”. (DES, 1985, p. 226)

What principles can be deduced as guiding the recommendations of the Swann Report? How is the ‘problem’ perceived and what does Swann suggest are the educational imperatives needed to address this problem? In looking to answer these questions, I propose to critique the multicultural framework in which the Swann Report is situated and to consider the implication of this framework for majority white schools.

2:02 Framing the ‘problem’ in terms of cultural differences

It is important to recognise the wider context of official racialised discourse as one in which race equality pronouncements have run in parallel with the immigration control policies of various governments since the mid 1960s. That this dichotomy of intention is on the one hand sympathetic and on the other suspicious is aptly expressed by Lester:

Our law has two faces. One face confronts the stranger at the gate, grudgingly and suspiciously; the other is turned benevolently toward the newcomer and his descendants within the gate, guaranteeing the treatment of members of ethnic minorities as individuals on their merits, rather than discriminatory treatment on the basis of racial stereotypes, prejudices and assumptions. With one face, the law embodies and reinforces racial inequality; with another, it expresses and urges racial equality. (Lester, 2000, p.33)

This divided approach is one that can be detected in official racialised discourse towards pupils of minority ethnicity. It is argued in this thesis that their presence in schools is constituted as being a ‘problem’ with differing perspectives framing varying causes for this problem. It is important to recognise these multiple and sometimes contradictory contexts of official discourse, regardless of the seemingly positive sentiments about valuing difference that are expressed in the field of education; the underlying persuasion at the nation’s borders is that immigration of

large numbers of people is fundamentally undesirable. Minority ethnic pupils' presence in schools is widely reported as having been problematic; the cause given varies from their difficulties in adapting to the language, to their home cultures conflicting with school culture (Grosvenor, 1997, p.52) to teacher and institutional racism (Coard, 1971). The reasons for the 'problem' is thus seen either as a matter of language, culture or of racism.

There is also a fine conceptual distinction between the *effects* of black children's presence in schools considered to be problematic and their presence in itself being regarded as problematic. For example Margaret Thatcher's statement pertaining to fears of being 'swamped' would indicate that the very presence of minority ethnic communities is a problem. In a television interview during the election campaign of 1978, she stated:

People are really rather afraid that this country might be swamped by people with a different culture and you know the British character has done so much for democracy, for law, and done so much throughout the world, that if there is any fear that it might be swamped, people are going to react and be rather hostile to those coming in. (Television interview, 30/01/1978, quoted in Gaine, 1995, p.27)

The bussing of minority ethnic children away from schools where the minority ethnic pupil population was over 30% to schools with a lower percentage of such pupils, took place from the mid 1960s to the early 1970s. This policy also demonstrates that the very presence of minority ethnic children in schools was seen as a potential 'problem', in this case for the education of white, British children (Grosvenor, 1997, p.54). I am suggesting that it is the framing of the influx of minority ethnic people into Britain, either as a problem in itself or as causing potential problems in schools, that influences the way in which multiculturalism is approached. This is to suggest that there may be a link between the way in which the presence of minority ethnic pupils in schools is understood and whether the status quo is seen as being acceptable or as needing to be challenged through the educational system. I am arguing that the Swann Report is fundamentally accepting of the status quo and in this respect the changes it recommends to the educational system do not question or challenge the fundamental precepts of the wider social system.

2:03 Critiquing the Swann Report

The Swann Report, commissioned in response to the underachievement of 'West Indian' pupils argued that it was the responsibility of local authorities to ensure that all schools provided curricula, which were culturally diverse 'to take full account of the pluralism which is now a marked feature of British life' (Swann, 1985, p.767). The main conclusions and recommendations recognised that schools are in a position to change behaviour and attitudes towards people from minority ethnicities. The Report recognised the possibility of prejudice and discrimination being responsible for underachievement suggesting that further research was necessary to evidence whether some teachers were racist. The Swann Report took a concerted stand against an assimilationist approach to education, being concerned about the 'Anglocentric bias of the curriculum' (Swann, 1985, p.763).

In stressing the need for multicultural education in *all* schools (a key recommendation in the context of this thesis) The Swann Report suggested that,

...“multicultural” considerations are of as much relevance to such areas (schools with few, if any, ethnic minority pupils) as to other, more evidently multiracial areas.’(Swann, 1985, p.763)

The positioning of writers critical of the hegemony supported by the Swann Report reflects my own analysis both of the Swann Report and of multicultural education in general. The Swann Report proposes the following interrelated and complementary strands:

1. 'meeting the needs of ethnic minority students'
2. 'broadening the education offered to all pupils to reflect the multi-racial nature of British society' (Runnymede, 1985, p.9)

These strands break down into a series of recommendations; those most pertinent to my particular critique of the discourse of the Swann Report are as follows:

- curriculum changes should be made
- education has to do something more than the reinforcement of the beliefs, values and identity which each child brings to the school
- all schools should adopt clear policies to combat racism

- all schools whether multi-racial or 'all white', should review their work in the light of the principles proposed. (Runnymede, 1985, pp.10-11)

Chapter 6 of this thesis investigates the operation of two of the principles foregrounded above, namely curriculum change and policies to combat racism. It is interesting that these themes, as laid down in 1985, continue to have resonance in education for diversity over twenty years after the publication of the Swann Report (DES, 1985). The statement above referring to the onus of schools to do more than to reinforce the 'beliefs, values and identity' of its pupils is interesting and will be considered now.

The Swann Report refers repeatedly to the 'shared values' of a pluralist society in terms of ethnic minorities needing to adopt these values. Figueroa (1991, p.82) argues that the Swann Report sets out to find a 'balance' 'between assimilation and separatism' by suggesting that all pupils need to understand the shared values of our society (DES, 1985, p.316). The Swann Report sketches an idealised multi-racial society:

We consider that a multi-racial society such as ours would in fact function most effectively and harmoniously on the basis of pluralism which enables, expects and encourages members of all ethnic groups, both minority and majority, to participate fully in shaping society as a whole within a framework of *commonly accepted values, practices and procedures* (my italics), whilst allowing, and where necessary, assisting the ethnic minority communities in maintaining their distinct ethnic identities within this common framework. (DES, 1985, p.5)

The suggestion in the Swann Report that all groups should accept a set of shared values is open to the question of whose shared values need to be accepted by everyone else, presumably, the ethnic minorities need to accept the values of the majority. This example of a taken-for-granted dominant framework of values is linked to Ifekwunigwe's notion of bi-racialization that will be explored further in Chapter 3 (Ifekwunigwe, 1999, p.13) in which taken-for-granted racialised structures of status are seen to influence individuals' life experiences.

The discourse evident in the Swann Report of the need to teach common values while allowing the development of separate identities can be compared with

Parekh's discussion fifteen years later. Parekh stresses the need for community cohesion alongside a parallel notion that community differences should be respected. He introduces the notion that Britain should be seen as constituting 'a community of communities', using this same framing concept of 'shared values':

We have argued that Britain should develop a community of communities in which there are shared values but also recognition of differences. (Parekh, 2000, p.90)

May is critical of 'the charade of universalism and neutrality' (May, 1999, p.31) within which education is framed and which the Swann Report would seem to employ. May calls for initiatives in schools to:

unmask and deconstruct the apparent neutrality of civism, that is, the supposedly universal, neutral set of cultural values and practices that underpin the public sphere of the nation-state. (May, 1999, p.30)

These seemingly neutral values, argues May, are historically and culturally situated. As such the Swann Report's notion that the task of schools is to teach such values ignores the fact that they are intimately connected to the institutional powers, the authority of which is taken for granted by the authors of the Report.

As illustrated, the Swann Report endorses the idea of a democratic pluralist society, and suggests that schools should 'achieve a balance' between the maintenance of the '*essential* (my italics) elements of the culture and lifestyles of all the ethnic groups within it and ... the acceptance by all groups of a set of shared values distinctive of society as a whole' (DES, 1985, p.6). This understanding of pluralism, in suggesting that there are 'essential elements' of the culture of 'all ethnic groups', fixes the idea of the culture into a static entity that needs to be 'maintained', rather than conceiving of culture as a fluid and negotiated set of sensibilities which transform and mutate over time, in relation to the cultures of others and in the expressions of new generations. As Rattansi suggests:

The Swann Report thus failed to break with the cultural and racial essentialism which had hegemonized debate in this area. (Rattansi, 1992, p.18)

Figuroa critiques the Swann Report for failing to provide a critical educational approach to social injustice within society. Although the Report is critical of

individual instances of racism and would seek to challenge those, Figueroa suggests that it does not address the more pervasive inequalities in society, quoting the Swann Report he claims that to; 'raise awareness, overcome ignorance and change attitudes' though desirable, does nothing to 'address the very structures, procedures, mechanisms and processes of the school and the education system generally' (Figueroa, 1991, p.85). Figueroa's critique of the Swann Report is that it is not sufficiently ideologically positioned in its understanding of the power structures of society to suggest strategies to tackle structural racism:

...it is misconceived to think of countering racism merely in terms of teachers seeking to **dispel present ignorance** (DES 1985, p.88). (Figueroa, 1991, p.85)

The critique of the Swann Report presented here centres on its positioning as a liberal document, condemning racism and acknowledging the need to respect cultural difference and to teach about these in schools, but failing to look beyond relatively superficial cultural difference to institutional structures of power, influence and hegemony.

Runnymede's critique of the Swann Report, made in the year of its publication, precedes those already discussed, suggesting that the Swann Report was making a set of recommendations to ensure the maintenance of the status quo:

What is sought is not a radically different social structure, but rather an extension of this already existing pluralism to embrace ethnic minority communities. (Runnymede, 1985, p.2)

How does the principle of Swann's multiculturalism operate in the context of majority white schools and what other, related models of interventions have been envisaged in discussions about delivering a curriculum that addresses cultural diversity?

2:04 The discourse of Swann in the context of majority white schools

Multicultural education in the 1970s was confined to areas that had a large number of black children and to non-examination courses on which most of the black pupils were placed (Massey, 1991, p.13). The Swann Report stressed that even those schools in which there were few or no pupils from minority ethnic origin should include a multicultural perspective within their curricula. In its recommendations, it was seen as imperative that all children in schools needed to be aware of, and to

be taught about, the different cultures that made up British society. In referring to the strategy for implementation of 'Education for All' (the title of the Swann Report), the summary states:

the response of schools, both multi-cultural and 'all-white', to cultural diversity has to be seen as a central feature of the current debate on the balance and breadth of the school curriculum... (Runnymede, 1985, p.10)

Even before the publication of the Swann Report, Page and Thomas recommended that multicultural education should take place in majority white schools as well as in multi-ethnic inner cities. All schools, they suggested, needed to engage with the changing ethnic profile of the country, regardless of whether those changes were evident in their particular locality:

...one of the main aims of multicultural education is to improve the skills, knowledge and attitudes which will enable pupils and teachers to participate responsibly in a multi cultural environment. (Page and Thomas, 1984, p.42)

In this thesis I wish to investigate the implications of the onus on teachers in majority white areas to deliver 'multicultural education' which, according to how the curriculum is constructed, may compel them to engage in teaching about cultures that do not reflect their own experience. My research interest is to find out from teachers in majority white schools how they envisage cultural diversity education³, how well equipped they consider themselves to be to teach in this area and what they feel are the pertinent issues linked to this obligation.

Multicultural education as a descriptor has been used to signal different perspectives which underlie both its task and its approach. Some of these, particularly in connection with teaching in majority white schools, will be reviewed below. Rattansi in 1992, uses the term 'black'⁴ to define the purpose, as he sees it,

³ The term 'multicultural education' used at the time of the Swann Report, has been replaced in official racialised discourse as 'cultural diversity education'. This term itself is now being replaced by 'community cohesion' with the possible consequence of removing an automatically racialised perspective

⁴ see Chapter 1 for discussion about the changing significance of the term 'black' in official racialised discourse.

of multicultural education, as being to teach white pupils to tolerate 'black minorities':

Multiculturalism, as expressed in the Swann Report...is based on the premise that the key issue facing schools is how to create tolerance for black minorities and their cultures in a white nation now characterised by cultural diversity or cultural pluralism. (Rattansi, 1992, pp.24-25)

This understanding of multiculturalism is open to critique from differing views of its aims and applications. In reviewing the literature focusing on the rationale for teaching about 'difference' in majority white schools, various authors have conceived of the task in different ways, which are signalled by the terminology they use to describe their perspective. For example the following terms are used to frame the educational strategies that the authors under review have proposed in relation to teaching in majority white schools:

- *the multicultural curriculum* (Page and Thomas, 1984, Tomlinson, 1990)
- *the multicultural anti racist curriculum* (Massey, 1991)
- *education for racial equality and social justice* (Brown, Barnfield and Stone, 1991)
- *antiracist education*, (Gaine, 1995, Troyna, 1989)
- *critical multiculturalism* (May, 1999)

It is from these differing critical perspectives of the aim of the project that these authors make claims about the interventions that they see to be necessary for successful education for diversity. As suggested, the frameworks within which these authors understand the purpose of 'educating about difference'⁵ indicate different perceptions of the imperatives of the task. Each of these authors has conducted research in majority white schools and each perceives the context and the objectives differently. How do the authors' conceptual frameworks and research projects inform their recommendations and proposed strategies?

In *Still No Problem Here*, Gaine makes a claim for the need for directed antiracist curriculum interventions in majority white schools:

⁵ Rather than using one of the terms under discussion and thereby adopting a specific position at this stage, I prefer to use the term 'educating about difference' as a way of encompassing these different perspectives

Almost all pupils, in almost all parts of the country, have considerable levels of confusion, misunderstanding, learned misinformation and ignorance about 'race'. Many have high levels of prejudice and hostility... Multicultural education as it is understood may well leave these attitudes untouched. (Gaine, 1995, p.14)

Supported by his research findings, Gaine suggests that where there is an absence of interaction with people from diverse ethnicities, white children will internalise negative stereotypes about black people which may not come to the notice of teachers unless those pupils are asked to explore their views, for example in creative writing exercises such as those which form the basis of Gaine's research. His work is directed towards teachers, offering strategies to initiate an antiracist dimension to policy and practice in schools.

In a position that may be argued to share the discursive understanding of the Swann Report, Tomlinson, citing a government white paper on *Better Schools* (DES, 1985b) suggests that the role of multicultural education is to:

...reflect and develop an understanding of British society and Britain's role in the world, and actively to teach all groups to respect each other. (Tomlinson, 1990, p.11)

This perspective forefronts Britishness and although Tomlinson goes on to consider the suggestion that there needs to be a model of political education to combat racism, (Tomlinson, 1990, p.17) the above description of multicultural education does not take into account power differentials, which, others argue, determine the experiences and life chances of many people from minority ethnicities in the UK. Tomlinson's perspective also presumes the same moral neutrality of British culture and society, as discussed above in relation to the Swann Report (DES, 1985) that is at odds with Sivanandan's critique of multiculturalism in that:

to learn about other cultures is not necessarily to learn about the racism of one's own. (IRR, 1982, p.8)

Troyna and Hatcher construct an argument that racism is a social force that is often unrecognised and unacknowledged, presenting their research findings as a challenge to 'an idealised conception of the world'. They feel that the reality of children's experiences in majority white schools is that "race' might shape and constrain young children's lives' (Troyna and Hatcher, 1992a, p.2). They take an

ethnographic approach to their research, seeking to investigate the meaning of 'race' in children's everyday experiences, with the objective of exploring:

the ideological lens through which they make sense of their world and act within it. (Troyna and Hatcher, 1992a, p.4)

A key issue that I am setting out to explore in this thesis is the relation between a localised understanding of racialised language and the broader interpretation of this language as a potential 'racist incident'. This is the relationship between intention and interpretation. A child, who is involved in a quarrel, may be concerned at that moment to call another person a rude or hurtful name, calling on her/his repertoire of known rude names, without necessarily any racist intention, whereas onlookers may interpret that particular expression as racist and as such define the incident as being a racist incident. My contention here is that a seemingly racist utterance, particularly if made by a child in a primary school context, such as that explored by Troyna and Hatcher, needs to be understood as a layered event as in the model that they offer, containing several potential levels of meaning. This layering of meaning may be common to events that are labelled as racist, as the definition of racism is a contingent and slippery notion; more attention will be given to this subject as the thesis develops. Troyna and Hatcher state, 'the meaning of a specific incident can only be determined by an analysis of the underlying social processes that produced it' (Troyna and Hatcher, 1992a, p.198). In this claim the 'underlying social processes' can be understood both as localised, in terms of the sense made by the individual actors involved, and in addition 'the underlying social processes' also refer to underlying cultural and institutional processes. This broad - brush approach of simultaneously appreciating both the micro and the macro context of incidents is, I would argue, important to any analysis of how racist incidents are understood. To what extent are macro interpretations of racism imposed on social events, even when those who instigate them or are involved with the events do not share this meaning? It is here that official discourse, with its bureaucratic approach and recommendations may not focus enough on the need to explore a localised understanding of 'what is going on'.

The proactive concept of 'education for race equality and social justice', of Brown, Barnfield and Stone (1991) rejects an approach that simply seeks to teach about

other cultures, as some multiculturalists would propose to do. They focus their attention rather on young people's conception of their place in the world. In this sense they describe their approach as:

genuinely child centred... working from the children's own felt experience to equip them with the emotional and intellectual tools to make connections between their own experiences and those of black and minority ethnic groups. (Brown, Barnfield and Stone, 1991, p.5)

Brown, Barnfield and Stone suggest that the focus in multicultural education, should be on investigating the pupils' own cultural traditions to enable them to make the connection between their own 'heritage' and the traditions of 'other people's' cultures. For example, they state:

If children are genuinely to value, for example, the oral tradition of some Black British communities, they need to understand similar traditions may have existed in their own communities. (Brown, Barnfield and Stone, 1991, p.5)

The pedagogic approach suggested here is to engage the pupils to consider and relate firstly to their own identities and cultural positioning, before being supported to consider those of other people.

However, the authors suggest that rather than using their own actual experience from which to make links with those of others, the (presumably) 'white' children, will have to be introduced to their cultural *traditions* as their own current cultures are seen as being 'deprived'. In this way the idea of 'culture' becomes divorced from lived experience and the idea of making connections with other people is compromised. This idea will be further considered in Chapter 4 in connection to discussions about current curriculum interventions.

2:05 Critiques of multicultural approaches

I wish to consider critiques of multiculturalism as a pedagogic intervention and discuss the implementation of multicultural approaches in the majority white classroom setting. Racialised intervention in schools has been determined by a discourse that was initiated by, and grew out of, the reaction to black pupils' underachievement in British schools (Coard, 1971; Grosvenor, 1997). The initial onus of the Swann Report (DES, 1985), which originated from Shirley Williams'

establishment in 1979 of a Committee of Enquiry into the Education of Ethnic Minority Groups, was on addressing black pupils' underachievement (Gaine, 1995, p.34). There is therefore an emphasis in the Swann Report on the underachievement of black children, and among other measures, the Report recommended the monitoring of the educational performance of ethnic minority groups. **In this thesis however, I am less concerned with the academic achievement of pupils from different ethnicities, I intend rather to investigate how, whether and to what effect curriculum approaches are being employed to counter prejudiced or stereotypical attitudes in majority white schools.**

Multiculturalism is portrayed as occupying a specific position in a series of educational initiatives to adapt to the fact of post-war immigration of black and Asian communities in particular. How useful is it to adopt the linear model that Grosvenor refers to, citing Mullard's notion of 'racial forms of education, which progressed by moving through the distinct stages of assimilation, integration, and cultural pluralism, (Grosvenor, 1997, p.49, citing Mullard, 1982)) as a means to understand the official and political rationale to intervention in schools? Although this linear model seems to be an effective way of organising the conceptual shifts between these stages, Grosvenor argues that the apparent changes in policy that are seen to mark an increasingly liberal approach, conceal a static position in the underlying understanding of the policy makers:

there is an inherent weakness in this approach (*that of a linear model*) in that it draws attention to the elements of change in policy, rather than identifying any element of continuity. (Grosvenor, 1997, p.49)

Grosvenor's observation makes an interesting claim alluding to official racialised discourse, in suggesting that, at its core, it may have changed little over the years. Drawing attention to the stages representing changing educational approaches to 'difference' also alerts us to the possibility that at any particular time in a school setting, there may an overlap of influences and approaches that determine teachers' interventions in the classroom.

The multicultural perspective as framed in this chapter is critiqued by those who believe that the intervention objective must be to educate pupils about the fact of

injustice and that multiculturalism does little to achieve this. Gaine suggests that multicultural education has no impact in challenging pupils to develop a critical perspective about the way that society frames racial difference. He claims that:

...to hope that by some process of osmosis, ideas about cultural relativity or knowledge about Ramadan will transform the views on 'race' of many white school children is to hope for far too much. (Gaine 1995, p.2)

Other commentators critical of the rationale offered by exponents of multiculturalism, suggest that rather than arising from the apparent educational motive of teaching about other cultures, the impetus of the multicultural initiative is an attempt to counter Black resistance, as Grosvenor suggests:

the promotion of cultural difference through the curriculum was based on a concern for maintaining good 'race relations' rather than a recognition of the value of different cultures. (Grosvenor, 1997, p.60)

and Sarup claims:

...multiracial education is being used as a State strategy to diffuse and recuperate black resistance in schools and society. (Sarup, 1986, p.33)

Mullard (1982) makes a similar claim to Grosvenor's, discussed above, in speaking of the British education system as having gone through distinct phases of adaptation to the presence of black pupils. Mullard suggests that all these phases stem from 'the social imperative' to maintain, as far as possible, the dominant structure of institutions, values and beliefs' (Mullard, 1982, p.121); each stage, according to Mullard, implies 'integration of alien black groups... into a society dedicated to the preservation of social inequality.' (Mullard, 1982, p.130)

These critiques of the multicultural project are of its failure to draw a link between racial difference and social structure. Looking further into actual classroom interaction, the concluding discussion in this chapter considers ways in which classroom delivery can be conceived to incorporate concepts of power, empowerment and injustice that critics of Swann's model of multiculturalism suggest should be taking place in this area of the curriculum.

2.06 Developing a critical multiculturalism

McLaren and Torres, discuss a more radical concept of multiculturalism than that recommended in the Swann Report. They start with the premise that there is conflict between cultures, and that pupils' political engagement should be a goal of multi cultural education. Critical to their position is this engagement of pupils in the process of learning, so that rather than being told about other cultures, they are encouraged to critically explore what it is that they already 'know'. McLaren and Torres cite Mohan in presenting a radical notion of multiculturalism:

multiculturalist pedagogy takes as its starting point a notion of culture as a terrain of conflict and struggle over representation...Rather than present culture as the site where different members... co-exist peacefully, it has to develop strategies to explore and understand this conflict and to encourage creative resolutions and contingent alliances that move students from interpreting cultures to intervening in political processes. Implicit in this agenda is a shift in pedagogical emphasis from transmitting to transforming knowledge. (McLaren and Torres, 1999, p.70)

McLaren and Torres create an argument for diversity education to deliver a critical form of multiculturalism, which is grounded in lived experience, and works towards political consciousness and a confidence in pupils to affect social change. This stance moves away from that associated with multiculturalism as teaching about other cultures. It has as its starting point a level of engagement that moves beyond the norms of traditional classroom interaction between teachers and pupils to one in which a real engagement with political realities that relate to the experiences of the pupils, encourages them to challenge their own assumptions.

McLaren and Torres continue their call for the rethinking of pedagogy, to ground it within lived experience:

The critical pedagogy to which we are referring needs to be made less *informative* and more *performative*, less a pedagogy directed towards the interrogation of written texts than a corporeal pedagogy grounded in the lived experiences of students...Teachers need to displace the textual politics that dominate most multicultural classrooms and engage in a politics of bodily and affective investment. A critical pedagogy for multicultural education should serve to quicken the affective sensibilities of students as well as provide them with a language of social analysis and cultural critique. (McLaren and Torres, 1999, p.71)

This understanding of a collaborative approach to multi-cultural education, working

with the pupil's own experience, is particularly challenging in majority white schools in which the predominant experience may be of cultural uniformity. Similar challenges are faced when teachers are charged to draw on the experiences of students as a prerequisite for an effective approach to multi-cultural teaching. Sleeter and Montecinos, make this important challenge to the very perception of a teacher's role, when it comes to the classroom delivery of effective multicultural education:

Most educators find it hard to acknowledge that we rarely understand a culture or community to which we do not belong as well as we might believe that we do. As teachers we are used to knowing more than our students and are often very threatened by the fact that students or their parents might know more than we do. As a result, in cross-cultural classrooms well-intentioned multicultural teachers too often attempt multicultural teaching by presenting superficial versions of other people's cultures and communities... (Sleeter and Montecinos, 1999, p.118)

The principle expressed by Sleeter and Montecinos is that teaching about diversity, or difference, is potentially a unique moment in which the roles of teacher and learner become blurred and experience rather than knowledge becomes central. In classrooms in majority white schools, the task of identifying experience of difference from the cultural norm may not be as straight-forward as in a multicultural classroom, but I would argue that the principles expressed in the above textual references of locating the learning within the pupils' lived experiences, must be seen as necessary to avoid the accusations so frequently levelled at multicultural teaching of tokenism, stereotyping, irrelevance or ethno-centrism.

2.07 Conclusion

The Swann Report's endorsement of a commonly accepted framework of 'shared values of our society' (DES, 1985 p.316) as a desirable outcome is, as discussed, illustrative of a discourse which does not seek to disrupt or challenge the status quo. In Chapter 2, I have critiqued the implicit assumptions of some multicultural perspectives implicit in official discourse, in particular those suggesting that 'our' values need to be shared by all. This chapter has also explored some of the interventions offered by theorists as regards educating about difference in majority white schools, looking at underlying framings of the significance of 'difference' and the resulting educational objectives and suggested classroom processes. The

resonance and relevance of key representations of official racialised discourse, in majority white schools today, will be considered further in the following chapters. Having made the link between the Swann Report of 1985 and the framings of multiculturalism, I will explore in Chapter 3 the racialised discourse of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, 2000, and the idea of antiracism. Critical attention will be given to the suggestion in official discourse that racist incidents are understood as being the manifestation of racism in a school. The proposal being made in Chapter 3 is that the centrality of racist incidents in policy guidelines may detract from the pressing need for discursive processes which are able to reflect an understanding of racism that is broader and more pervasive than that being suggested at present by the supporting documentation to the RR(A)A.

Chapter 3: The Race Relations Amendment Act, 2000: is this legislative antiracism?

3:00 Introduction

In Chapter 2, I investigated the influence of the Swann Report of 1985 on the way that multicultural education is perceived, suggesting that it locates 'the problem' with the presence of minority ethnic pupils in British schools, in terms of differences of culture and spoken language. This 'problem' could thus be addressed, according to Swann, by the implementation of a multicultural curriculum in *all* British schools because 'Britain is a multiracial and multicultural society and all pupils must be enabled to understand what that means' (Runnymede, 1985, p.10). Chapter Two explored differences in how such a curriculum is perceived by various writers; it critiqued multiculturalism and drew attention to particular recommendations for classroom intervention. In Chapter Three, I will question whether the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, 2000 (RR(A)A) has signalled a significant shift in 'official racialised discourse' as applied to schools, and whether this can be seen in terms of a changing perception of the significance of racial difference, in particular when compared to the Swann Report's position on multiculturalism, as discussed above.

The RR(A)A, was introduced into legislation as a result of the recognition of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (Macpherson,1999) that local authorities and public bodies in Britain, including the police forces and the educational system, were institutionally racist, and needed to be compelled to devise Race Equality Schemes to implement policies and practices to address this problem. As applied to schools the RR(A)A is a legislative continuation of the concern that was central to the Swann Report, namely the poor educational attainment of 'West Indian' children in particular (DES, 1985). In the foreword to the guidance document, *Learning for All* (CRE, 2000), which, as will be discussed, supports schools in carrying out their duties under the RR(A)A. Jacqui Smith MP, the then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for School Standards, outlines the intention of the guidance document in a way that mirrors the concept, proposed in the Swann Report, of schools needing to transmit 'national values' as discussed in Chapter 2:

Government policy is that pupils from ethnic or religious minorities should have the same opportunities as all others to profit from what their schools can offer them. Low expectations, prejudice, intolerance and racism have no place whatever in our schools. Schools should aim to preserve and transmit our national values in a way which accepts Britain's ethnic and religious diversity and promotes understanding and racial harmony. (CRE, 2000, Foreword)

In this guidance, the term 'pupils from ethnic or religious minorities' has replaced the term 'West Indian' used in the Swann Report, but the framing of the pertinent issues continues to be the discourse of schools needing to address issues of attainment, and promote an acceptance of diversity.

3:01 Antiracist education and the reproduction of racism

Troyna (Troyna, 1989) distinguishes between two educational principles that emerged from the Swann Report, and are repeated in *Learning for All*, as illustrated above in Jacqui Smith's foreword, namely selection and learning. Selection is seen by Troyna to refer to the access of black children to scarce educational 'rewards' and encompasses considerations of their relative achievement and attainment in the educational sphere. Troyna makes the important argument that in majority white schools, official concerns about the attainment of black pupils may be less of 'an issue' and have less relevance than considerations of the climate and content of the 'learning'. Troyna suggests that in majority white schools there needs to be:

... less emphasis on the overt and quantifiable aspects of racial inequality, more on the ethos, curriculum and pedagogic features of educational institutions which contribute to what young people learn about themselves, others and the social world. (Troyna, 1989, p.182)

Troyna further suggests that the imperative for schools, particularly those in majority white settings, is to investigate pedagogic approaches:

which will challenge those less obvious, more diffuse but no less insidious means by which racism and the practices it gives rise to are maintained and reproduced. (Troyna, 1989, p.182)

The pedagogic focus of attention for schools, as envisaged by Troyna, should be to frame the educational experience by offering an approach that counters the reproduction of racism. This chapter will consider the extent to which the RR(A)A is able to meet this challenge of responding to the onus for learning to take place in

majority white schools about the 'reproduction' of racism. Troyna's vision of schools focussing pedagogic attention on how racism is 'maintained and reproduced' implies an anti-racist approach in which the operation of structural inequalities is exposed and held open to scrutiny. In defining what is and what is not an antiracist approach, Bonnett distinguishes six strands of antiracism suggesting that a 'variety of approaches can be defined as antiracist, including, 'multicultural antiracism' (Bonnett, 2000, p.85).

Bonnett's assertion of a variety of antiracisms causes some difficulties in discussing the extent to which 'official racialised discourse' incorporates an anti-racist perspective. Bearing in mind Bonnett's project to show how various ideologies can be included within the term 'antiracism', the discussions in this thesis will need to be discursively specific about the perspectives that are proposed in the sites of interest (by official discourse, by teachers and by pupils), rather than being intent on labelling these perspectives in terms of the extent to which they match an ideal of antiracist education. Antiracism cannot be understood to have a unitary definition, as is also evident in Gilroy's critique of the way that the term has been discredited:

It is possible, then, that the idea of antiracism has been so discredited that it is no longer useful. (Gilroy, 1992, p.50)

The intention in this thesis, as stated, is to attempt a representation of what is actually going on in schools as regards the positioning of cultural diversity in the curriculum and as regards the way that racism is conceived and acted upon. Perhaps a close approximation of what can be seen as helpful, for the purposes of this thesis, in an antiracist position, is Bonnett's definition of 'radical antiracism', which he particularly identifies in the context of the critique of the British education system:

One of the most well-developed areas of (*radical*) anti-racist critique is education; more particularly in the anti-racist critique of the racist nature of existing educational practice and the proposal for new forms of pedagogy, forms that facilitate students' 'critical abilities'. (Bonnett, 2000, p.106)

Such an antiracist position necessitates an acceptance that society is institutionally racist, a claim, which if taken seriously, would radically transform the education system as suggested by Troyna and Hatcher, (Troyna and Hatcher, 1992b, p.85).

3:02 The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the 'Learning for All' guidance.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act, (RR(A)A) 2000, introduced statutory requirements for all schools regarding their race equality policies and practice. The Act contains a compulsory requirement for all schools to comply with this, regardless of their racial intake. A key distinction between the Race Relations Act of 1976 and the RR(A)A, 2000, is that the latter does not contain the words 'where appropriate' as an option by which local authorities are able to make a decision about whether to get involved with proactive race equality work according to their racial profile. The newer law does not leave it to individual local authorities to decide whether the promotion of race equality is an 'appropriate' activity. All local authorities, including those in majority white areas, need to comply with the demands of the (RR(A)A). In order to support and instruct schools with the implementation of this process, the Commission for Racial Equality-authored document, *Learning for All*, was sent out by central government to every school in Britain in 2001 (CRE, 2000). This document offers guidance on the content of the Race Equality Policy, which every school was required to have in place by 31st May 2002. The language used in *Learning for All* can be understood as reflecting the way in which both racism itself and the task of schools' intervention into dealing with racism is understood in official discourse.

Many left wing local authorities in the 1980s including Burnage High School in Greater Manchester implemented antiracist policies. The antiracist approach of Burnage High was implicated in the murder of Ahmed Iqbal Ullah, a 13-year-old Bangladeshi pupil who was stabbed in the school playground by a white pupil, in 1986 (MacDonald, 1989). Rattansi records the force with which the Committee of Inquiry (made up of individuals with 'impressive anti-racist credentials' (Rattansi, 1992, p.13)) criticized Burnage High School's antiracist policies:

The committee of inquiry delivered a strong and, for some, an astonishing condemnation of the antiracist policies apparently vigorously pursued at the school, castigating them as doctrinaire, divisive, ineffectual and counterproductive. (Rattansi, 1992, p.13)

Gaine too is mindful of the failure of the school's anti-racist policies in this tragic event, suggesting that Burnage High School, 'failed to engage with the lived experience of the largely working class white pupils in this all-boys school' (Gaine, 1995, p.56). The questions asked in this chapter concern the way in which official racialised discourse suggests to schools that racism should be understood and countered in school policy. In particular I am interested in asking:

- does the way that racism is understood in the CRE publication, *Learning for All* (2000), provide a model for intervention which helps majority white schools understand and approach racism?
- is the policy-driven change, which the Act is designed to bring about, able to fulfil the Government's objective of preventing as well as challenging racism? (CRE, 2000, p.11)

I will consider the significance of 'race' as revealed in the *Learning for All* (2000) guidance, looking particularly at the way in which 'racist incidents' are understood. In particular, I explore the limitations of official discourse as exemplified in equalities legislation and discuss the racialised nature of sub-cultural discursive understandings, which may impact on the experience of school students. An empirically based investigation of the way that these issues are framed and understood by students and teachers in majority white schools will be continued in the discussion of themes raised by my own fieldwork in Chapter 6. I am suggesting that the underlying perception of the impact of 'race' and of racism that is embodied in the policy intervention required for schools under the RR(A)A, mirrors the discourse of the Swann Report, which holds pupils of minority ethnicities to be causing problems by their presence. My suggestion is that this perception is implicit in the understanding portrayed in the guidelines for identifying and tackling racism. To support this claim I will be applying Troyna and Hatcher's model of the layers of structural and cultural influences in which a racist incident is located (Troyna and Hatcher, 1992a, pp.39-47), to critique the way in which 'racist incidents' are understood in the 'official discourse' of the RR(A)A. **This discussion lays the basis for my argument that the present centrality of 'racist incidents', particularly at policy level, may not be the most appropriate lens through which to understand and respond to the complexities and contradictions**

raised by the idea of 'race' in majority white schools. This opportunity to frame the issues of racialised experience through a wider lens than that provided by this discourse of 'racist incidents is offered by the idea of 'bi-racialisation' (Ifekwunigwe, 1999) which will be explored in this chapter in the context of pupils in majority white schools. Ifekwunigwe defines bi-racialization by referring to the impact of the attribution of racial positionings which in social life may assign a status of superiority to Whiteness over an inferior status attributed to Blackness (Ifekwunigwe, 1999, p.13)

A bi-racialized approach to understanding how racialised designations may operate in majority white schools, offers an insight into how racial differences are seen and understood. This exploration forefronts the importance of schools exploring racial and cultural diversity by means of the curriculum rather than their only reference to racial diversity being expressed by the management of racist incidents via schools' behaviour policies.

Consideration is given here to whether and how the RR(A)A, takes an approach to 'race' that essentialises the relationships between black and white pupils and teachers, and what the implications of such an approach in majority white schools might be. To summarise, the argument that I am making in this chapter is as follows;

Approaches to racism in schools need to reach below the surface of the events or incidents that happen, to the underlying inequalities in the system, (in schools in their structure and their curricula) inequalities which have their effect socially and psychologically on young people. The discourse of 'anti-racist' legislation as introduced through the RR(A)A is simplistic in its failure to recognise that need.

3:03 Framing 'the problem' in terms of racism

The focus on policies as stated in the requirements of the RR(A)A indicates a top-down approach, rather than one that facilitates a level of bottom-up engagement with principles of equality and social justice. Under the Act, schools are compelled to

produce documentation and monitoring statistics to indicate their compliance. Schools are specifically obliged to:

- Prepare and maintain a written race equality policy
- *Assess the impact of policies, including the race equality policy, on pupils, staff and parents from different racial groups. In particular schools should assess whether their policies have or could have an adverse impact on the attainment levels of pupils from different racial groups*
- Monitor the impact of the operation of policies on pupils, staff and parents from different racial groups, again giving priority to the impact on pupil attainment. (Runnymede, 2003, p.167)

As indicated above, the emphasis of the *Duties for Schools* under the RR(A)A is on the attainment of minority ethnic pupils. There has been comparatively little documented research in Britain relating to the underachievement of minority ethnic pupils in majority white schools in contrast to much research on the experience of isolation and harassment (for example, Connolly and Keenan, 2002; Gaine, 1995; Hamilton et al, 1999; Massey, 1991; Troyna and Hatcher, 1992a). A study by Cline et al, entitled *Minority Ethnic Pupils in Mainly White Schools*, based on a study in 35 LEAs of over 34,000 pupils in mainly white schools, suggests that in mainly white secondary schools there may be less differentiation than in urban schools, in the attainment levels of Black and minority ethnic pupils as compared to White pupils:

Children from Black Caribbean, Indian and Pakistani backgrounds ... also outperformed their urban counterparts at GCSE level but *not* at the end of Key Stage 2. Children from minority ethnic backgrounds shared in whatever educational advantages were available in these schools to the same degree as children from a White background in secondary school but not in primary school. (Cline et al, 2002)

On the basis of the results of this study, it may be that the emphasis of the RR(A)A on the educational attainment of Black and minority ethnic pupils may have a different relevance in majority white schools than in inner-city schools, in which a substantial proportion of pupils are of minority ethnicities and the issue of the attainment has long been of public concern. It is my contention here that in

majority white schools the ways in which teachers and pupils perceive, make sense of, and act on racial and cultural difference must be of primary concern. The challenge for majority white schools is to create spaces in both the formal and hidden curricula to support the pupils in the process of understanding the social implications of racialised difference and to explore interventions that do not essentialise difference or institute knee-jerk policies that forefront compliance rather than education.

The requirements of the RR(A)A compel schools to reformulate, record and review their intervention strategies both in terms of the curriculum and in terms of monitoring 'racist incidents' but questions remain as to what extent this piece of racialised legislation has brought about meaningful change in majority white schools. This thesis seeks to carry out empirical study in two schools, which investigates the conceptual frameworks under which 'race' is imagined, in terms of the official racialised discourse that the RR(A)A has brought about. It is the intent of classroom interaction as well as the policies that determine it that influences the impact of the educational process and my thesis is concerned with the limitations of policy dictates on influencing what this intent might be. The questions that I ask concern the way that teachers in majority white schools approach the task of 'education for diversity' which must include the way that racist incidents are understood as well as the way that racist incidents are acted upon in the classroom. In discussing the antiracist approach that the RR(A)A attempts to institute, I would maintain that the theory of antiracism does not translate easily into educational practice, partly because the antiracist position does not originate from an educational perspective, but rather from a political position to challenge the social structure in which a key role is assigned to the process of education. This point is expressed effectively by Giroux who suggests that a radical position towards education, which could arguably be seen to incorporate the perspective of antiracism, sees schools themselves as being structured as 'agencies of domination' and therefore unable to bring about radical social change:

...in spite of its insightful theoretical and political analysis of schooling, radical education theory suffered from some serious flaws. The most serious was its failure to move beyond the language of critique and domination...The agony of this position has been that it prevents left educators from developing a programme language in which they can

theorize *for* schools. Instead, radical educators have theorized primarily *about* schools as agencies of domination, and, as such, seldom concern themselves with the possibility of constructing new, alternative approaches to school organization, curricula, and classroom social relations. (Giroux, 1988)

In this sense the radical intentions of antiracism cannot easily be incorporated into official discourse, which by definition seeks to mediate, rather than to disrupt the operations of institutional structures such as schools. However, Giroux's analysis provides an interesting strategic dilemma for those who claim that our educational systems are ideally placed to counter the operations of institutional racism.

3:04 Understandings of 'racist incidents'

In considering the guidance document for schools, *Learning for All*, (CRE, 2000) to support the implementation of the RR(A)A it would seem to endorse the view of racism which Gilroy refers to as a 'coat-of-paint theory of racism' (Gilroy, 1992, 52), in that it imagines racism as being apparent on the surface of social relations rather than as being integral to their structure. This understanding can be detected in the following extract from *Learning for All*:

staff in predominantly white schools are alerted to the possibility of racism, racial harassment, prejudice and stereotyping. (CRE, 2000, p.42)

This call for school staff to be alert to the 'possibility' of racism, rather than to consider racism as pervading the understanding which legitimates the social, legal and political institutions of which schools are a part, seems to suggest a surface understanding of racism. Further analysis can be made of the way that 'racist incidents' are understood and the position they are given in the project of ensuring race equality. *Learning for All* suggests that the identification of 'racist incidents' should, under the Race Equality Plan signal the implementation of a policy-led response (CRE, 2000, pp.41-44). *Learning for All* goes on to suggest that perpetrators of racism be 'disciplined' (CRE, 2000, p.43) and that lists of the ethnic origins of all concerned are recorded and sent to the LEA (CRE, 2000, p.44). The focus of the policy pronouncements in recording details of the ethnicity of those involved in the incident, loads it with racialised significance, regardless of the possible layers of meaning in which the incident itself may have been constructed.

This focus assumes and mirrors a racialised interpretation to an event, which may have arisen from a very different set of localised meanings.

Troyna and Hatcher's model of racialised influences may help to explain a range of locations of racism that may underlie a racist incident. This model sets out a broader basis from which to understand the various and simultaneous locations of racism than the narrow perspective afforded by the focus just on the 'racist incident' itself. Troyna and Hatcher (1992a) seek to understand racist incidents in a synthesised way that is able to incorporate the micro and macro interplay attached to an incident, so that it can be understood as an event in which the particular and the general, the biographical and the social, can be seen to combust in the flare of the event. Their framework (summarised below) suggests that the following determinants are contained in each incident:

Structural: the differing relations of power and structure, which underlie the incident

Political/Ideological: the system of ideas that is prevalent at the time, for example racism may be justified in the prevailing *Zeitgeist*

Cultural: the lived experience and common sense understandings within the locality and community

Sub-cultural: the sub-cultures of the teachers and the young people

Biographical: factors and characteristics specific to the individuals involved

Contextual: the immediate history of a racist incident

Interactional: the actual event or incident, what was done, what was said.

Troyna and Hatcher's model, (1992a, pp.39-47) adapted from Waddington et al (Waddington, 1989 p.167) implies that policies and practices that are at present concerned only with dealing with the racist incident itself need to incorporate a wider understanding. The context in which the incident occurred, the immediate

background and understandings in which it is framed, as well as wider, cultural and political events should be understood as influencing the racialised perceptions of the pupils (and the teachers). The policy formulation, which dictates the response to racist incidents, can be critiqued as not taking into account the possible interactions and social relations that may form the context of the 'incident'. The policy imperative as stated in *Learning for All* (CRE, 2000, p.43) to punish racist language or behaviour exhibited between pupils fails to ask the question, 'what *exactly* is going on here?' at a profound level. It allows no attention to be paid to the particular history and circumstance surrounding the interaction within which the incident occurred. The framework of the victim and perpetrator (CRE, 2000, p.43) is a simplistic one which schools are asked to transpose onto what may be highly complex and contingent interactions. The challenge is for schools to look beyond these procedural-led reactions to racist incidents as a key feature of their race equality policies, in order to engage, through the taught curriculum, with structural, cultural, sub-cultural and personal understandings of racialised difference.

The argument I am making here claims that the guidance document for schools outlining their duties under the RR(A)A *Learning for All* frames racist incidents as being isolated from other layers of interaction, and suggests policy responses to reflect this understanding. This position, which enables 'racist incidents' to be understood in isolation from other forms of social interactions, derives from an understanding of racism as being 'always located on the surface of other things' (Gilroy, 1992, p.52), rather than as being integral to the way that Britain's institutions operate.

Gilroy suggests:

Seeing racism as determining rather than determinate, at the centre rather than in the margins, also means accepting that Britain's crisis is centrally and emphatically concerned with notions of race and national identity. (Gilroy, 1992, p.52)

The policy-driven, behaviour management response to the framing of racist incidents, as suggested in *Learning for All* is, I am arguing, an overly simplistic response to the complexity and contradictions of real life racialised positionings. Cohen expresses well the problems associated with the failure of policy to encompass these complexities:

...in order to construct certain exemplary models of antiracist policy and practice, it has been necessary to operate in terms of a reductive representation of racism, one which not only scales down its reality, but ignores its more complex features. It is this 'reductionism', this disavowal of complexity for the sake of pursuing moral certainties or political ideals, which has led to the present crisis of anti-racist education.' (Cohen, 1992, p.63)

This claim that racial complexities have been oversimplified by policy pronouncements has a particular pertinence in majority white schools where the social play resulting from racial and cultural difference is more likely to be experienced as an abstract concept, rather than a lived experience. Urban schools are often characterised by interplay of racial and cultural identities that challenge essentialist ideas about the way that racial and cultural differences are marked. Hewitt evokes the term 'polyculture' (Hewitt, 1991, pp.34-35) to describe the process in inner city schools in which minority and majority ethnic pupils interweave their internal and external identifications, based on cultural, ethnic and religious affiliations. This opportunity is clearly not available for pupils in majority white schools. There are fewer cultural alternatives to allow the formulation of sub-cultural sites from which the pupils can create new expressions. Without first-hand experience of living among racially and culturally different people, there is an absence of polyculture, of cultures colliding, mingling and transforming. Without the force of numbers behind them black pupils and those of minority ethnicities in majority white schools are unable to bring 'other' cultural expressions into the processes of mutual cultural transformation that Hewitt describes.

3:05 A bi-racialized perspective widening the lens of 'racism'

In this discussion concerning the legislative demand that schools respond to racist incidents or racial harassment (CRE, 2000) it is important to consider the relationships between pupils and between pupils and teachers that make such incidents possible. In this critique of the way in which racist incidents are understood in official discourse, I do not wish to understate the potential harm that such incidents can cause. **The point is not to deny a response to racist incidents, but rather to challenge an oversimplified understanding of the dynamics of how, and at what levels, racism operates.** The problem I am alluding to, manifest in official racialised discourse, as discussed above, is the

reduction of the complex and insidious dynamics of racism to the occurrence of neatly bounded 'racist incidents'. It may be that such incidents may more usefully be understood as a manifestation of the asymmetrical racialised social relations between pupils and between pupils and teachers that Ifekwunigwe refers to as bi-racialization (Ifekwunigwe, 1999). This term being used to describe the dominance of one form of racial experience over another and the social consequences of this.

I am suggesting that this idea of bi-racialization may offer an alternative position to that of racism, from which to investigate the consequences of racial and cultural differences in majority white schools. The idea of racism carries with it an element of agency or intention as ascribed to an individual perpetrator. This is obviously the case when the racism in racist incidents is identified, recorded and punished. However, referring back to Troyna and Hatcher's model (1992a) of the different contexts within which racism operates, there is an identified need for a broader analysis of racialised influence. The concept of bi-racialization can be a useful tool in the uncovering of relationships in this wider context. In using the lens of bi-racialisation, the clearly defined concept of racism as understood to be evident in the idea of racist incidents, loosens its analytical hold. A bi-racialized analysis is able to consider the sub - cultural processes and received understandings that inform how racial and cultural differences are perceived and acted upon. The idea of bi-racialization is, I would assert, a more encompassing concept to describe social positionings on a wider scale than that of racism, and may prove to be extremely useful in helping to focus attention on the *context* of a racist incident. In applied terms, bi-racialization can account for a sense of racial or cultural insignificance or invisibility, which may be experienced by some pupils of minority ethnicity attending majority white schools. In order to be accepted into majority white peer groups they may have to negate outward identification with 'inferior' black cultural allegiance (*One of Us*, 2004). I would go on to qualify the use of bi-racialization by stressing that although it is a useful concept, not all sites of engagement or conflict between black and white young people are characterised by unequal racialised power relations as suggested by the term. Personality, personal histories, and other variables will mediate the interactions, as argued by Back (Back, 1996, pp.94-96). In his ethnographic study of the racialised behaviour of young people in urban settings, Back records the subtleties of 'wind ups' and cussing

between young people of differing ethnicities and warns that attributing the charge of racism to such incidents needs an insider's awareness of their cultural boundaries:

It is in "cussing" and "wind up" situations that the relationship between black and white youth is most vulnerable. Any attempts to interpret racism must be informed by an understanding of the dynamics of these rituals. (Back, 1996, p.96)

Social encounters, which *can* be understood in terms of bi-racialized power relations, are evident in a short film entitled *Nothing Serious* (2001) which features young black people talking about their experiences of 'race' in majority white schools. The film was produced to show at a conference on 'race' and education in 2001 in which I had a coordinating role⁶. Some examples from the film of the young people discussing their experiences serve to illustrate that bi-racialized events may occur in circumstances that would not be recognised as 'racist incidents' by teachers in school or would be unlikely even to come to the attention of teachers:

- A black African teenage girl recalls being friendly with a British-born Asian girl, but notices that this girl becomes unfriendly to her when other white pupils' from the girls' peer groups were around. The African girl claims that coming recently from Africa and having an African accent made an open friendliness with her from the British-born Asian girl socially unacceptable. (*Nothing Serious*, 2001)
- A black British-born teenager recounted how when he was playing football with friends, a crowd of other boys jeered at him, chanting the Batman theme, replacing the word 'Batman' with 'black man'. His frustration at this incident was not so much in the action of the strangers, but more that his friends felt unable to offer him support or even to comment on what had taken place. (*Nothing Serious*, 2001)

The parties who caused these young people to feel hurt (the British born Asian girl and the friends of the black teenage boy) would not be seen to have been responsible for a racist incident under the terms of the *Learning for All* (CRE, 2000) guidelines and yet both the Asian girl and the friends of the black boy, through their

⁶ Conference on 'Race' and Education held at Hove Town Hall on 31st March 2001

action or inaction, have been responsible for causing pain and isolation which has a racialised dimension. These examples indicate the limitations of the policy suggested by *Learning for All*, (CRE, 2000) as being unable to make a difference to the social exclusions, which result from a bi-racialized pupil subculture within the school, which policy pronouncements are unable to affect. It is precisely because these situations formed a part of the school pupils' subcultural discourse, played out away from teachers, that the exclusion was experienced so acutely by the young people involved:

- Another black teenager appearing in the film recalled the names he had been called by the other students because of his colour and claims not to have been hurt by this. (*Nothing Serious*, 2001)

His comment that this was 'nothing serious' provides the film with its ironically framed title. As the school authorities remain unaware of the actual extent of the sites and frequency of these moments of social exclusion, their policies to confront it remain, for the most part, impotent. The attitudes held by their peers and teachers, encountered by the young people who feature in the film, are socially developed as a taken-for-granted bi-racialized stance.

In this thesis, I am able to raise, rather than fully explore the idea, indicated in various texts, (Bhavnani and Phoenix, 1994; Richardson and Wood, 1999; Fanon, 2000; Connolly and Keenan, 2002; *One of Us*, 2004) that racism is experienced as a psychological process. The effects of racism are recognised as an internalised experience affecting the sense of self and weakening feelings of belonging to the majority culture. The response of schools to racism is, by definition, an institutional response which objectifies the idea of racism in contrast to the subjective experience described above. The idea of racism in official discourse can be seen as being confined to the occurrence of 'incidents', the reaction to which is prescribed in policy. Racism is seen as an event, which becomes quantifiable and recordable and in accordance with these positivist terms of reckoning, the victims are supported and the perpetrators of racism are punished. The internally felt effect of racism becomes an externally understood, policy assigned phenomenon. Schools, by virtue of their structures, operate as sites in which the needs and experiences of the

individual are often subsumed under the force of collective need and experience. The suggestion is that rather than focusing on providing sanctions for racist incidents as a way to counter racism, schools need to put greater emphasis on imaginative approaches to the curriculum, to challenge the reproduction and maintenance (Troyna, 1989, p.182) of both racism and bi-racialization.

3:06 Conclusions

The construct of the racial incident and its positioning as a key marker of racism within schools and as such an indicator for a policy-led response, allows for a rarified sensibility to develop among policy enforcers (teachers) in which the 'problem' of racism is located solely within the manifestation of racist incidents. This assertion is not to deny the moments of extreme hurt, discomfort, isolation and pain caused by the racism identified as 'racist incidents', neither is it to deny that such manifestations need to be taken seriously and responded to by the school. What I am suggesting is that racialised understandings, particularly in majority white schools, may be more pervasive and potentially damaging than can be detected by the manifestation of racist incidents alone. Richardson and Wood give an apt illustration of this claim, by their representation of the iceberg structure of 'institutional racism in education' (Richardson and Wood, 1999). Whereas they are using the iceberg model to show the underlying reasons for the high permanent exclusion rates of African-Caribbean boys, the same model could be used to show the underlying processes which may be seen to be working to create and sustain racist incidents in schools.

In this thesis I argue in favour of moving away from locating the 'problem' of 'race' in education in racist incidents. Rather, the 'problem' may be located in the discourse of 'race' itself, enforced and perpetuated to some extent by the imposition of policy level imperatives. As well as Ifekwunigwe's concept of bi-racialization, Bourdieu's idea of habitus and cultural capital may be of use when investigating the relation of official discourse to 'what is going on' in the cultural sites of majority white schools (Bourdieu, 1990). May (1999) suggests that the idea of habitus can help to explore inequalities in power between dominant and subordinate groups, the habitus of dominant groups being constructed as 'cultural capital'. May allies this dominance to the 'normalization and valorization of whiteness' and sees this position in

opposition to the perception of minority ethnic cultures and practices as 'regressive and pre-modern' (May, 1999, p.30). Both Bourdieu's and Ifekwunigwe's theoretical constructions may prove to be valuable in gaining an understanding of the everyday discourse of teachers and students in majority white schools.

In order to intervene with greater sensitivity to racism and to approach the task of engagement with young people in a way that does not necessarily impose a solely racialised interpretation on each 'racist incident' it may be necessary to challenge the perspective of *Learning for All* (2000). It may be that the manifestation of classroom racism as employed by young people, needs to be re-imagined in a more mutable way, as a 'tool' which is used in a particular moment, calling on bi-racialized power relations, to dominate, put down or even wind-up (Back, 1996, p.96) another person. It can be understood as a construct that can be expressed at times, in the moment of conflict, and that can be left behind at other times, rather than being something that is always owned in a way in which it becomes integral to the personality of the person who displays it, making them a 'racist perpetrator'. Racism as such, it is argued here, as suggested by Essed, is embedded in a discourse rather than in a person or incident (Essed, 1991). The fundamental tenor of an anti-racist position is to challenge and change the racialised social relations on which society is built. The acknowledgement of this position can be seen to have an impact on official discourse in the form of the definition of institutional racism in the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report, (1999). The RR(A)A can be understood as a policy initiative to operationalise acting against institutional racism. The question initiated by this intended process is whether policy change imposed at governmental level in the form of legislation, can initiate real change in overcoming inequalities in society. Troyna and Hatcher frame the implications of this question forcefully:

...if the divisive properties of racism were to be given centre stage in policy documents this would raise enormous political dilemmas. It would demand a radical reappraisal of society and of the part played by education in the strengthening and reproduction of inequalities. (Troyna and Hatcher, 1992b, p.85)

The directive given to schools by the RR(A)A cannot easily be seen as providing a platform for this 'radical reappraisal'; furthermore, policies rely on human agency to carry them out, so the relationship between policy intent and classroom impact is

central and involves a process of understanding and engagement that may not always take place. In the case of the political positioning of antiracism as mediated through the RR(A)A, an additional question is how far policy directives can affect the culture and practice of schools. The implementation of specific policies to deal with racist incidents is an intended governmental strategy to use the legislative powers of the RR(A)A to reduce racism in schools. My argument has been that until majority white schools are able to look beyond incidents of racism to the social and cultural world view of racialised constructions which inform the school and the sub-cultural groups within it, the cultural sensibilities that give rise to this racism, in all its complexity, will remain intact.

In Chapter 4 the focus will be on making an analysis of official standards and guideline documents supporting the current implementation of cultural diversity in schools. The intention is to draw out the way in which these documents frame their understanding of the significance of racial and cultural difference and the interventions that are suggested that should be employed to teach about difference. The chapter concludes with a discussion about actual classroom intervention, drawing on the work of educationalists and researchers.

Chapter 4: Delivering the Cultural Diversity Curriculum; the relation of policy to practice

4:00 Introduction

In this chapter I explore the ways in which the cultural diversity curriculum is currently envisaged in official discourse and I will consider how these conceptions translate to the actual practice of cultural diversity teaching. My investigation involves several layers of relationships:

- that between the official discourse of racialised intervention and the underlying conceptions of 'difference'
- that between the official discourse and the recommendations made for implementation in the classroom
- that between these recommendations and the understanding of teachers and pupils as to how 'race' and difference are perceived and acted on in the context of school.

The last of these relationships will be explored further in the empirical research chapters: the first two relationships will be discussed below.

The idea of the cultural diversity curriculum has historically been preoccupied with teaching about 'the other' (as discussed in Chapter 2) and is still rooted in a discourse which problematises difference. In this chapter, I forefront the notion of 'whiteness' as a suggested starting point for a classroom engagement in majority white schools to what it might mean to explore cultural and racial experience. In looking at recent examples of official discourse, which offer guidelines as to how 'diversity' and 'cohesion' should be explored in the classroom and how standards should be set for teaching about difference, I argue that the underlying emphasis, albeit unwitting, remains one of framing a 'them' and 'us' perspective. I suggest that a framework that incorporates everyone as 'us' may not yet have been achieved in the standards and guidelines that underlie educational protocol. The current emphasis on 'community cohesion' as a (de)racialised ideal will also be examined for its underlying ethos.

4:01 Texts selected for analysis

The official racialised discourse that is critically analysed in this chapter has been

chosen from guidance texts on education about cultural diversity. In selecting from the huge variety of texts available for analysis I wanted to examine texts that offered direct guidance and that represented important official documents, designed to set standards and directly influence classroom intervention. However, these should not be regarded as seminal texts, rather they are illustrative of the position that is under consideration here, of the way that cultural diversity education is framed in official discourse. The texts that I have chosen to represent examples of 'official discourse' that come under analysis in this chapter are as follows:

Respect for all; Valuing diversity and challenging racism through the curriculum, www.qca.org.uk. (QCA, 2001). This text lays out an audit for schools to measure the steps that they are taking to ensure that they are implementing race equality and will be the main focus of my analysis.

Developing the global dimension in the school curriculum. (DfES, 2005) This text, developed by the charity Oxfam and endorsed by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, offers guidelines about educating for 'global citizenship' for teachers, head teachers and school managers.

The National Curriculum, Citizenship in Key Stage 4, <http://curriculum.qca.org.uk>. (Citizenship curriculum, 2009) This text lays out the rationale and guidance for the Citizenship curriculum requirements which became incorporated in the National Curriculum in 2002.

A stark example of the way that the idea of difference can be the determining concept in the framing of educational intervention is evident in the creation of the branch of 'Auslaenderpedagogik' (pedagogy concerning foreigners), (Aluffi-Pentini, 1996, p.48) which demonstrates the notion that any 'problem' resides in the fact of difference and those who embody it, rather than in the social relations created by such clear delineations of insiders and outsiders. My argument is that even though this is an example of a specifically German response to the implications of difference, such impulses to locate the problem with 'the other' can also be found in the British context of official racialised discourse. This perspective may be seen to originate from the context of the Rampton and Swann Committees of the 1980s

which were set up to investigate possible causes for the underachievement of black pupils in British schools. The differing emphasis between the interim Rampton Report and the Swann Report, brings to light the duality of approach that I am describing here. Was the reason for black pupils' underachievement within their own cultural grounding, as largely suggested by Swann (Runnymede, 1985, p.7) or was it to do with the racist institutions of British social structures, acted out through the education system as Rampton implies (Klein, 1993, p.59). The responses to these questions have determined theories of educational intervention in respect of multicultural and antiracist agendas. Here I argue that the recommendations for curriculum intervention are still grounded in this discourse that originated from concerns about low black achievement, the focus being located in the educational performances and experiences of black children rather than the needs of all children for an understanding of issues of racial equality and social justice. This position is exemplified in the 'Duties for Schools' that are highlighted in the requirements of the Race Relations Amendment Act, 2000 (HMSO, 2000) with its focus on attainment as discussed in Chapter 3.

There are two perspectives that seem often to be conflated in official discourse addressing the 'cultural diversity curriculum' which may perhaps help to account for occurrences such as the emergence of the discipline of 'Auslaenderpedagogik' as referred to above. The first of these perspectives concerns the language needs of pupils whose first language is not English or Standard English and who may not be familiar with British educational culture. The educational concerns here relate to teaching English to non-English speakers and ensuring that pupils are able to communicate with their teachers and peers. The second perspective is more complicated and is one that I wish to explore further in this chapter. It is the perspective that assumes that an integral problematic is attached to the existence of cultural difference, and that in effect, this problematic resides with those who are different (Dyer, 1997, pp.8-9). I am suggesting that these often-conflated perspectives underlie the concept of cultural diversity pedagogy. It is to substantiate this claim that this chapter presents an investigation of the official discourse that determines curriculum intervention.

4:02 The position of 'whiteness' in the cultural diversity curriculum

A first step in investigating the perception that those who are culturally and racially different from the 'norm' cause a 'problem' in schools (Gaine, 1987, 1995), whether or not they are present in the classroom, may be to critically engage with the construction of the 'norm of whiteness', within the curriculum. This idea can be explored through the work of Aluffi-Pentini (1996) who suggests that education pedagogy has at its moral centre the task of investigating social justice (Aluffi-Pentini 1996, pp.53-54). She comes to this position from a critique of the educational system in Italy which, she claims, is reluctant to adopt an anti-racist perspective, preferring rather to adopt the multiculturalist claim that 'to know and to value another culture is quite sufficient as a means of preventing intolerance and discrimination amongst school students' (1996, p.47). Aluffi-Pentini makes a strong case for the task of education in general, not only cultural diversity education, to concern itself with exploring structural inequalities:

It then also becomes the task of pedagogical reflection to expose the factors which impede education from doing its job properly, to make the political agendas more transparent which impinge on education, and to involve the learners in the processes of change that are needed to bring about an emancipatory process of education. (Aluffi-Pentini, 1996, p.54)

The process by which this can be done, she suggests, is to encourage young people both to explore every day differences and also to enable the investigation of structural inequalities (Aluffi-Pentini, 1996, p.54). This proposal may be seen to incorporate an antiracist approach within multicultural practice. Within this context of exploration of social justice in the classroom, Aluffi-Pentini makes a significant claim for the centrality of an investigation into identity and values in connection with both of these approaches, which she suggests should form the basis for classroom engagement:

...one of the most important educational conditions in schools and in other learning contexts ... is that a place should be provided for a dialogue with and between young people on questions of identity and of values. (Aluffi-Pentini, 1996, p.55)

This exploration of self as a first step in cultural diversity teaching has been suggested by other theorists, for example Brown, Barnfield and Stone in *Spanner in the Works*, (1990), but in this case, the investigation of 'white' identity is conceived as learning about the traditional British cultures from which the mass media has

allegedly distanced school children. The authors make the following claim, with reference to 'white' pupils:

For many, if not most white children, large parts of their cultural heritage are rapidly becoming invisible as the mass media and other standardising influences distance them from their own community's traditional language forms, styles of life and sense of themselves...The issue of cultural deprivation of large sections of the British population is one which must inform our teaching. (Brown, Barnfield, Stone, 1990, p.5)

This perspective, that culture is something that is only appropriate as a 'teachable' entity if it is considered traditional, is one which is challenged by the suggestion, proposed in this thesis, that the cultural diversity curriculum should begin from the exploration of contemporary and lived cultural identities. In this way, rather than using the teaching process to refer to a historical sense of culture through which links can be made, the pupils' immediate cultural experience can be an instantly accessible starting point for educating about social justice. The investigation of the self (and the idea of 'whiteness' that may be contained in this self) forms a core position from which to engage pupils with discussions of democracy in local and global contexts (DfES, 2005). This same level of personal relevance is less likely to be achieved in majority white schools by an emphasis on teaching about 'other' cultures, even if those 'other' cultures are from British history as suggested by Brown, Barnfield and Stone (1990, p.5).

It is this pedagogic principle that is being emphasised; of starting from the pupils' own experience that seeks to engage with their own identities rather than setting up a contextual framework of 'us' and 'them'. To facilitate a pedagogy in which 'us' and 'them' become incorporated into a unified 'we', that is not colour blind but rather critically aware, not foremost of difference but rather of different treatment, it may be necessary to uncover the personal and social context of 'whiteness' incorporated into this framing of identity.

Parekh, points to the unspoken aspect of racial designation, which includes the implicit link between whiteness and Britishness and the 'British reticence' to discuss 'race' which makes any open discussion of 'whiteness' challenging:

Britishness, as much as Englishness, has systematic, largely unspoken, racial connotations. Whiteness nowhere features as an explicit condition of being British, but it is widely understood that Englishness, and by extension, Britishness, is racially coded. Race is deeply entwined with political culture and the idea of nation. Under customary British reticence, to take race and racism seriously or even talk about them, is bad form, something not done in polite company. (Parekh, 2000, p.38)

To what extent, in respect of this reticence, is the social construction of 'whiteness' explored in official discourse pertaining to the cultural diversity curriculum? Bonnett carefully addresses the taken-for-granted nature of 'whiteness' in the context of cultural diversity (1997). In referring to an official document from ILEA, he notes the positioning of whiteness as being different to other categories of ethnic identification. Whiteness is addressed as an unproblematic category and is not recognised as a 'racial' term, unlike 'Afro-Caribbean' (*sic*), 'Asian' and 'black' (Bonnett 1997):

There is no entry on 'white'. It is the only 'racial' noun mentioned in the main text whose meaning is not explained. Thus 'White' is allowed to 'speak for itself.' It is permitted the privilege of having an obvious meaning; of being a normal rather than an exceptional case; of being a defining, not a defined, category.' (Bonnett, 1997, p.178)

If whiteness is not recognised or articulated, any investigation of diversity has at its basis the notion that it is being viewed from a position which understands difference as something strange and interesting, and always as something other than 'us'. This perspective will resonate even more in schools that are majority white because they are not situated, as multiracial schools are, in the context of cultural and racial differences that are lived and experienced on an everyday basis.

4:03 Conceptions underlying official guidance discourse, a critique of 'Respect for All'

What positions are formulated in the 'official discourse' supplying guidance and instructions to schools in relation to teaching about, not only cultural diversity but also 'community cohesion', and what conceptions underlie these positions? As mentioned, there exists a plethora of guidance notes issued by governmental departments and education authorities, which provide support and recommendations for schools and teachers charged with the implementation of a cultural diversity curriculum. In this chapter, one such document will be critically

appraised and two will receive an overview, particularly with reference to the underlying principles on which they are formulated and the extent to which they can be seen to be based on an understanding of cultural diversity, which essentialises the idea of difference.

The document for critical analysis is an audit tool, *'Respect for all; Valuing diversity and challenging racism through the curriculum'* (QCA, 2001) by which schools are directed to measure their own practice to ensure that they are meeting 'obligations and fulfilling (their) legal duty of promoting racial equality.'(QCA, 2001) In a protocol in which schools are invited to give evidence to indicate the extent to which they are fulfilling stated targets or 'standards', the principles of the QCA's position on 'valuing diversity and challenging racism through the curriculum' (QCA, 2001) are laid out. These include legal compliance pointers to 'good practice', some of which are by nature subjective, as is for example the statement that 'staff respond fairly and consistently to racially motivated incidents' as well as the more objective compliance that, 'staff keep a record of all reported incidents' (QCA,2001).

A section on 'ethos' suggests that a good practice indicator would be that:

The school conveys prominent and consistent messages that diversity is celebrated and racism is outlawed. (QCA, 2001)

The frequent use of the word 'diversity' in this document is notable; 'diversity' seems to be acting as a code to highlight good practice in signalling difference. Much like 'race', 'diversity' is a socially constructed term; I suggest that this term describes the way that manifest differences, often along racial and ethnic lines, are given exaggerated and uncontested status in 'official' educational discourse. **I am claiming that this centrally held conviction that 'diversity' needs to be taught, explored, and celebrated may be perpetuating rather than alleviating an 'us' and 'them' ethos which permeates 'cultural diversity' education. It could be argued that the continued emphasis on diversity lays open the ground for perpetuating a pedagogic ethos which determines that difference is taught, particularly in majority white schools, from a perspective of 'our own' normality.**

In reviewing the work of those critical of an essentialist approach to 'education for diversity' (for example, Figueroa 2000), the principle of teaching about difference as an end itself, is challenged, and difference is seen as only significant when it is appropriately contextualised. Figueroa, for example states:

... citizenship (in a plural society)... means a taking account of difference where that is appropriate, but not where it is not. (Figueroa 2000, p.57)

In making a claim for citizenship education to include the exploration of pupils' own cultural norms as a starting point for exploring power relations, rather than immediately focusing on 'diversity', Figueroa suggests:

The task is not easy...Existing power relations and sedimented culture means that individuals and groups operate within the taken-for-granted perspectives and imperatives of existing cultural 'habits' and frames. These need to be brought into awareness and subverted, but in a constructive and reconstructive way. (Figueroa, 2000, p.61)

The remit of the '*Respect for all*' audit however, appears to suggest that schools should focus on looking outwards towards diversity rather than looking at the cultures and social frameworks which they inhabit. Some further examples illustrating the centrality of the concept of 'diversity' in the demands of the audit include:

Posters, exhibitions and displays of work highlight *diversity*... (QCA, 2001)

Teaching materials reflect local, national and global *diversity*. (QCA, 2001)

Pupils are actively encouraged to respect ethnic, religious, cultural and social *diversity*. (QCA, 2001)

The learning environment prepares young people to live in a multi-ethnic, multi-faith, multilingual society where *diversity* is the norm. (QCA, 2001)

As stated, the term 'diversity' is repeatedly used and yet this term is not defined or opened up to scrutiny in the standards. The underlying tone of these and other guidelines is that 'diversity is a good thing' and this view needs to be imposed on pupils through the school's influence. Implicit within the tone of the standards is the conviction that 'diversity' should play a part in the curriculum, the ethos and staff training in school and that language or behaviour that challenges this perspective

should be addressed (e.g. A learning contract spells out inappropriate language and behaviour in the classroom (QCA, 2001)).

To critique this type of official discourse is problematic, since the ethos of cultural diversity education emerges from a position that seeks to encourage pupils to accept cultural and racial differences, and this aim in itself must be seen as laudable. Furthermore the official endorsement of a cultural diversity ethos in schools has taken years of campaigning to attain. Racialised educational intervention in Britain has come a long way since the assimilation approach of the 1960s and 1970s, (see Chapter 1). However, unless thought is given to the process by which these 'diversity directives' are constructed and interpreted, particularly in majority white schools, there is a danger of a token and superficial signalling of diversity and minimal engagement with exploring the relations of power and domination, which encompass more complex social relations than those contained within the idea of 'diversity'.

As well as critiquing what may be seen as an apolitical emphasis on 'diversity' within official discourse, another concern regarding audits, standards, official guides, policies and recommendations is the potential gap between theory and practice as applied particularly to the cultural diversity curriculum in majority white schools. An important distinction is made by May (1994) between the theoretical endorsement of equalities practice and the real life situation in the classroom in which a busy teacher may not have the time, the resources or the willingness to adhere to textbook standards. It is worth quoting at length from a passage written by May illustrating this gap between theory and practice in education:

While various educational theories are regularly expounded, and regularly replaced in academic circles, they often bear little relevance to or have little impact on classroom life. No wonder then, that educational theories discussed in universities or colleges of education during their training come to be seen by many teachers as marginal, of academic interest perhaps, but of little 'practical' value....For many teachers, education is simply a matter of survival; teaching children as best they can, and with what time and resources they have at their disposal. (May, 1994, p.1)

The reality of classroom life makes it more probable that the audit standards and guidance documents discussed here, may be responded to, if at all, in a 'box-

ticking' way, rather than through the rigorous task of ensuring that the principles are embedded in the whole school curriculum. May cites Carrington and Short to highlight the problem of providing clear and effective guidance to implement equalities education initiatives, criticising:

the failure of those concerned with the formation and implementation of policies in this area to provide unambiguous and workable strategies for implementation. (Carrington and Short, (1989, I, IX) cited in May, 1994, p.5)

In particular in majority white schools, 'cultural diversity' teaching may not be given priority, as it may not be seen as a 'live' issue. The compliance approach, which is encouraged by the format of the audit of standards from *Respect for all* (QCA, 2001), may also remove a sense of lively engagement from the delivery of cultural diversity in the classroom.

A further critique of official discourse, already alluded to in this thesis, lies in an assumption, particularly held in majority white schools, that the discussion of 'race' in schools is equated with difficulties or problems. This idea that 'race' forms a site of potential conflict in schools may be seen to be evident in the QCA audit standards' guide on 'Staffing and INSET' which states that an intended 'obligation and legal duty' is that:

Staff are encouraged to discuss race equality policies and related issues and to work together to identify solutions. (QCA, 2001)

This standard contains within it an assumption that the area of race equality policies is something for which 'solutions' need to be found. In majority white schools in which there are few minority ethnic pupils, fewer such 'issues' may occur and consequently, if viewed through this frame, the formulation of race equality policies will lose any immediacy or relevance.

Again, in looking carefully at the official discourse of the audit standards, in one of the recommendations, the standards conflate discussions of diversity with the idea of an antiracist perspective and the possibility of such discussion is seen to be restricted to 'when issues arise'. This again reinforces the impression that equalities

policies and antiracist practice are linked to the manifestation of racialised 'problems' within the school. The standard states:

Staff and pupils are at ease discussing diversity and anti-racism when issues arise. (QCA, 2001)

This is the only mention of antiracism in the standards. In discussing the basis of the Citizenship curriculum, as outlined in the Crick Report, Osler indicates that although political literacy is discussed, antiracism is not specifically mentioned. (Osler, 2000, p.12)

The approach taken in the examples of official racialised discourse discussed here seems to be to endorse teaching about 'diversity' and dealing with racist 'incidents' as they occur, rather than to suggest that the curriculum should teach about structural racism and racialised social injustice, as might be suggested by an antiracist approach. It is interesting to note therefore that the audit standards do not incorporate guidance on teaching about racism, despite suggesting that incidents of racism should be challenged, as in the following standard:

The school has a proactive response to anti-social behaviour, including racism, bullying, harassment and other forms of discrimination. (QCA, 2001)

The principle of teaching about cultural diversity and the ideals of antiracist education are presented as being interchangeable by Cole and Stuart in *Do you ride elephants and never tell them you're German* (Cole and Stuart, 2005) as if they emerge from the same underlying ethos. This is to say that Cole and Stuart's antiracist perspective, when attaching itself to an empirical study of schools in south-east England, forefronts the lack of awareness about other cultures in these schools. The authors' recommendations suggest that majority white schools should focus more on teaching about 'other' cultures:

We found it very disappointing that the schools seldom seemed to use the pupils' natural curiosity and interest pro-actively in the interests of increased awareness of, and positive views on, diversity, or to widen their horizons overall. (Cole and Stuart, 2005, p.361)

as well as recommending that an anti-racist approach should be enshrined in local authority policies and instituted in the National Curriculum, Cole and Stuart cite the recommendation of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report in suggesting:

The Government should consider how best to empower local education authorities to create, monitor and enforce anti-racist policies through codes of practice and by amendment of the National Curriculum... (Macpherson, 1999, 6.56 cited in Cole and Stuart, 2005)

Despite this advocacy of antiracism, the body of Cole and Stuart's report discusses what should actually be taught in the classroom based on what, as evidenced by their research, is not being taught. Their antiracist declaration would seem to collapse into multicultural recommendations (Cole and Stuart, 2005) in which the emphasis seems to be to teach about cultural diversity, rather than about racism. This raises questions about the practicability of implementing an antiracist perspective in the taught curriculum in a classroom setting. It may be that the political orthodoxy (Gilroy, 1992, 53) associated with antiracism, and the poor publicity and moral panics surrounding its links with education (Rattansi, 1992, p.13), have worked towards discrediting antiracism as a classroom approach, in conjunction with a possible wider-reaching and more recent trend to remove the concept of 'race' from policy initiatives.

4:04 De-racialising curriculum interventions

Developments in de-racialising intervention in the school curriculum, in particular the citizenship curriculum and the community cohesion agenda, mirror the way that other non-educational legislative frameworks perceive 'race equality' as becoming incorporated into a wider equalities agenda. This more general framing of equalities is indicated by the replacement of the Commission for Racial Equality (and the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Disability Rights Commission) with the Equality and Human Rights Commission, October 2007. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Equality and Human Rights Commission](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Equality_and_Human_Rights_Commission)). A specific focus on antiracist policies and cultural diversity initiatives has been replaced by a community cohesion strategy, initiated by the Denham Report in December 2002 (Denham, 2002), which signalled the community cohesion agenda for schools and local authorities. The development of this agenda has been perceived as signifying a move away from a discourse which critiques racist systems as determining life chances and social relations, towards a different kind of discourse in which the

multi cultural project is seen to have failed and cultural differences need to be overcome rather than recognised. Alexander cites Kundnani (Kundnani, 2002) who suggests that 'community cohesion' demands 'the reversal of cultural pluralist rhetoric to the conformity of shared values and common citizenship.' (Alexander, 2004, p.540) An important aspect of Alexander's critique of the community cohesion agenda is the implication and weight which she feels that it gives to the idea of the 'ethnic community', which is imagined in terms of being 'bounded and unassailable' (Alexander, 2004 p.541). She suggests that it is the tightness of this imagined structure, which is seen to pose a threat and hence the need is established to uncover shared social values. This 'cohesion' agenda is seen by Alexander as 'a home-grown cultural re-colonization' replacing the investigation of inequality and discrimination (Alexander, 2004 p.544).

I will look briefly at other examples of official documents that offer guidance to schools in implementing current educational objectives through the curriculum. In 2005, a DfES publication was issued to schools in respect of, '*Developing the global dimension in the school curriculum*' (DfES, 2005). In terms of its underlying approach to teaching about diversity in the curriculum, the guidance publication suggests that there should be a 'global dimension' to education, encapsulated in eight key concepts which are further explained in the document and include, 'Values and perceptions', 'Diversity', 'Social justice' and 'Human rights' (DfES, 2005, pp.12-13). The guidance further suggests that these concepts should be integral to all the subjects in the curriculum as well as informing the whole school ethos (DfES, 2005, p.5). The 'global dimension' is incorporated into the National Curriculum in that the DfES have supported the publication of this document which quotes from the 'values and purpose' of the National Curriculum, to indicate its underlying commitment to a 'global dimension'. The key concepts referred to deal with an analysis of the 'global dimension' through a lens of human rights and sustainability as well as encouraging pupils to 'challenge racism and other forms of discrimination, inequality and injustice' (DfES, 2005, p.113). It refers also to 'understanding the importance of respecting differences in culture, customs and traditions in how societies are organised and governed' (DfES, 2005, p.13) but it does not specify analysis of racialised power relations or of the idea of institutional racism, and neither does it stress that students should be encouraged to review the cultural and social

organisations of their own localities with the same sort of critical awareness that they are encouraged to bring to their global studies. Osler and Starkey (2000) make the following important point, which shows that a relationship needs to be recognised between claims made in the curriculum to be focusing on human rights and the culture of the school:

... the inclusion of human rights in a programme of study is no guarantee that such teaching will be well received. The culture of the school needs itself to be based on a culture of human rights for such education to be credible and effective. (Osler and Starkey, 2000, p.98)

This position is pertinent in terms of teaching any aspect of the cultural diversity curriculum; the context and culture of the classroom and the school in which such teaching is set, having a major impact on the receptiveness of the pupils to the ethos of what is being taught. The influence of classroom dynamics on this area of teaching will be considered in greater detail in relation to the empirical research findings in Chapter 6.

Citizenship was introduced into the National Curriculum in 2000 and also includes the recommendation for pupils to study human rights. The National Curriculum framework on Citizenship sets out key concepts concerning what is covered by Citizenship in Key Stage 4 (Citizenship curriculum, 2009). A key part of the Citizenship strategy is in outlining the ways that students should be equipped by the citizenship curriculum to relate to difference; the words and phrases used to determine this process include 'respect for difference', 'engage critically', 'explore diversity' (Citizenship curriculum, 2009). The strategy also includes facilitating a critically active approach to social problems and teaching the skills 'to challenge injustice, inequalities and discrimination.' In relation to the Swann Report (DES, 1985), there is perhaps more emphasis in this initiative on encouraging pupils to engage critically with identifying discrimination, rather than on teaching about other cultures (see Chapter 2). However, this approach can be critiqued because the Citizenship framework fails to open up the possibility of exploring racism as operating at a structural or institutional level. So, although the approach taken by the Citizenship curriculum outline appears to be open and enquiring, seeking a level of engagement with different perspectives and experiences in the context of human rights and democracy, this curriculum initiative is critiqued for not facilitating an

investigation of structural injustice. In questioning this focus of the Citizenship framework on individual rather than on structural injustices, Richardson suggests:

The essential problem is that human rights theory tends, because of the historical contexts in which it was developed to concentrate much more on the rights of the individual than on the rights of communities and that it tends to underemphasise the importance – and indeed the inescapability - of culture. It is true that human rights discourse includes references to culture, but typically it refers to recognition of ‘minority’ cultures rather than to the self- understanding of ‘majority’ cultures, and conceptualises cultures as static and sealed off from each other rather than as dynamic, developing and inter-mingling. (Richardson in Osler, 2000, p.83)

The Citizenship curriculum, although concerned with the fundamental equalities and principles of justice and representation, is in danger, according to Richardson, of isolating these concerns from the social conditions in which they take place. In his critique of human rights theory in the curriculum as focussing on the individual rather than on the community, Richardson suggests that the importance of culture becomes understated. In a similar critique to that made earlier pertaining to the invisibility of ‘whiteness’ in cultural diversity education due to the focus on ‘difference’, Richardson suggests that the citizenship curriculum, with its focus on human rights, marginalises the idea of culture to the recognition only of ‘minority cultures’ and that as such it fails to encourage critical reflection on the structural injustices of the majority culture. In terms of implementation of any curriculum delivery that addresses diversity, it is important to consider that through the process of classroom interaction every outlined model of delivery will be mediated, not only through the approach of the teacher but also by the responses of the pupils.

It is within classroom settings that these carefully chosen words and phrases that offer guidance to various curriculum interventions, and explore the knowledge, skills and understanding that they intended to deliver, will be interpreted by the political and experiential position of the classroom teacher. For example, to consider the framing of a concept from the Citizenship curriculum for Key Stage 4:

Exploring the diverse national, regional, ethnic and religious cultures, groups and communities in the UK and the connections between them. (Citizenship curriculum, 2009)

The process of interpreting this laudable concept cannot be as neutral as implicitly suggested by the Citizenship framework; a whole range of possibilities of emphasis, tone and political perspective are determined by the way in which this outline is delivered in the classroom, as will be investigated in empirical research in later chapters.

4:05 Conclusion

The challenge in critiquing official discourse in the teaching of cultural diversity is to envisage how guidelines can be suggested which are able to acknowledge and explore difference, without that difference being reified or used to obscure inequalities. In particular in terms of the cultural diversity curriculum, the argument has been made that the lack of attention to social justice and the failure to explore the idea of 'whiteness' in the context of Britishness, has led to a focus on 'difference' in an a-political context, which may serve to reinforce, rather than to diminish, a 'them and us' sensibility, particularly in majority white schools, in which there may be a hypothetical rather than a grounded quality to the idea of cultural difference.

And yet this is a difficult argument to be making as, taken to its conclusion, it may be seen as a call for a colour-blind approach in schools, in which, in an effort not to essentialise 'race' or 'culture', diversity is not explored in the curriculum and only our similarities are acknowledged. A claim being made by authors such as May (1994), Alexander (2004) and Cole and Stuart (2005) is that the workings of power and influence need to be explored in relation both to parallels and discrepancies along racial and cultural lines. May (1994) and Figueroa (2000) suggest that cultural diversity teaching should begin with the pupils' own experience, but that it should expand to explore local and global issues. Such an educational blueprint is a far cry from simply teaching about the traditions and world-views of 'other' cultures and would necessitate teaching an awareness of the principles and practice of social justice. In terms then of the discourse underlying these officially endorsed documents, this analysis has explored the implications of the focus on the concept of diversity, suggesting that even when couched in carefully constructed guidance directives, the suggestion is that the 'other' with its inherent problematic, is the subject of cultural diversity education.

The analysis of 'official discourse' in the context of implementation of the cultural diversity curriculum has led to questions of the values underlying the pedagogy, which determines this intervention. This discussion has emphasised that in order to avoid 'the othering' of cultures and people that differ from the 'norm', the 'norm' itself needs to be opened up to analysis and critique in the classroom and that this critical analysis should include the normalised notion of 'whiteness'. Linked to this, the official discourse which has been reviewed is seen to include curriculum directives to encourage the recognition and challenging of racism, but this would seem to be limited to the personal rather than institutional dimension of racism and as such it has been critiqued by writers who would advocate a deeper structural analysis of the social and political implications of 'race' and 'culture' in our social systems. (Figueroa, Osler, Richardson, 2000)

In Chapter 5, I will discuss my approach to finding out about the implementation of cultural diversity in the classrooms of two majority white secondary schools. This chapter will give an account of the research methods that I employed to research the racialised discourse of teachers and pupils.

Chapter 5: Research Methods

5:00 Introduction

The resonance of official discourse to teaching about 'race' and ethnicity and understanding racist incidents in majority white schools is investigated in this thesis. In previous chapters I have reviewed and analysed key examples of guidance, policy and protocol concerned with how racial and cultural differences in the school context are imagined and incorporated into school policies and pedagogic principles concerning the curriculum and the framing of 'racist incidents'. This chapter sets out the research methods used to explore how 'race' and cultural diversity is constructed and acted on by teachers and young people in two majority white secondary schools. My theoretical positioning, my methodology, the methods used and the process of carrying out and analysing the research will be discussed, paying attention to the strengths and weaknesses inherent in the process. The chapter will end with a discussion of ethical issues that needed to be considered in planning and carrying out this research.

5:01 Approach to the research

My approach to the empirical research is linked to the critique of official racialised discourse above. This critical literature review, which is also a part of the research methods used in this thesis, can be seen to relate to Troyna's challenge to deconstruct the official discourse of racialised policies:

It is imperative, then, that we deconstruct the versions of reality enshrined in policies and explicate the values which underpin and guide them. In this way we are able to identify precisely whose versions of an 'ideal society' they represent. If we find obfuscation or ambiguity in their conceptual make-up this needs to be illuminated. (Troyna, 1993, p.37)

It is this 'deconstruction of versions of reality' approach that has informed my analysis of official racialised discourse, and it is from this position that my entry into the research sites of two majority white schools is framed.

5:02 My methodological positioning

My use of a qualitative rather than a quantitative methodological approach is central to my thesis in its concern with the deconstruction of meaning. The collection of

quantitative data would be unable to access the nuances of meanings that are attached to 'race' as the assumption of shared meanings is inevitable in the processing of numerical information. For example Gillborn (1995) is critical of Smith and Tomlinson's (1989) quantitative study of twenty comprehensive schools which focused on the achievement of minority ethnic pupils, for making the claim, based on inadequate methods, that very few minority ethnic pupils experienced racial harassment. In later conducting his own research in one of those schools, using a qualitative approach Gillborn (1995) found a very different situation in which racist harassment was a significant feature of students' lives, nicely supporting his suggestion that quantitative research may be limited as an approach through which racism can be investigated (Gillborn, 1995, pp. 44-45).

My research perspective is built upon the understandings that have built up over years of personal and professional interest in 'race'. Opening up this perspective reveals my epistemology, the 'knowledge' underlying my approach, the position which shapes my commitment to this project. My intention to investigate the ways in which teachers and pupils imagine and make sense of racial and cultural difference does not emerge from an ideologically neutral position, but rather from a concern that in majority white schools, issues of 'race' and ethnicity are marginalised or essentialised and do not form part of the mainstream of the classroom or the school experience. In declaring this position, the research process is open to the critique that it is partisan. Gillborn suggests a similar problem in reiterating a critique that has been levelled at his own research:

The argument is simple; if you are politically motivated, and hope to use research (directly or indirectly) towards political ends, the chances are that you will compromise your position as a scientist. (Gillborn, 1995, p.54)

In recognition of this critique of research when it initiates from the political convictions of the researcher, the only counter-claim that can be made in this qualitative research is in the assurance of transparency, and the reflective declaration of my own position. It is the nature of qualitative research that any interpretation of the findings can be contested (Gillborn, 1995, pp.53-54) and as such it must be acknowledged that the analysis of my research findings will have

been mediated to some extent by my own positioning and motivation expressed through a critical perspective. Therefore, no guarantees of an objective truth can be made. Schostak acknowledges this situation in his claim that:

Rather than guaranteeing truth, honesty and completeness the researcher can make clear what was done by the researcher to increase the reliability of the data and its analysis in each case. The acceptance of the truth of a statement or conclusion then depends on the nature of the supporting arguments developed by the researcher. (Schostak, 2002, p.135)

My primary concern in my methodology is to represent the understandings of the participants. In order to achieve this, there ideally needs to be a process of getting to know and interact with them to gain access to their 'common sense' knowledge and perceptions; as Schostak explains, the imperative of qualitative research is to get closer to these perceptions:

Getting in deeper...in order to get at what might be hidden or impossible to record by quantitative methods requires spending more time with the community under study. (Schostak, 2002, p.72)

This process would ideally be achieved by an ethnographic methodology, which, as Devine and Heath suggest, is an ideal approach for researching in schools on the kind of enquiries which concern me:

ethnographic methods provided an ideal tool for exploring the day-to-day operation of school life. Not only did they place emphasis on studying teachers and pupils in their 'natural settings', but allowed researchers to develop understandings of the *symbolic* meanings of classroom behaviour and interaction. (Devine and Heath, 1999, p.22)

In the case of my research, an ethnography would have followed the example of Cusick (1973, p.239, quoted in Delamont, 2002, pp.121-122) and would have entailed spending time in various classes, attending student council meetings and social events and clubs at the schools, carrying out informal interviews in the canteens, staff rooms, and in classes and outside areas, conducting formal interviews at the end of the research process, document analysis of newsletters, and meeting minutes, and pupils' essays and constant observation. Despite the fact that such an ethnography did not prove possible, an ethnographic sensibility is still be used to inform ways in which to investigate how 'race', itself a heavily symbolic

construct, is imagined and reproduced within discourse. An approach to support this task is offered by the theoretic principle of constructionism (Crotty, 2003). This approach suggests that meanings applied to the social world by its participants are inferred rather than categorically stated, and the interpretation of the social researcher cannot be ratified by any overriding claim to truth, as Crotty explains:

What constructionism drives home unambiguously is that there is *no* true or valid interpretation... 'Useful', 'liberating', 'fulfilling', 'rewarding' interpretations, yes. 'True' or 'valid' interpretations, no. (Crotty, 2003, pp.47-48)

It was therefore important in planning the research that I got as close as possible to try to access the reflections and understandings of teachers and pupils regarding 'what goes on' in schools around racialised interventions.

The hypothesis that informs my research is the notion that 'race' is constructed, and acted upon in school settings influenced by an official racialised discourse, which continues to problematise racial and cultural difference. In this way, my research standpoint may be seen to entail a critical theoretical perspective, in that it emphasises that particular sets of meaning in official discourse are reflective of the dominant hegemony. Critical theory is suspicious of such constructed meanings and taken-for-granted social systems, as Crotty explains:

In the type of inquiry spawned by the critical spirit, researchers find themselves interrogating commonly held values and assumptions, challenging conventional social structures and engaging in social action. (Crotty, 2003 p.157)

A critique of understandings of 'race' is undertaken throughout this thesis in deconstructing these understandings in official and everyday discourse and opening them to analysis. Crotty states that critical theory strives to investigate given cultural meanings as perpetuating the status quo:

The critical tradition, encountered today most markedly in what we know as critical theory, is even more suspicious of the constructed meanings that culture bequeaths to us. It emphasises that particular sets of meanings ...exist to serve hegemonic interests. Each set of meanings supports particular power structures, resists moves towards greater equity, and harbours oppression, manipulation and other modes of injustice and unfreedom. (Crotty, 2003, p.60)

Paulo Freire proposed the idea of a critical interventionist obligation for social research carried out by continued interaction between reflection and action. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, (1972) he introduces the idea of 'praxis', as a conceptual insistence that action and reflection take place at the same time. This approach changes the nature of research from a passive exercise to an active and creative intervention. Furthermore Freire suggests that critical thinking can only be created through dialogue (Freire, 1972, pp.64-65) and that, in the field of education, it is the process of interchange between teacher and learner which creates the possibility for social change. It is this notion of education based in the spirit of critical social inquiry, that inspires and informs my own thesis, since this idea underlies not only my research perspective, but also an approach to 'cultural diversity education' that has been suggested in the literature review. As Crotty makes clear:

Critical inquiry cannot be viewed as a discrete process of action that achieves its objectives and comes to a close. With every action taken, the context changes and we must critique our assumptions again. Viewed in this way, critical inquiry emerges as an ongoing project. It is a cyclical process... of reflection and action. (Crotty, 2003, p.157)

Both the approach to cultural diversity education then, and the approach to investigating how cultural diversity is thought about needs to share the same avoidance of fixed constructs in making sense of how the views and opinions of participants (or learners) are constructed. Within this approach research is used as a basis for 'social and cultural criticism', with the focus on spotlighting 'power relationships within society so as to expose the forces of hegemony and injustice' (Crotty, 2003, p.157). From a critical enquiry perspective, the research investigation reveals 'what is going on' in a way that leads to a re-evaluation of action. The research methods used here take several forms which will be discussed below, but they are grounded within a theoretical approach of constructionism, accessing the research participants through the lens of a methodology of critical enquiry.

5:03 Researcher-researched relations

My own presence in the research must be taken into account as influencing the findings and needs to be reflectively understood. As Hammersley and Atkinson suggest:

there is no way in which we can escape the social world in order to study it (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995, p.15)

As proposed by Delamont, the researcher, rather than trying to eliminate investigator effects, should focus attention in '*understanding* those effects' (Delamont, 2002, p.8) As a woman of 'mixed race', my racialised appearance will almost definitely have an impact on the way that those in the research field perceive me. Particularly because my research questions are about 'race' and ethnicity, it seems likely that teachers in particular would want to show their professionalism by saying the 'right thing' and indicating their levels of awareness. Similarly my professional profile as regards my work on issues of 'race' in education could potentially influence the nature of their responses to questions. In particular, the teachers in Bexlington School had met with me as a trainer, as I had come into the school some months previously to work with them on the very issues which I was investigating. While it must be acknowledged that this may have influenced their responses to me, one of my aims in the interviews was to ascertain from them what they considered to be 'best practice' and it could be assumed that their answer to these questions of what they considered to be 'ideal', would be fairly consistent in any interview situation, although this inference is open to debate. However as regards to some of the other questions and in the classroom intervention, focus groups and interviews with pupils, my own minority ethnicity may have impacted on the nature of the responses that were made and the pupils' responses in the classroom. It does however need to be stated that this too would have been the case for a researcher of a different ethnicity, including white, there being no such thing as a 'neutral' ethnicity or 'race'.

5:04 Defining the research area

The following notes from my research diary indicate how I first began the process of framing the research questions based on what I was interested in exploring:

Research Diary, 28thOctober, 2005

My research question; this will take some thought as it needs to relate to the accessibility I have to do the research. I think that there needs to be a dual focus – that's where the tension of the research is – between the experiences of the pupils and the perspectives of the teachers.

How do young people understand and experience racial and cultural differences?

How do secondary schools approach racial and cultural difference through the curriculum?

*And what happens at the intersection? (between teachers and pupils?)
This needs to be rethought into a conjoining question – with the possibility of moving outside of the school boundaries;*

I'm toying with the thought of doing more in-depth interviews with some pupils and teachers. I want to know how they relate to/feel about 'race', culture, difference and how they feel about/experience curriculum demands.

*To find out who is teaching PSHE or Citizenship and interview them – focus on 'the chalk face'
Interviews with pupils, select a year group, possibly Year 10.*

Working within limitations

not an ethnography – rather use interviews and possibly discourse analysis

Challenging the bureaucratic perception of blackness

Uncovering how blackness has been framed

Gaine; blackness as victimhood

Blackness as deviant (Swann)

Blackness as culturally 'other' (multiculturalism)

Examine the emergence of identity politics, Dadzie, explore Hall and Gilroy's commentaries

Explore also Fanon's psychological impact of blackness within a white framework. (Research diary extract, 28.10.05)

The research question was honed and developed during this time, as can be detected in the above extract, which outlined the area that I was interested in exploring further. The struggle to find a title that brought together an analysis of the perspectives of teachers and pupils can be seen in the following extract:

Research diary, 1st November 2005

Ideas for Research Question

How do young people in predominantly white areas understand and experience racial, cultural and ethnic difference?

How do secondary schools approach racial, cultural and ethnic differences?

How do these perceptions collide and interact? (Research diary extract, 1.11.05)

The element that was missing in the prototype titles is mention of the idea of 'official discourse', which has since become a central element of this study. The following extracts from my research diary detail thoughts that I had during training that I delivered which can be seen to influence my framing 'official discourse' as something that I was critiquing and therefore needed to focus on as a central of my area of study.

Research Diary 9th February 2006

I facilitated a workshop on Resources for a local authority Children's Services yesterday (as part of my role as a local authority Equalities Consultant).

There were about 25 teachers there –primary and secondary.

I started by stressing that the effectiveness of resources was dependent on the commitment level of teachers using them. I got them to split into groups and focus on the delivery of Equalities, Cohesion and Diversity (Rob Berkeley – Runnymede Trust) and the materials that they used to support that delivery.

I walked round the groups to see how discussions were going – One woman in a group of about five said "SEAL' that's it, we've done it.' Apparently, there's a new, widely known resource for Primary Schools called 'SEAL', that is completely comprehensive – does it all for you- all the teachers need to do is teach it.

For me this raises issues of teachers' engagement. The whole idea of packages that can be taken off the shelf and applied - resulting in an attitude that teachers can 'do' equalities without engaging their brains.

Am also troubled by this whole question of being an 'expert' in racial equality – as I was called when introduced to one of the managers.

I dislike and am uneasy with corporate structure to such a profound extent- I wonder if I could be throwing out the baby with the bathwater and failing to appreciate an important avenue for 'getting things done' – but I see corporate structure as a clumsy and dull-witted monument, incapable of imagination, wit or verve and ultimately only reacting to and eventually institutionalising community –led initiatives. People can't be spoon-fed commitment.

In terms of a critical approach to official discourse, the concerns expressed by Weber about increasing bureaucracy have a resonance with my own position.

Weber defined modernity in a phrase borrowed from Schiller as, 'disenchantment of the world'. Weber was especially critical of bureaucratisation, which he defined as valuing 'precision, speed,

unambiguity' and the ideas of 'unity, strict subordination, reduction of friction':
Weber, 1970, 214 (from *Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, eds H.H. Garth and C.W. Mills, Oxford University Press, New York)
(Research diary extract, 9.02.06)

As discussed here, the impetus of this research is very much framed on the basis of my own personal and professional concerns over the years, as referred to in Chapter 1. These concerns have motivated me to try to make sense of, through the process of targeted research, some key contradictions that I notice in living and working in 'a racialised space' in majority white educational settings.

5:05 Research methods

I am, as already suggested, influenced by the ethnographic work of researchers interested in young people's racialised identities, who enter the research site as youth workers and teachers in order to be able to engage with young people and to understand the sense that they make of their social world, Hewitt, (1986, 1996), Jones (1988), Mac an Ghail (1988), Gillborn (1995) and Back (1996). Other approaches such as the life history work of Ifekwunigwe (1999) have also been concerned with getting close to understanding and interpreting the 'complex evolving everyday lived realities' (Ifekwunigwe, 1999, p.29) of the subjects of the research. All of these writers have set out to investigate the sense that is made of racialised difference.

As suggested, my research method would ideally have been an ethnographic study, involving school-based research over a considerable period of time enabling me to be immersed in the understandings and experiences of the subjects of my research. However, this possibility was limited by the logistical constraints of only being able to access schools, teachers and pupils intermittently. While maintaining a methodological ethnographic sensibility of trying to get close to the social construction of meanings around 'race' and ethnicity, I had to access more direct research methods in response to these limitations, that would still deliver data that supported this endeavour.

A detailed description of the following methods can be found on **pp 85 - 91**:

Semi-structured interviews with teachers (**pp 89 – 90**) and pupils (**pp 90 – 91**)

Focus groups with pupils (**pp 87 – 89**)

Participant observation in the classroom, as a classroom visitor teaching cultural diversity lessons (pp 85 – 87)

Document analysis of materials produced by pupils in the classroom (p 87)

Analysis of filmed interviews with young people, *Unfolding Identities* (2009) (p 91)

Writing up of field notes in my research diary (p85)

Table 2 details the research methods used in terms of the sample size and the research interactions that took place.

Table 2, Research interactions

Research Method	Number. of interactions	People in each interaction	Total number of people
Semi-structured Interviews with pupils	3	1	3
Semi-structured interviews with teachers	6	1	6
Focus groups with pupils	3	6	18
Participant observation in PSHE classes	8	30	120
Film screenings	4	30	120
Analysis of film resources	2 films	N/A	2

The rest of this chapter will be concerned with the processes of organising the research and discussing the intention and usefulness of the various research

methods and the analysis used.

5:05(i) Setting up the fieldwork

The research sites were two majority white schools, one urban and one rural. The reason for choosing two schools rather than one was to gain a wider perspective on what went on in schools, and to create the opportunity to observe whether any factors to do with differing school cultures were significant in terms of my research investigation. Access was gained through my previous connections with both schools and the schools were chosen on this basis. The first school, Valley High is a rural secondary school set in rolling countryside in a seemingly affluent area with the vast majority of pupils coming from white families and with very few pupils from visible minority ethnicities present. The deputy head had participated in a workshop I had delivered at a conference in London, and we had met again at another conference at which I had told him about the planned research and asked whether he might be interested in his school becoming a research site. In agreeing, he had expressed the hope that the results of the research could be presented, to give the school the opportunity to reflect upon their current practice and to consider how it could be improved. The second school, Bexlington Secondary School, was one in which I had delivered peer mentoring training to a group of Year 10 pupils and had carried out two 'race' equalities training sessions to the teachers. This school was situated in a semi-urban area and although its pupil cohort was majority white, there were more pupils of minority ethnicities present than at Valley High and, according to some of the teachers that I interviewed, this number was steadily growing. However, Bexlington Secondary School was still very much a majority white school. I was also involved in making a series of films exploring the construction of identity with a few of the pupils from this school. I had accessed this work through one of the teachers, Joanna, and had asked her about the possibilities of conducting research in the school. Joanna had supported me in setting up an appointment with the head teacher to ask his permission, which was given. Joanna was one of the teachers that I later interviewed. The understanding at this school too was that on completion of the thesis I would present the research findings to the staff group.

My previous connections with both schools had no discernable effect on questions

of neutrality of the research as there were no expectations or pressures on me or the teachers or pupils to produce a certain kind of research write up.

5:05(ii) Writing field notes

I kept a research diary throughout the research process, making notes on observations before and during the actual research process. After each visit to the schools, I wrote in my diary about what had taken place and my thoughts about this. Delamont cites Jackson's (1990) description of field notes as 'a liminal variety of text, on the borderline between 'the field' and 'home', between 'data' and 'results', between 'private' and 'public' records (Delamont, 2002, p.64). Making field notes close to the time of the fieldwork, in longhand, oblivious to grammar or punctuation, helped me to express and then to organise my ideas and impressions and to reflect on the pertinent issues that were arising out of the research. Revisiting them during the write -up stage, gave me a better sense of what I had observed and helped in the process of considering how the data could be made sense of.

5:05(iii) Participant observation in classrooms

Schostak claims:

...participant observation serves as the unifying central activity of *all* qualitative work, rather than simply one facet of it... (Schostak, 2002, p.91)

This statement serves as a reminder of the centrality of 'observation' in any qualitative research project and applies to my own research. It was important for me as a researcher to come close to an understanding of 'what went on' in the classroom setting and to observe directly how young people in schools approached discussions of cultural and racial difference. I also wanted to get an impression of how effectively these discussions could take place in the classroom setting. In arranging to go into the classrooms as a visitor to deliver lessons about 'cultural diversity', I was able to gain some of these insights. It is important however to reflect also on the limitations of this process. In accessing the classroom in this role, I was unable to get an impression of 'what usually went on' since my presence disrupted the everyday activity of the setting. I was unable to observe the interaction between teachers and pupils, in all its complexity that usually takes place in the dialogue between them as racialised meaning is constructed. However, in the use of

the film, 'One of Us'⁷ in the class I was able to open a dialogue with the pupils, modelling a pedagogic approach that built on their knowledge and experience, asking them to consider value systems and issues of social justice. In the process I was able to gain an insight into the meanings that they themselves constructed around 'race' as well as to raise the profile of this dialogical approach to teaching 'cultural diversity' through the process of my research.

I worked with two classes in each school, a Year 9 class and a Year 11 class. I delivered two cultural diversity lessons (of about 45 minutes each) to each of these classes, making a total of eight lessons taught. As I will explain further in the section on ethics, I did not wish to raise these issues with pupils younger than Year 9, particularly as I had not built up a teacher-pupil relationship with them and I felt that by Year 9, they would be able to discuss issues of 'race' with a certain maturity. I also wanted to work with Year 11, to notice whether there was any significant difference in the way that pupils at the end of their school career, approached and discussed the work carried out in the lessons as well as wanting to find out what they had been taught on this subject during their time at school.

The classroom teacher introduced me in my first meeting with each class and I then introduced myself, telling the class about my research and that the two lessons I would be working with them were a way of having a conversation with them about these issues and finding out what their views were.

The lessons I delivered had the same format for both year groups, involving discussions and definitions of key terms, the viewing of the film *One of Us*, (2004) and further discussions about the responses of schools to racial injustice and the implementation of social justice, based on the incidents revealed in the film (see Appendix 1 for outline of sessions). The classes were of an average size of about 30 pupils in each lesson. The PSHE teacher was present during the lessons and at times participated in the discussions and the behaviour management. At the end of each session I wrote up an account of the session in field notes.

⁷ 'One of Us' is a film that I co-produced in 2004 that explores the experiences of diversity in majority white schools through the testimonies of young people from minority ethnicities

5:05(iv) Document analysis

I collected materials and notes produced by the pupils at the end of the lessons to be analysed as part of the data collection. This process also contributed a degree of triangulation to the research process to substantiate the rigour of the claims that can be made. Schostak gives a succinct account of this process:

For example, by using multiple sources of data collection (documentary analysis, interviewing, observation, reflection) it is argued that comparisons between these indicate the generalizability of accounts and theories. (Schostak, 2002, p.79)

5:05(v) Focus groups with pupils

At the end of the second lesson in each of the year groups in both schools, I asked for volunteers to be part of a focus group to further discuss some of the issues raised in the lessons. Their anonymity was guaranteed. Delamont describes focus groups straightforwardly as follows:

The researcher brings a set of questions, or at least topic headings, to the group and leads them through a discussion of these predetermined subjects. (Delamont, 2002, p.128)

Cohen, Manion and Morrison define a focus group with more emphasis on the interaction elicited from within the group by suggesting:

...the reliance is on the interaction within the group who discuss a topic supplied by the researcher, yielding a collective rather than an individual view...the participants' rather than the researchers' agenda can predominate. (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007, p.376)

Through this research method, I hoped to elicit the pupils' views of the research area, away from the authority of the teacher and to access the understanding that groups of pupils had of the impact of 'race' in their school experiences. However, I had overestimated their willingness to share their views, and although in Bexlington School the Year 9 focus group 'took off' and some interesting discussion took place, in Valley High the pupils were more reluctant to get involved and to share their views. The reasons for this may have been that they did not feel strongly about the issues, 'race' having little relevance for them, or possibly that they were worried about saying the 'wrong thing'. In either case, it is possible that individual open interviews may have been more productive.

The fact that pupils volunteered to be part of the focus group means that the sampling of the focus group cannot be seen as being representative of the class. However, it was not my main intention to access a strictly representative voice. My intention rather was to continue the dialogue begun in the classroom, but in a more intensely focussed environment and with fewer pupils present. The objective was to gain some insight into the perception of some pupils into how they felt teachers and schools approached, taught and dealt with issues of cultural diversity, 'race' and racism, and to gain an idea of how important these issues were for the pupils.

Each focus group session consisted of six pupils. They were held in classrooms in the school and lasted about 30 to 40 minutes each and were recorded and later transcribed. The focus groups were co-facilitated by one of two female colleagues that I had asked to come in to take the lead on asking the questions, one was of white British ethnicity (Amanda Grange) and one of 'mixed race' British ethnicity (Irene Mensah). Both of these women worked in the field of education and were experienced in facilitating groups of young people. This arrangement gave me the opportunity to take a greater observational role and to watch and listen to what went on in the sessions; I was also able to ask questions in the session when something of particular interest came up, to elicit further discussion. I had briefed my colleagues, asking them to try to make the participants feel listened to and able to freely express their opinions. At the beginning of the sessions, I reminded the pupils that the groups had been set up to support my research, and the results of the sessions would be offered back to the schools to let them know the views of the young people, but that their individual responses would be confidential. The questions asked were designed to encourage the pupils to consider what they learnt at school about cultural diversity and to express how this learning corresponded with their previously held notions. They were also asked to consider how the school dealt with racist incidents and whether the policies and practices were effective (Appendix 2). The intention of these sessions was to get close to the pupils' own perceptions and experiences.

Of the four focus groups that were arranged, only three actually took place. The last focus group did not run because the classroom teacher who had agreed to the research being carried out with her class went on maternity leave and her

replacement did not respond to my repeated requests for the facilitation of the last focus group, with Year 11 students in Bexlington School, to take place.

5:05(vi) Interviewing teachers

It was important to come close to an understanding of the sense made by both teachers and pupils of the 'teaching' of cultural diversity and the handling of 'racist incidents'. I was interested in the context within which teachers understood cultural diversity, and in finding out how they perceived the implementation of a curriculum dealing with 'cultural diversity' and what issues they felt it was important to teach about. As such, I decided to conduct semi-structured interviews with teachers and pupils. The teachers that I wanted to interview were those with responsibility for teaching PSHE, (Personal, Social and Health Education) or Citizenship as these subjects specifically required that cultural diversity be taught. I also interviewed Joanna, the teacher at Bexlington High who had helped me to gain access to the school, as she had been instrumental in setting up the school's racist incident policy and I was interested in exploring her relationship to 'official racialised discourse'.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison state:

Interviewers and interviewees alike bring their own, often unconscious, experiential and biographical baggage with them into the interview situation. (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007, p.150)

In using interviews as a research method with teachers, it was my intention of finding out what this 'baggage' was, both in terms of their experience and their biographies, especially as this related to how they understood the cultural diversity curriculum and dealing with racist incidents, and the open-ended questions were designed to elicit from them an exploration of their position, based on their experiences (Appendix 3). The interviewees were told about the remit of the research and assured of their own and the school's anonymity (Appendix 4). Open-ended interviews are seen by Silverman (1993), cited in Cohen, Marnion and Morrison, (2007, p.151) as a research method that 'enables respondents to demonstrate their unique way of looking at the world – their definition of the situation.' It was my intention in constructing and carrying out the interviews to encourage the respondents to reflect their personal perspective of how they understand 'race' and ethnicity in the context of their school. I chose to conduct

semi-structured interviews as a way of getting close to an understanding of how teachers approach their task of teaching about 'cultural diversity' and of how they framed their own responses and those of the school in dealing with racist incidents. The questions asked were about these issues and I also asked about their upbringing and their early experiences as teachers as well as how they understood cultural diversity and how they felt that racist incidents should be dealt with in the school context (Appendix 3). In Valley High School, the interviews were set up by my contact in the school. In Bexlington Secondary School, the email contact details of PSHE and Citizenship teachers were passed to me and I made the approaches to the teachers myself. The interviews took place in interview rooms in the school, and were recorded and later transcribed. The interviews each lasted between 40 minutes and one hour. In total, I interviewed six teachers, three from each school.

5:05(vii) Interviewing year 11 pupils

Parallel to conducting this research, I was working on compiling a learning resource for schools to carry out interactive work with pupils to explore how and whether differences in 'race' and cultural experience impact on the understandings and identities of young people. (*Unfolding Identities*, 2009). The development of this learning resource was supported by one of the schools in question. The resource consists of a series of films featuring five school pupils from Year 9 to Year 11. Three of the young people in the films came from Bexlington School. My colleague and two student filmmakers from a local university worked with these young people over the summer of 2008, holding workshops and working with them in various locations to construct films to reflect the expressions of their identities.

The three young people, all in Year 11, attending Bexlington School who were part of this project were told about my research and I conducted semi-structured interviews with each of them, to gain further insights into their experiences and reflections. The interviews were carried out in classrooms, recorded and later transcribed and lasted 30 to 45 minutes each (Appendix 5). They were carried out at the end of the film project and for this reason were conducted almost a year after the rest of the research. The advantage of interviewing the young people at this stage was that I was able to get to know them over the course of the film project, and hopefully they were more relaxed in expressing their opinions. These

interviews also form part of the triangulation process discussed above. Two of the pupils were of white British ethnicity and one was of Pakistani ethnicity.

5:05 (viii) Interviews from the *Unfolding Identities* films

The rationale which initiated the *Unfolding Identities* resource project, (*Unfolding Identities*, 2009) was to open up the opportunities for pupils and student teachers to explore the idea of and the consequences of emerging identities. This exploration was to include any experiences of injustice they might have had, their relationship to the idea of Britishness, their passions in life and their experience of belonging. In order to support this work in the classroom, the films were made to enable a process of 'call and response', so at the same time as exploring their own identities, pupils would be encouraged to make links with the experiences of the young people appearing in the films. Analysis from two of the films, featuring Nkosi and Daniel, from the *Unfolding Identities* resource (2009), as referenced in Chapter 7, support my contention that the concept of bi-racialization may prove useful in offering a broader context than the idea of racism from which to understand the impact of racial difference.

5:06 The research time-table

Most of the research took place between September and November 2007, however, the one-to-one interviews with the pupils took place in December 2008. The research time-table is shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3, Research time-table

Valley High, Year 9, 12 th September 2007, lesson delivery
Valley High, Year 9, 22 nd September 2007, lesson delivery
Valley High, Year 11, 26 th September 2007, lesson delivery
Valley High, Year 11, 11 th October 2007, lesson delivery
Bexlington, Year 9, 16 th October 2007, lesson delivery (double lesson)
Valley High, Year 9, 27 th October 2007 focus group
Valley High, Year 11, 27 th October 2007 focus group
Valley High, all teachers' interview, 6 th November 2007 (Anne, Mark, Derek)
Bexlington, Year 11, 23 rd October 2007, lesson delivery (double lesson)
Bexlington, Year 9, 22 nd November 2007, focus group
Bexlington teachers' interviews, 23 rd November 2007, (Joanna, Vicky)
Bexlington teachers' interviews, 30 th November 2007, (Rose)
Bexlington, Year 11 pupil interviews, 15 th December 2008, (Nasreen, Miranda, Natalie).

5:07 Approaching the analysis

After the messiness of research, the many impressions gained, the 'evidence' gathered, the general confusion punctuated by flashes of inspiration and endless writing of notes, how can 'telling moments' in the myriad influences be selected and represented in a way that is meaningful and informative to other people? How can this representation of my findings emerge from my own subjectivity as researcher with a declared interest in this area, to produce a body of evidence that withstands critical scrutiny? As the researcher, I have determined and influenced the research process before this stage of representing the findings. The framing and setting up of the proposal, the interventions in the classroom, the conducting of interviews and the facilitating of focus groups were all shaped by my own agency in terms of my gender, 'race', age and personality as well as the social structures in which I am situated. Having made this claim conceding the inevitable subjectivity of this presentation of my research findings, I would also make a parallel claim for these presented findings to reveal some useful areas for further discussion and for producing an additional perspective on majority white schools' possible interactions with 'race' and ethnicity to that given in the earlier chapters of this thesis.

In this empirical research, my focus is on the construction of meaning surrounding the concept of 'race' as it is employed in two majority white schools. In this task, I was keen to reference the literature search and analysis that I had carried out on the way that 'race' is constructed in official school-related discourse. In defining construct analysis in research, Cohen, Marnion and Morrison make reference to the centrality of the literature search in 'teasing out' the meaning of a construct (Cohen, Marnion and Morrison, 2007 p.138). In my research design, I have looked for a consistency of themes (ensuring triangulation) in the questions asked of all the participants (teacher interviews, pupil focus groups and pupil interviews) and in the participant observation teaching carried out in classrooms. As well as wanting to find out how cultural diversity teaching and racist incidents were understood – I was interested to find out which interventions were envisaged as appropriate, both in terms of the curriculum and in terms of responding to racist incidents. The analysis of findings from this empirical research is presented as addressing both concrete and conceptual questions of enquiry. The analysis of responses documented from interviews and focus groups, and the fieldnotes and document analysis from classroom-based participant observation sessions does the following work:

- it considers how participants construct 'race' and culture and how their stated opinions, actions and interventions may relate to official racialised discourse
- it looks carefully at how existing racialised interventions are understood by participants and draws out concerns and gaps in provision as identified by participants
- it discusses and frames participants' views and experiences about what kind (if any) of school-based racialised interventions are seen as being necessary or desirable

The analysis of the findings therefore, as well as endeavouring to make sense of the way that teachers and pupils implement and experience the schools' approach to teaching about racial and cultural diversity and the schools' responses to racist incidents, also attempts to deconstruct the way that 'race' is imagined by the respondents and, coming from a position of critical enquiry, offers recommendations for future work.

5:08 Thematic Analysis

This section will describe the analytic method employed in this research, citing literature on thematic analysis and discussing how this literature relates to the ways in which the research data were made sense of. The process of analysis of findings requires a leap of imagination; the work of making an analysis is not implicit in the research data:

... the real work of analysis and interpretation lies precisely in those intellectual operations that go beyond the data. (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996, p.154)

This section attempts to open up to scrutiny these analytic and interpretative processes undertaken in this research. Coffey and Atkinson go on to suggest that the analysis of data is to a great extent a creative and reflective activity, referring to 'the internal dialogue of reflection' on the part of the analyst (Coffey and Atkinson, pp. 190 – 191). They make the point that the data in themselves do not contain the sense that can be made of them; the process of creative imagination based on familiarity with the key ideas with which the thesis is concerned is a necessary component of the process of analysis:

No amount of routine analytic work will produce new theoretical insights without the application of disciplinary knowledge and creative imagination. (Coffey and Atkinson, p.192)

The 'framework' model of research analysis (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994) makes accessible the process of analyzing data to develop a greater understanding of the issues being addressed. The various stages that make up this model are useful in discussing the analysis of my own research data.

5:08 (i) Familiarization

This is the first stage of the analysis and involves 'getting a feel for the material as a whole' (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994, p.178) in becoming immersed in the material that has been collected. In my research this process included listening to the tapes, reading transcripts, reading through field notes and reading through materials produced by pupils in the lessons that I taught. The fact that I transcribed the interviews myself had increased my familiarity with what had been expressed. It was important at this stage to keep an open mind so that all of the material collected was considered for review and analysis (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994, p.179).

5:08(ii) Identifying a thematic framework

The procedure of identifying a thematic framework, referred to by Ritchie and Spencer as “ the process of abstraction and conceptualization” (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994, p.179) involves reviewing the material and making a note of key themes that seem to be emerging from the data. At this point in the analysis a framework is devised to highlight the key concepts through which to make sense of the material.

In reviewing the data, I was able to identify some themes, which had been of interest to me as I entered the research field and around which I had structured some of the questions with teachers, pupils and focus groups. These issues in particular concerned the way in which cultural diversity was understood and valued by teachers and pupils in the interviews. The classroom work, the ensuing focus groups and the material produced in lessons again drew my attention to the impact of teaching about cultural diversity and the pupils’ attitudes and experiences in relation to cultural diversity teaching. In recognition of the centrality of questions about cultural diversity teaching to my thesis, one of the key themes that emerged from the data was:

Perceptions of cultural diversity education

In relation to this central concern with cultural diversity education, the study was also initiated from an interest in the way that racist incidents were conceived in official discourse and in the attitudes, practice and experiences of teachers and pupils. This theme was discussed in the interviews and in the focus group work and it was also addressed in the classroom work. As a result of my interest in perceptions of racist incidents as a major area of investigation in carrying out the research another key theme was defined:

Framings of racism and racist incidents in schools

A further theme has emerged from the data in a seemingly deductive process, although it has also been signalled by the work of Paul Gilroy (Gilroy, 1992, p.60) and Chris Gaine (Gaine, 1987, 1995) and discussed in the literature review. This is the perception that the presence of people from minority ethnicities may in itself be viewed as problematic. From the research data there was evidence of a further

theme, linked to this perception, in its diametric opposition to it, namely the fact of relatively few numbers of minority ethnic people in majority white areas constituting a problem in itself. To this effect, the construction of the 'problem' became an interesting theme for analysis in considering:

The location of the 'problem'

An analysis of the social occurrence of bi-racialization initiated from the literature review in considering Ifekwunigwe 's exploration of this notion and finding it more expansive and illuminating than the concept of racism through which to make sense of the contingencies of racial positioning in people's experiences (Ifekwunigwe,1999, p.13). The term 'bi-racialization' raises the idea that differing racialised social designations have an impact that is not always sufficiently explained by the term 'racism'. Noteworthy examples of nuanced social events were evidenced during the research process that could usefully be discussed through the theoretical construct of bi-racialization. By including this concept in the themes for analysis, this understanding could help make sense of what was going on. As such, a deductive theme that emerged from the data, which was linked to prior theoretical exploration, was:

Evidence of bi-racialization

The research process itself led to the deductive realisation that the dynamics of the classroom as well as the status position of PSHE as a curriculum area had a significant impact on the teaching process. The field notes that I made after each lesson made repeated reference to the classroom dynamics, considering the impact that these had, from a reflective point of view, on teaching about cultural diversity. This experience-led awareness was reinforced in the claims made by the teachers and the pupils in the interviews and the discussions in the focus groups. As such, an important theme through which to analyse the data was seen to be:

Teaching cultural diversity in the classroom

As evidenced in the discussion of how the key themes were chosen through which to examine the data, this selection process picked up on areas of interest that had come from both inductive and deductive processes as Ritchie and Spencer suggest in discussing the construction of the thematic framework:

When identifying and constructing this framework or index, the researcher will be drawing upon a priori issues (those informed by the original research aims and introduced into the interviews...), emergent issues raised by the respondents themselves, and analytical themes arising from the recurrence or patterning of particular views or experiences. (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994, pp179-180)

In having selected these five themes through which to analyse the data, the next part of the analytic process was to organise the data in a way in which these themes could be grouped and explored.

5:08(iii) Indexing

The task of indexing is defined by Ritchie and Spencer as:

the process whereby the thematic framework or index is systematically applied to the data in its textual form (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994, p.180)

I carried this out through a system of colour coding. Using highlighter pens of five different colours, choosing a colour to correspond to each theme through which I wanted to explore the data, I re-read the transcripts and the documented material from the classroom, marking the relevant passages in the chosen colour that corresponded to the relevant theme. This process in which the data are organised according to the judgements of the researcher and of choosing which extracts of data are applicable to each category, is not value-free, as Ritchie and Spencer point out (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994, p.182).

Miller and Crabtree aptly describe the intermediary role of the researcher in the presentation of the data, through the process of formulating and applying themes, as follows:

Coding can be thought about as a way of relating our data to our ideas about those data (Miller and Crabtree, 1994, p.348)

5:08(iv) Charting

After marking the themes as they are evidenced in the data, the sections need to be considered as themes. Ritchie and Spencer suggest that:

Data are 'lifted' from their original context and rearranged according to the appropriate thematic reference (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994, p182)

In the analytic process of my research, I cut and arranged the data in the themed colour groups. I made a decision to present the analysis on the basis of each theme, rather than on the basis of the replies of each particular cohort that was researched. This decision was made in order to facilitate an analysis that discussed different

perspectives, from teachers and pupils that emerged in respect of common themes. This was particularly effective in highlighting differences in attitudes and experiences on the themes of 'the perception of cultural diversity education' and 'the framing of racism and racist incidents in schools'. By grouping a variety of quotations, from various perspectives, that illustrated the different responses to a theme, a more encompassing interpretation of the data could be made to highlight differences in the perspectives of teachers and pupils.

5:08(v) Mapping and Interpretation

This part of the analysis is perhaps one of the most creative in the process of data analysis. While it is important that the researcher, for the sake of credibility, remains closely connected to the data in offering an analysis, there is a required conceptual leap that surmises and elicits meaning and provides explanations to what has been revealed to the researcher. Ritchie and Spencer in discussing this stage suggest the following:

this part of the analytic process is the most difficult to describe...each step requires leaps of intuition and imagination (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994, p.186)

In terms of my research, as it was on a relatively small scale, it would not have been helpful to create typologies to reference the range of attitudes and experiences discussed. These differences could be explored in the discussions under the thematic headings and they could be illustrated by citing quotations or by giving examples of documented material.

In the process of interpreting data, decisions have to be made about how data should be represented in the analysis and which particular segments of data should be highlighted. In making these choices, I chose certain quotations to illustrate how teachers and pupils negotiated their understanding, attitudes, experiences and behaviours in relation to the key themes. These quotations were then subjected to analysis that related to the themes and sought to provide insight and explanation.

5:08(vi) Providing explanations

The provision of explanations, which Ritchie and Spencer refer to as a common aspect of qualitative research, is tentatively approached in my research, on the basis of not wanting to make unjustifiable claims from the data that was available to me. Ritchie and Spencer suggest:

A common objective in applied qualitative research is to explain, as well as to illuminate, people's attitudes, experiences and behaviours (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994, p.191)

Perhaps a more realistic outcome of my research, than to provide explanations, is to suggest reasons why certain attitudes and approaches may be prevalent in majority white schools. Each of the themed findings sections concludes with an attempt to summarise what has been learnt about that particular theme from the research process, which in itself can be seen to begin the process of developing strategies for change. This discussion of such strategic suggestions is developed in the concluding chapter.

5:09 Ethical issues

In order to maintain the confidentiality of the schools involved and those individuals within them who freely participated in this research, limited information will be given about the profile of the schools and their intake, other than to stress that both schools were set in majority white areas of southern England and had a majority white pupil constituency. Certain findings that could identify the schools, have, for the same reason, been omitted and names changed.

In carrying out this research, I was aware that raising issues of 'race' and culture with young people in the classroom was fraught with sensitivities and was something that needed to be handled carefully. In particular I was concerned not to cause distress to any pupil (or teacher). It was for ethical reasons also that I decided not to carry out research with pupils younger than Year 9 (aged 13 to 14). I wanted to carry out classroom intervention, focus groups and interviews with pupils who would be mature enough, I hoped, to appropriately engage with issues of 'race' and ethnicity without causing emotional distress to any child who was intimately connected to these issues. Each lesson that I took with a new class began with my eliciting the pupils' agreement to ground rules suggested by the class, which were then displayed in the classroom and referred to when necessary. These ground rules were designed to ensure that every pupil felt that the lessons were bounded and that their psychological safety would be assured. As an equalities trainer and university tutor who regularly facilitates discussions similar to those being held in the schools, I am experienced in handling sensitive issues around 'race' and ensuring that people are made to feel 'safe'. The fact that the class teacher was in the room

and entering into discussions provided a guarantee for behaviour management and in this way ensured that there was some limitation to what was said. In gaining access to the schools, I had to undergo a Criminal Records Bureau check, as did my colleagues with whom I carried out the focus groups.

The decision to make the focus groups self selecting was also in part an ethical one, ensuring that only those pupils who felt comfortable in discussing these issues were encouraged to do so. However, on each occasion there were more volunteers than the six pupils that I suggested as the limit for the focus groups. The teachers were asked to make the selection from those pupils who were interested, but the teachers were not present during the focus group meetings. As stated, I cannot make a claim for the focus groups as being representative, and it is likely that only those pupils who were articulate, well behaved or interested in these issues attended, which needs to be acknowledged in considering the extent to which these findings can make any claim for universal validity.

In the interviews with teachers, I too had to ensure that they could be confident that their views would be anonymous, particularly as I was working with such a small sample. I also tried to ensure that they felt relaxed during the interviews and did not feel that they were being 'tested' or judged in any way. This process was made easier because I was genuinely interested in their perspectives and experiences.

Another ethical issue is to do with limiting the likelihood of either of the schools, the staff or the pupils being identifiable and such an identification causing embarrassment to individuals or to the institution, particularly as some of the perspectives have been subjected to some critique in this thesis. In order to minimise this risk, I have changed the names of the schools and the people within them who participated in this research and I have taken out any markers in this thesis that could point to their identification. This has necessitated leaving out descriptive information that would have been of interest in describing the constituency of the schools and other factors relating to them, but the ethical considerations of anonymity in this case overrule the usefulness of providing more detailed description. The ethical issue of 'using' respondents as a source for research material and then not continuing the relationship or providing an

opportunity for them to be aware of the findings is alleviated by the commitment that I have made to return to the schools to present the results of the research once the thesis has been completed.

5:10 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the methodology on which my empirical research is framed and reviewed the research methods that have been used; particular reference has been made to my claim that ethnography would have been an appropriate methodology for my research positioning and ways discussed in which the research sets out to include an ethnographic sensibility. I express my intention of using my research as a critical inquiry, exploring how the research methods and the analysis of the research data facilitate this process. In the next chapters I will consider the finding of the research and offer an analysis.

Chapter 6: Research Findings

6:00 Introduction

The findings are presented in five sections for analysis; brief summarising comments will be made at the end of each section, but the arguments will be brought together more completely in my final chapter – the Conclusions.

6:01 The location of the ‘problem’

...the ideological circuit which makes us visible in two complementary roles – the problem and the victim. (Gilroy, 1992, p.60)

Paul Gilroy is accusing ‘antiracist orthodoxy’ of framing black people as being either the ‘problem’ or the ‘victim’. The view that the presence of ‘black’ (*sic*) people in schools in this country constitutes a social problem, in the light of which action must be taken and directives espoused is reflected on several occasions during the process of the interviews with teachers. One teacher in particular seemed to suggest that the more minority ethnic children there are in a school, the more of a ‘problem’ the school will have. This perspective, assumes that an integral problem is attached to the idea of cultural and racial difference, and that in effect, this problem resides with those who are different. (Dyer, 1997, pp. 8-9)

I suppose being a majority white school, I suppose a lot of the problems you might get somewhere else, you don’t necessarily have here. I’m trying to think of the handful of people we’ve had in the past, they’ve never had any bullying, they’ve never experienced any bad animosity, but if it did happen it would be dealt with very severely, very severely. It’s like the whole culture of the place is that it’s just not tolerated. (Mark, teacher, Valley High, interview 6.11.07)

Also when Anne claims that Valley High has less ‘friction’ than other places, it may be that she too is referring to the fact that the school is majority white and therefore there are fewer ‘problems’ to do with ‘race’.

I think we’re probably quite fortunate because I think the kids do feel safe here so even if they are from a minority background, I think there isn’t or there doesn’t appear to be that friction that there could be in other places. (Anne, teacher, Valley High, interview 6.11.07)

In contrast to this view, other teachers with whom the research was carried out, rather than making the claim of ‘no problem here’, identify ‘the problem’ as being

the monocultural position in which 'majority white' schools such as Valley High and Bexlington School are situated. These teachers suggest that the pupils in a majority white school are at a disadvantage by not having the opportunity to experience diversity in their daily lives, for example Derek can be seen as locating the 'problem' in this way:

YA: How well equipped do you feel either through your life experience or through training to address cultural or racial diversity issues in your teaching?

Derek: Well, you're never well equipped enough, and I guess your personality and the way you are dictates how you approach race and all of the other sort of minority issues in general. I think because I work here, I'm not addressing it on a day to day basis, the way that I would be if I was working somewhere else, and as I think I've already said I think that the children here don't get the opportunity to focus on diversity issues the way that youngsters would elsewhere. I think that as a consequence I have little training now and I deal with issues or raise issues with the youngsters based on what's important to me at any one time, so if our teaching programme involves looking at racial issues I do and if they turn up unexpectedly during the course of a session, we always address them, I'd always address them. But I feel certain that if I was working in an inner city school in any part of the country, it would be much more of a day to day issue and that I'd be involved a whole lot more. (Derek, teacher, Valley High, interview 6.11.07)

Derek's personal experience has included teaching in inner city schools in which he felt that discussing issues of diversity on a regular basis, based on the pupils own experience was something that added to the quality of the education that they received, and that this dimension is lacking in the experiences of the pupils in the majority white school in which he now teaches.

Some young people in the Year 9 focus group at Bexlington School can be seen to view the majority white status of a school as a potential problem for its pupils when they leave the school. In relation to being asked whether cultural diversity should be taught in majority white schools, the following response was given:

I think it's like really important especially say if it was an all white school, like mostly white people because if they like don't know anything of it then when it's like after school, they're not going to have any like any knowledge of it, and I think they need to know it more because they don't know about it already because they didn't have like friends who were of different race and like when they are older and they come across people, they don't

understand the culture and whatever and it's just really important. (Jack, Year 9 pupil, Bexlington School, focus group 22.11.07)

Various views are illustrated here that locate 'the problem' of 'race' in majority white schools very differently. Some teachers seem to see the low numbers of minority ethnic pupils as contributing to the lack of racial tension in the school to the effect that this is of benefit to the school. Therefore, if somewhat obliquely, a claim is being made that more minority ethnic pupils might constitute a potential 'problem' for the school. Other responses, from a teacher and a pupil, illustrate a position in which the lack of a greater racial mix in the school constitutes a 'problem' in their framing of a deficit model as regards majority white schools, in that the pupils remain unaware of racial and cultural difference as they progress through their school careers which restricts their opportunities to experience racial and cultural differences. What is striking here are the similarities in response between a middle aged male teacher and a boy of 13 or 14. The evidence presented in these findings indicates that many of the pupils worked with and spoken to are every bit as insightful as their teachers and at times arguably more candid in their discussions of these issues.

6:02 Evidence of bi-racialization

The process of bi-racialization dictates that separate inferior Black and superior White social and symbolic designations determine subjectivities and define specific and exclusive group memberships. (Ifekwunigwe, 1999, p.13)

The idea of bi-racialization is presented here as an unconscious process by which people take for granted power relationships between different racial and ethnic groupings. As discussed in Chapter Three, bi-racialization may prove to be a more useful concept than racism from which to investigate the way that difference is understood and acted upon in majority white schools. Consideration of bi-racialized power relationships may offer a more comprehensive approach to racist incidents, so as well as considering the incident itself, the circumstances and relations that underlie it are also addressed. The idea of bi-racialized understandings will be used here, to consider the taken-for-granted designations that are attributed to racial and cultural difference, by both teachers and pupils in majority white schools in the research sites under investigation.

In one of the focus groups, carried out with a Year 9 class in Valley High, an Asian boy, the only pupil of minority ethnicity in the class in which I had delivered a lesson on cultural diversity, said that he had been racially bullied by other pupils. As he continued to speak, and was met with disinterest by the other pupils, he suggested that his height rather than his 'race' may have been a cause for this bullying (he was smaller than most of the other pupils). The other pupils in the focus group made a point of stressing that racism really was not much of an issue at their school⁸. The notes that I made in my research diary are as follows:

Research Diary, 27th October 2007

Valley High, Year 9 focus group

The school is well ordered. Children wear strict uniform – skirts for the girls – ties, shirts neatly tucked in – a no make-up code. They walk around the school in an orderly way – compare that with the scrums of Bexlington. In the first focus group, the one Asian boy of the year 9 class was present. He spoke about his experiences of racism, but they were skimmed over by the group. Their perspective was one in which, due to the low BME numbers, racism didn't exist. The lone voice- how brave to admit to experiencing racism- wasn't heard. Bullying yes, racism no. (research diary extract, 27.10.07)

This moment in the focus group suggests that even when confronted with testimonial evidence of racism as having taken place, the preferred image that the pupils in the focus group have of their school is one in which racism does not exist as the other pupils did not acknowledge what the boy had said. This incident supports the suggestion made in these findings that topics of cultural and racial difference are peripheral both to classroom engagement and to the teachers' and pupils' everyday concerns and experiences.

In my field notes on 27th October 2007, following this visit, I further noted the following concerning this Year 9 focus group:

Little awareness of classroom discussions about cultural diversity and low level of engagement with culture and 'race' as topics of conversation. (research diary extract, 27.10.07)

I am suggesting that such lack of awareness reflects a bi-racialized perspective, which does not recognise or acknowledge different personal experiences deriving

⁸ This section of the focus group was unfortunately not caught on tape, but I made notes immediately after the event.

from 'specific and exclusive group membership' (Ifekwunigwe, 1999, p.13). This perspective is also suggested in the responses of Anne, a teacher, who declares her focus for intervention in racism to be on the incident itself rather than on the cultural setting which made the incident possible:

I had a couple of Asian lads and there was a couple of times maybe that they came up and said 'Oh someone said this about me', but again it gets dealt with very quickly, the same as if they were being bullied for any other reason and then it seems to be OK again. (Anne, teacher, Valley High, interview 6.11.07)

The idea that issues 'are dealt with' in the school by punitive measures was frequently repeated in interviews with other teachers. This idea reflects the view that expressions of racism are not related to the underlying culture, but are lone-standing events that can be admonished by the behaviour policies of the school.

In the interviews with some of the teachers the suggestion was made that when the majority white children in the class accepted a minority ethnic student: that was somehow remarkable. The focus of two teacher's attention would seem to be on the accommodating behaviour of the children in the class, framing this as though it was special rather than to be expected. This I would suggest evidences a taken-for-granted privileging of a 'white' norm and reflects an assumption that the other pupils might be expected not to be welcoming of a pupil who is racially and culturally different to them. The discourse of some of the teachers seems to expect white pupils to 'other' the minority ethnic pupil:

It's quite interesting, a Chinese girl...in my form. We did an introduction when they all started, everyone said a few words and when she said she was Chinese, everyone was very interested in her and I think her little speech went on for longer than anyone else's because they were asking a lot more questions of her. So they were quite keen to know. They wanted her to speak some Chinese which she wouldn't, but they were actually very keen to ask her lots more questions like 'Ooo, so are your parents Chinese or your grandparents? When did you move from China to England?' so it was actually quite interesting, I think she was quite pleased because to start off, she was quite quiet and a little bit unsure and then by the end of it you couldn't stop her talking. They really took to her actually... (Anne, teacher, Valley High, interview 6.11.07)

Despite the girl's perceived pleasure in being of interest to her class mates, an exotification of difference seems to have taken place here (Ifekwunigwe, 1999,

100) and the teacher, despite her pleasure at the acceptance by the other pupils, is seeing it as extraordinary. Joanna, a teacher at Bexlington School, of 'mixed-race' origin, speaks of a similar process in her own childhood and the confusing effect that being seen as being racially 'exotic' had on her sense of self:

Well actually at the school, it was as though one's identity was, this was the 50's, 60's, exotic at times, you know that side of one was, so the notion of that was problematic because as a child you're trying to deal with those categories. (Joanna teacher, Bexlington School, interview 23.11.07)

A similar trend of a teacher perceiving difference as exotic can be detected in Rose's telling of the reaction of the pupils in her class to a Thai boy who joined them:

And another time, we had a Thai boy that joined our class, sadly he left, they loved him, absolutely loved him..., I mean he was a fascinating boy and he lived in a sort of community, fishing community basically in Thailand and he worked, mum had gone into a city to earn money, dad had died or dad had left or something, so he stayed with his aunt who fished, so as well as going to school, he had to work. I just think he was very interesting but I don't think any of children in my class found out anything interesting about life for a child in Thailand. But was he interested in their life, you know, this is part and parcel of being a child isn't it you know, that's it the here and the now rather than rather than the things that you do back home type of thing but they were very, very accepting. (Rose, teacher, Bexlington School, interview, 30.11.07)

What is notable is that Rose is admitting that the pupils in her class did not find the boy's past experiences of particular interest, while she, as an adult, obviously did. Rose as the teacher, finds it necessary to stress how 'accepting' the pupils were of the Thai boy, while giving the impression that the pupils themselves took their acceptance of and friendship with the boy for granted. It is significant that after this anecdote, Rose gives a further example of her class accepting a pupil of minority ethnicity, as if to stress the point about the absence of racism in these instances. I am suggesting that her emphasis on the way that the class accept pupils who are racially or culturally different is an approach that may perhaps be seen as bi-racialized, in that the Rose's subjectivity is determined by her white, western social designation from which position she sees the minority ethnic pupils in her class as being 'others' who are nevertheless accepted in a way that she suggests must be seen as being remarkable.

Another signalling of the extent to which a bi-racialized perspective is evident is in the interview with Mark, a teacher at Valley High. He can be seen to consider his own perspective as being value-free, and as such suggesting that he has nothing to learn about addressing difference. He considers himself to be perfectly equipped to teach about cultural and racial diversity, despite having said that he has not lived or worked outside of rural and semi rural parts of the county:

YA: *How well equipped do you feel, either through your life experience or through training to address issues around cultural and racial diversity?*

Mark: *Yeah, I feel very equipped... We have had INSETs in the past about how to deal with racial bullying, sexual bullying, so as a school they have tackled it. To be honest, you know, everyone's got equal rights so I just make sure that's emphasised in my lessons. It doesn't matter what background you come from, I think every individual has got rights. If I'm looking at two pupils, I don't notice the colour of their skin, I don't notice whether they're a male or a female, each of them has got an equal right in my eyes. (Mark, teacher, Valley High, interview 6.11.07)*

In Mark's response here he can be seen to be displaying his confidence in the idea of equal rights rather than acknowledging the impact of the lived experience of diversity. His emphatic claim to be able to teach about 'cultural and racial diversity' contradicts his apparent lack of awareness of the principles of a multicultural or an antiracist approach to teaching. This is evidenced further on in the interview. Also of significance is Mark's assumption that my question about addressing diversity is actually referring to responses to bullying and racism. His approach here suggests a perspective in which education about cultural and racial diversity can be reduced to the commitment to treat all pupils the same.

Further on in the interview, Mark expresses the view that the norms of conformity within the school would seem to mitigate against pupils expressing their difference:

YA: *In your opinion and experience how do you think that young people in schools feel about those pupils who are different in terms of culture or religion or 'race'?*

Mark: *I don't think they are thought of as being different to be honest. When we had two Rastafarian boys and they had to wear their berets, it was just perfectly accepted. We've had a few girls from the Middle East, who've had to wear longer skirts. We've had no one actually have to*

wear the full umm, what's it called?

YA: *Hijab?*

Mark: *Yeah, we've had no one that had to wear that. I don't know if that did occur, how the school would deal with it. There's been a lot in the press about pupils and what their rights are. I think here, because we've got a very strict ethos with regard to uniform and the uniform representing the pupil body, I think that if they did want to wear their jihad or whatever its called, then I think they might be seen as being different, and they probably might not want to. I don't know, its never actually occurred here, but because there's such a strong ethos on uniform and presentation, they might feel slightly uncomfortable, which I'd hope they didn't you know but as I say its something the school would have to deal with at governor level and what the Head and deputies say, but its never occurred. But no, I don't think the pupils themselves class themselves any different to anyone else, it's never noticeable anyway. (Mark, teacher, Valley High, interview 6.11.07)*

With reference to his claim of difference not being relevant, Mark refers to the school culture, suggesting that the strict uniform code, may override any attempted expressions of cultural difference. He gives every indication of a discourse which emphasises 'there is no 'problem' here', with the idea of a 'problem' being equated with differences between pupils. A 'problem' would be seen to occur if students felt strongly about visually expressing their difference. Possibly because he has claimed not to notice racial difference, Mark chooses to speak about difference with reference to potential problems with the uniform if pupils wished to express a religious conviction, rather than talking about other implications of difference from the perspective of the pupils who may live out this difference. His usage of the word 'jihad' rather than 'hijab' and of Rastafarians 'berets' may also be seen to reflect a disinterest in pupils' expressions of difference.

In not wishing to highlight racial or cultural differences, Mark suggests that the way that racist expressions are envisioned and dealt with is the same as any kind of breach of conduct. Within this approach, expressions of cultural diversity become irrelevant:

The whole ethos is, you're here to learn, you're here to achieve, you're here to do well and anything that gets in the way of that won't be tolerated. So if people do mess around in lessons they're dealt with, we don't accept any swearing or bad behaviour and you know we can't accept any racism or any violence towards another pupil. (Mark, PSHE teacher, Valley High, interview 6.11.07)

At the end of his interview Mark raises an issue that concerns him in his role as a science teacher, rather than as a PSHE teacher. He complains about the use of 'multicultural names' in science exam papers, as being distracting for pupils in majority white schools.

YA: *Do you have any other comments, suggestions or observations to make regarding issues of race and ethnicity...*

Mark: *I have, it's only a very minor thing its from a science perspective, I mean, I can understand why the exam boards do it, they put some multicultural names in exam papers and I know they have to but that sometimes confuses the pupils. So I know the exam board are trying to be politically correct by putting some names. But if the pupils' have got poor literacy skills anyway they're, you know finding it difficult to understand the question, and then they see some multicultural name and because we're from a school like we are, they're not used to that type of name and quite a few of my pupils in the past have said, 'what does that word mean?' and its sort of got in the way of the actual question. (Mark, teacher, Valley High, interview 6.11.07)*

Mark indicates his understanding that the reason 'multicultural names' are used by exam boards is because they 'have to be'. To this extent the principle of using names that express the 'difference' that is an inherent part of British society is not fully recognised. He would here appear to be challenging an 'official discourse' that dictates what needs to happen in terms of a multicultural perspective. The expression of difference in this context is seen to be problematic and as causing unnecessary difficulties for the pupils of the majority white school in which he teaches.

Differences in personal perspectives made evident through the idea of bi-racialization are revealed in how Joanna, a teacher at Bexlington School, responds to questions about her background. She speaks about her parents being of different 'races' and the effects of that fact on her own world - view as a young child:

*... issues of race and identity have always absorbed me, even as a child, so, going to India for example and meeting my Indian family, I was 3, I can still remember issues of difference and difficulty, amazing acceptance, given that my parents were meeting from completely opposite ends of the spectrum, in terms of caste and class. It was amazing that in a sense a Brahmin, marrying a white working class woman and then a mixed race child, the family were fantastic, they've always been so welcoming, but its incredibly complex and there were times when I did feel isolated as a small child perhaps because I didn't speak Asanese fluently at all and because of*¹¹⁰

not being completely Asanese and then there were times in England where I did feel, the victim of a horrible racist incident for example when I was about 5. (Joanna, teacher, Bexlington School, interview, 23.11.07)

and then later as a teacher:

Yeah, I first worked as a teacher in Hackney and that was a deliberate thing on my part, knowing that I wanted to work in a very multicultural part of London and knowing that I wanted to work in a working class area that was very diverse...And then after that I worked in Coventry where there was a very significant Asian population and I found as a teacher working in the school there which had a very high proportion of Asian children that I was perceived differently, I was perceived very much as being more Asian and people were more comfortable, both the kids and the staff, with talking about that side of me or asking me about that side of myself. That seemed to be a connection, which was easy, whereas in mainly white schools, my identity has been sometimes perceived differently. So you know, it's like shifting identities according to where you are really. (Joanna, teacher, Bexlington School, interview, 23.11.07)

In Joanna's experience, her own position as being of mixed race has informed her outlook, her life decisions and the way that she is seen by other people. Further on in her interview her experiences can be seen to inform her practice in ensuring that the school she teaches in negotiates issues of institutional racism. Her conviction may be seen as having developed from a very different experience of 'race' to that of the other teachers who were interviewed. Through her own experience, she has come to a position in which she is aware of the lived significance of 'race' and 'racism' and as such Joanna has been instrumental in developing the school's race equality policy.

The effects of bi-racialization, in determining the world view of their own perspectives as being 'normal' is indicated in some of the teacher's responses in which they assume that issues of racial difference are either insignificant, or are likely to signal an antagonistic response from majority white pupils. In particular, in a school culture in which there is a strong element of conformity and discipline, any hint that racial antagonism could possibly be culturally embedded is refuted by those who most obviously take-for-granted their own racialised world-view in which whiteness is the norm.

6:03 Teaching cultural diversity in the classroom

While various educational theories are regularly expounded, and regularly replaced in academic circles, they often bear little relevance to or have little impact on classroom life. (May, 1994, p.1)

This section considers the effects of factors such as the discipline and behaviour cultures of particular schools to actual cultural diversity curriculum interventions in classrooms. With reference to 'what goes on' in the classroom, May makes the suggestion that the development of academic discourse may have little relevance to 'classroom life'. (May, 1994, p.1)

In this section I relate this question of relevance to the 'official discourse' being considered here in the forms of laws, guidelines and policies concerned with cultural diversity. To what extent do the edicts about delivering cultural diversity in the classroom that have been discussed in previous chapters, influence the practice of teachers in the classroom and how do pupils react to approaches to cultural diversity in the classroom?

The interview with Miranda, a Year 10 pupil at Bexlington School reveals some of the difficulties of having meaningful discussions about culture or racism in the classroom context:

YA: Can you talk about any lessons you've had that teach about cultural diversity or about racism?

Miranda: When we had PSE it was 100 minutes of the teacher just trying to keep the class in order because people just thought of it as a kind of a joke lesson. But in RS we also do some stuff about cultural diversity with religions and stuff, which is more effective I think, but then it is more focused on religions and deals with religions and not just culture. (Miranda, Year 10, Bexlington School pupil interview, 15.12.08)

Miranda goes on to say:

In PSE we do a lot of like create a role-play of somebody suffering from racism or bullying or whatever, which doesn't really work because you split up into groups and nobody does anything for the next half hour. (Miranda Year 10 Bexlington School pupil interview, 15.12.08)

Miranda's account of a certain amount of chaos in PSHE lessons in Bexlington

School was reinforced by my own observations as recorded in my field notes after delivering a Year 9 lesson on cultural diversity, making comparisons between Bexlington School and Valley High:

Research Diary, 15th October 2007
Year 9 lesson at Bexlington School

...the pupils were all the various shapes and sizes of early adolescence from virtually adult to very much still children- this variation in size and shape was later reflected in the maturity, or lack of it, of their responses to the material. In contrast to Valley High, the pupils (at Bexlington School) pushed past me to get in and sat in chairs making a wide circle around the classroom, they were shouting out, messing about and generally being loud and not wanting to be controlled... there were some exceptions, many in fact, but the disruptive pupils completely claimed the attention of Rose (the teacher) and myself. She played a warm -up game with them before my input. It was like when I was a youth worker in that the unruly ones dominated. There wasn't or didn't seem to be much enjoyment of the game. (research diary extract, 15.10.07)

Some key factors in this situation militate against having a sensible and enlightening lesson, one of these factors being the number of young people in the class. Trying to have discussions in a setting with 30 adolescent pupils, about sensitive and personal issues is hugely challenging. The Year 9 focus group, held subsequently at Bexlington School in which there were only six pupils had a very different feel to it, of lively cooperation, rather than the slightly adversarial atmosphere of the classroom setting. Lessons, as I have observed them in the schools in this research and previously,⁹ can appear as sites of conflict, built on a paradigm in which the teacher's intention is to impart information and the role of the pupils is to receive it, with a certain percentage of pupils, setting out to disrupt whatever is going on. This would seem to be the case particularly in PSHE lessons in which the format of the lessons tends to be looser and more interactive, giving more opportunities for disruption.

As part of the PSHE lesson the pupils had to fill in an evaluation form at the end of the lesson in which they were asked to record the 'learning objective', 'how much I enjoyed the lesson' and 'how could I have improved my learning'. In the last

⁹ In previous research, in 2004/2005, I taught six lessons (on cultural diversity in the Citizenship curriculum), as a participant-observer to a Year 11 class in another part of the county. I have also experienced Year 9 and Year 10 classrooms in my current role as mentoring manager at Aimhigher Sussex

column, the pupils had written seemingly standard phrases such as 'speak more', work faster, 'contributed more' and 'spoken less to my friends' (Year 9 PSHE lesson materials, Bexlington School 16.10.07) which seem to be consistent with the pattern of self-evaluation that pupils are asked to do in schools today¹⁰. There was general feedback of the pupils having enjoyed the lesson, most giving marks out of 10, which were between 7 and 10, which was surprising to me given the disruptions that took place throughout the lesson.

Comments on these forms included the following:

It was good, I learned stuff

I enjoyed the lesson because it was good to see how much people stereotype because I didn't realise!

I enjoyed it quite a lot because it was very interesting

Better than usual (sic), more interesting!!

(Year 9 PSHE lesson materials, Bexlington School 16.10.07)

One of the students expressed her reluctance to share personal information in her feedback form:

It was interesting but I don't like talking about the way I feel

(Year 9 PSHE lesson, Bexlington School 16.10.07)

Interestingly, this feedback form was from a pupil from a Muslim background, Miriam, who volunteered to participate in the focus group. In this focus group setting Miriam shared her views and feelings in a thoughtful way, despite her stated reluctance suggested by her evaluation after the lesson. For example, she gave the following response to a question in the Year 9 focus group at Bexlington School:

AG: What sort of things have you talked about, perhaps in PSHE, but it might have gone on to other subjects as well, but what have you talked about with your teachers to do with cultural diversity?

Miriam: In like RS last year we kind of learnt to respect everyone's religion but it was kind of like no one was interested so if it was your religion you felt kind of bad because everyone was kind of la, la, la, la, this is so boring and they were kind of ignoring the fact that 'we listen to what you believe in so give us a chance', but they never did.

¹⁰ This knowledge being based on personal experience of having three children currently in the education system

AG: *Do you think that could have been handled better, perhaps by the teacher?*

Miriam: *Well if the teacher didn't yell at us maybe, but she kind of told us 'you're badly brought up', so as soon as said that, the class never listened to her again.*

AG: *How do you think it could be dealt with in a positive way because it's so important to learn about all of that.*

Miriam: *She kind of generalises too much... She makes such a massive generalisation that you all sit there thinking, 'how can you say that, we don't judge you and yet you judge us'.*

AG: *Are you allowed to then say something and express your opinions?*

Miriam: *No*

AG: *You feel that you'd then get shouted at?*

Ben: *Yes, well you do*
(Year 9 focus group, Bexlington School, 22.11.07)

The frustration that Miriam is voicing here comes from her wanting the rest of the class to be interested in learning about her religion. The teacher's handling of the pupils' uninterested behaviour alienates them even more from the possibility of paying attention. Then to add to Miriam's annoyance about the teacher's approach, the teacher gives out misinformation. This results in Miriam feeling unfairly judged and unable to voice a protest. Ben's support of Miriam's interpretation of this situation gives an added authority to her representation of this as a fair account of the classroom dynamics. The classroom culture, in which all the authority and knowledge is held with the teacher is suggested here as operating even when pupils themselves may have a greater knowledge and authority of the subject that is being taught. This situation was discussed hypothetically in Chapter 2 in the suggestion by Sleeter and Montecinos that 'teachers too often attempt multicultural teaching by presenting superficial versions of other people's cultures and communities' (Sleeter and Montecinos, 1999, 118). There are parallels here between RE and PSHE with the delivery of the curriculum, in which student voices and experiences may go unheard.

In the interviews with teachers, Derek, a teacher at Valley High, expresses a conflict

that exists between the school culture, in which the pupils see the purpose of lessons as being to impart information and the remit of cultural diversity lessons, which Derek understands to be an opportunity to discuss experiences and perspectives:

Derek: I think there's a danger maybe, particularly in an academic school like our own where the youngsters see it almost as a lesson, rather than as an experience and they tick it off, not necessarily consciously but, 'oh, we've done racism lets go on to something else' and it becomes a subject and you do get, when we do the PSE, you do get a reaction, 'oh we've done that' whatever it may be, it needn't be just about race, and they don't appreciate that various things need to be revisited again and again and again from different perspectives on learning for life lessons...?

YA: Is that about how the PSHE curriculum is looked at? Its looked at as another lesson that you do and you learn and..?

Derek: No, in fact I think here that they don't see it as a lesson, they're not working towards a GCSE and we're very much results oriented here, you might be aware of that, from very early on. But they still see it as part of the curriculum rather than you know, as much broader issues. (Derek, teacher, Valley High, interview 6.11.07)

The culture, internalised by the pupils, in academic schools such as Valley High is suggested to include the notion that all the teaching should be leading to some sort of quantifiable end, rather than extending the opportunity for pupils to engage in, what Derek refers to as 'learning for life lessons' which will be of value beyond the school context and outside of a box-ticking approach to specific subject areas. There is a further assumption from pupils that learning is vertical and sequential, so they express that they have 'done' something, whereas some conceptual learning might be more circular and require development in order to reach depth and maturity.

A further challenge in teaching lessons focusing on cultural diversity is encountered when there are just one or two pupils of minority ethnicity in a class. When cultural diversity issues are discussed this can be seen to be challenging for teachers, Anne, a teacher at Valley High illustrates this concern:

Anne: ...last year I had a Muslim boy in my form and a Chinese girl as well and there was another Asian lad as well who wasn't quite as practising, he was more sort of Western in his beliefs. But it was very difficult when you had to address, you know, things about foreign people I

suppose, coming in, as the kids would put it, and having to be quite sensitive to people in the form but also appreciating where some of the comments were coming from, obviously the parents.

YA: *That is hard.*

Anne: *A lot of it I think is the parents' point of view, you know what they hear on the news and the immigrants are taking all the jobs and also Ali celebrated Ramadan so he was fasting and you know we had to be sensitive to that on top of the fact that the other kids didn't really understand so we tried to get him to talk a little bit about it and stuff but... I think it is important because you get quite a bit of bigotry and isolated views on what people think and if they don't open up and accept that there are different people in the world then it's going to get worse. (Anne, teacher, Valley High, interview 6.11.07)*

The confidence levels as well as the political positioning of the teacher is of crucial importance for them to be able to address classroom situations effectively in majority white schools in which some of the children may express bigoted ideas. The QCA Standards make reference to classroom situations of the kind described by Anne, expressing the ideal discussed in Chapter 4 that:

Staff and pupils are at ease discussing diversity and anti-racism when issues arise. (QCA, 2001)

This 'ease' cannot be assumed in a majority white classroom in which the teacher and most of the children may have little experience of 'diversity' and the teacher is unfamiliar with an antiracism perspective. Intervention practices to address situations of this kind in majority white classrooms, in which there is 'quite a bit of bigotry', may be best dealt with as part of a planned curriculum, rather than a response in which the pupil of minority ethnicity is called on to explain his religious beliefs to an unsympathetic class.

The influence of the teacher's perception and positioning in the classroom context can be detected in Rose's interview in which she relates her experience as a PSHE teacher in Bexlington School:

...and I think that is very much within the Bexlington culture to accept difference and race being one of them. Over the years when I've taught about this in years 10 and 11 our topic, you know on race equality, it was extremely hard to get any sort of discussion going because there was unanimity about everybody's views, everybody was right on politically correct, there was not one hint of racism, that's not altogether true, from

time to time somebody would say something that would be simply outrageous... (Rose, teacher, Bexlington School, interview 30.11.07)

The process of Rose investigating her own claim that there 'was not one hint of racism' will be looked at in more detail below. The interesting assertion here is that it was difficult to get discussion going, which leads to the question of how the framework for discussion on these issues is set up to encourage the class to share their views and experiences with their peers in discussing the contentious area of 'race', culture and ethnicity, rather than just creating a space for pupils to be 'right on politically correct'.

A further extract from my field notes, written after my lesson with the Year 9 class at Bexlington, investigates some of the problems of classroom delivery:

Research Diary, 15th October 2007

I introduced my research to the class and told them what they'd be doing in the lesson. The noise and disruption levels were so high that Rose began writing the names of the disruptive kids on the board and told them that they could have their names removed by good behaviour but all those whose names were on the board by the end of the lesson would stay in at lunch time. This seemed to reduce the noise levels.

Working against this antagonism has huge implications for cultural diversity work in the classroom. How to keep enough discipline to do the work while allowing enough of a relaxed atmosphere to allow creative thinking? (research diary extract, 15.10.07)

There are huge challenges for teaching cultural diversity against the backdrop of a classroom culture of lack of interest and disruption and the status of PSHE as an unimportant subject. Linda Measor discusses 'Pupils' Perceptions of Subject Status' claiming that in the course of her research in secondary schools:

a pattern of response became clear; certain curriculum areas had more value than others(some courses) are held in low esteem by pupils; they fail to match the rigid academic criteria which grant a subject high status. (Measor, 1984, 202)

There seem to be several factors that make effective classroom delivery of cultural diversity difficult, particularly in majority white schools, as discussed in this section. The pupils' own perception that this lesson is not to be taken seriously, is suggested by both the teachers' and the pupils' analysis, as well as my own participant

observation in PSHE lessons. In addition, there are difficulties and sensitivities in a situation in which there are only a few pupils of minority ethnicity present in a classroom, and the general atmosphere of the class is either indifferent or hostile to the discussion. These difficulties increase when the teacher is uninformed or misinformed and the teaching content is at odds with the actual life experience of the pupils who inhabit the diversity being 'taught about'. In order to teach about sensitive issues, a school needs to have an atmosphere and behaviour levels that make any teaching/learning through discussion possible. This will be difficult to achieve in disruptive classrooms as I experienced in Bexlington School, but it will also be difficult in situations with high levels of discipline and politeness, in which the pupils' approach to learning is to receive it, rather than to interact in the production of knowledge (Freire, 1972). The demands of official guidelines and standards will have little relevance if the classroom setting, the approach and experience of the teachers and the attitudes of the pupils towards both the curriculum context and the subject matter itself are not conducive to learning.

6:04 Perceptions of cultural diversity education

not as a flattening process of assimilation but as equal opportunity accompanied by cultural diversity, in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance.
(Roy Jenkins, MP 1966¹¹ (defining integration)) ,

This section will consider how teachers and pupils perceive the delivery of education about cultural diversity through the curriculum. Teachers were asked how important it was to address cultural diversity in the curriculum and what they felt were the main issues that should be taught (Appendix 3) and pupils were asked to consider what they had been taught in PSHE lessons or other areas of the curriculum about cultural diversity. (Appendix 2 and Appendix 5). The intention underlying these questions was to gain an understanding of how teachers might perceive cultural diversity, in particular whether they felt that it was an important area to teach about in majority white schools and how 'equipped' they felt to be able to deliver such lessons, by virtue of their convictions, their life experiences or their training. I also wanted to find out from pupils what their perceptions were of having had lessons focussing on cultural diversity. In this section I will consider whether there may be differences between spoken commitments to teaching about cultural diversity as a

¹¹ Speech by Roy Jenkins to the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants, 23rd May 1966~~9~~

concept and the implications of classroom practice. Finally I will reflect on what can be deduced from the general levels of awareness and engagement of teachers and pupils in two majority white schools about the theme of teaching and learning about cultural diversity.

Firstly, the teachers' perceptions, in response to being asked whether they feel that cultural diversity education is important, indicated a unanimous consensus that it is of extreme importance, as is evidenced by the responses to the following question:

YA: *How important do you think it is in majority white schools such as this one to address issues of racial and cultural diversity in the school curriculum?*

Mark: *I think its very important, just because we're a mainly white school, our pupils go out into the wider world and they're going to come across different groups of different people with different ideas so I think we need to equip them really well.* (Mark, teacher at Valley High, interview 6.11.07)

Derek: *Yes, I think it's perception of racism, I think they (the pupils) need to understand what we mean by racism and not have their own, maybe preconceived ideas which might be based on TV or the media or whatever the case might be, so actually look at diversity issues and what we mean by them and to try to understand the issues that young people and people of minority groups face, to understand their issues, the problems and concerns that they have.* (Derek, teacher at Valley High, interview 6.11.07)

Anne: *Well, I think especially in a school like this, it is very important because again the kids don't necessarily come across different cultures within this environment because we are quite limited as to who we've got coming into the school and it is important, you know in PSHE lessons, if you mention the word 'immigrant', you have all the parent views coming out and you have to be obviously quite strong in how you approach that...*(Anne, teacher at Valley High, interview 6.11.07)

Rose: *Very important because, well, particularly in a school like this...* (Rose, teacher at Bexlington School, interview 30.11.07)

Joanna: *Hugely important. Obviously I've always felt it was important but it's increasingly so as we become increasingly diverse as a society and with increased migration globally and with increased globalisation as well, it's crucial for all of us to become more culturally attuned, more culturally aware, more sensitive to issues of race and ethnicity, more aware of linguistic difference and other languages but also aware of racism and its reality and the experience of that. And we all benefit from that, we all need to become more aware.* (Joanna, teacher at Bexlington School, interview 23.11.07)

It is notable, that Vicky, a teacher at Bexlington School, in questioning the use of the word 'important', is less inclined to endorse the need to address issues of racial and cultural diversity, over teaching about other types of socially designated difference.

How important? It's interesting you say 'how important', how important is anything? Young people just need to have a balanced understanding of any element of issues in terms of any discrimination, which exists and also an understanding of any diversity that exists in culture. That's not just about 'race' that's about sexual orientation and everything really and social economic background, it's about the lot isn't it? It's that breadth, it's not about one specific area it's about a total breadth of diversity in society essentially. (Vicky, teacher at Bexlington School, interview 23.11. 07)

Joanna's conviction in particular that issues of race and culture are of key importance in the school curriculum can be seen to differ with the views of Vicky, who although acknowledging that racial and cultural diversity ought to be addressed through the curriculum, is reluctant to highlight 'race' over other areas in which injustice can be manifest.

Most of the teachers who were interviewed give a strong endorsement to the notion that it is of utmost importance to deliver cultural diversity education to pupils, some emphasising that this is particularly important because the school has a predominantly white intake. One teacher qualified her feeling that it was important to teach about cultural diversity, by referring to the need to counter the negative views of some parents. It is interesting to compare this theoretical support for cultural diversity education with the responses of the pupils when asked to what extent they had received such education.

In the Year 9 focus group at Bexlington School, the pupils gave little indication of having had any input at all to their PSHE lessons of any discussions about 'cultural diversity':

Actually to be honest, the first year I had PSE, I guess we were kind of easing into it, because the work was easy and we didn't really do much. Then the second year we had a really horrible teacher and I couldn't really concentrate and this year I haven't had a lesson for PSE. (Jack, Year 9 focus group Bexlington School, 22.11.07)

The other pupils in recalling what had been looked at in PSHE, mentioned discussing bullying and a booklet they used called 'The Life Game' in which they discussed budgeting. None of the pupils could recall any input regarding cultural diversity, other than that of the lessons that I took with them as part of this research. One pupil made the suggestion that teachers actively avoided discussions of 'race':

Yeah because normally they say, 'oh were going to be doing something on racism' and then when we get up to it, they sort of steer round it and forget about it and end up talking about shoes or something. (Miriam, Year 9 focus group Bexlington School, 22.11.07)

Nasreen, Year 11, when asked in her interview about how cultural diversity is dealt with in the school curriculum suggests that little is actually done:

...it's only like touched on, it's not explored a lot. (Nasreen, Year 11. Interview, 15.12.08)

Neither teachers nor pupils suggested that issues to do with cultural diversity had been fully addressed through the curriculum. Pupils at Valley High gave an indication of a limited understanding of cultural and racial diversity, for example in the Year 11 focus group at Valley High, when asked by the focus group facilitator:

IM: *What sort of things have you talked about in your classroom in connection to cultural diversity?*

A pupil's response was:

If there's more coloured people than white, then the white person's going to feel out of place and vice versa. (Year 11 focus group, Valley High 27.10.07)

This response is of interest both for the use of the outdated word 'coloured' which suggests that this pupil has had little personal involvement with black people, and for the naivety of the sentiment expressed, which shows little awareness of social, cultural or political dynamics. Another interesting perception from this focus group comes from a pupil who suggests that all they have learnt about racism is located in the history of the 1936 Berlin Olympics and that current racism had been ignored to the extent that Year 11 pupils were seemingly unaware of racism continuing to exist:

... we learnt in PE about the Berlin Olympics and how Jesse Owen was treated, we know about the stuff from history, but we didn't know how it had

progressed and that it's still going on. (Year 11 focus group, Valley High 27.10.07)

Much attention was given to the impact of the film, *One of Us*, that I had shown to the classes and used to initiate discussion in the PSHE lessons that I had taught (Appendix 1), to the extent that this seemed to be one of the only lessons that focused on matters to do with cultural diversity that most of the pupils had received. In each of the classes in which the film was shown it was received with a real sense of interest. The pupils in focus groups and interviews made comments as to the impact of the film on their awareness of pertinent issues. For example in the Year 11 focus group in Valley High, the following dialogue about the film took place:

IM: Has anything that you've discussed in PSE made any differences to your attitude towards people of other races or different cultures?

To see how things affect people more than you actually know, like what goes on behind closed doors and stuff like that. Like when you saw the bullying you don't realise it affects people as much as they make out at that moment.

IM: You mean do you think it affects people much more?

Yeah, than they let on

IM: So it hasn't made you change in any way?

It doesn't really like change your opinion entirely, it just teaches you more about it and stuff I suppose.

(Year 11 focus group, Valley High 27.10.07)

The points being made here suggest that in viewing a film that showed the effect of racism on young people of minority ethnicities and their families, the pupils were being exposed to an area that they had no previous knowledge of, this perception seems to be revealed in the phrase that the film offered them a glimpse of 'what goes on behind closed doors'.

It is significant that all of the pupils that I spoke to were of the opinion that in majority white schools, there needed to be greater focus on teaching about cultural diversity. This is exemplified by responses from the Year 11 focus group at Valley High to a question asking whether this was an important area to teach about:

IM: *In a sort of school where there's a predominance of white people, do you think that it's important to teach about cultural diversity?*

Yeah (chorus)

For the people that maybe were brought up not really understanding just need to be educated to actually know about real experiences, it makes it all real. (Year 11 focus group, Valley High 27.10.07)

The Year 9 focus group at Valley High also suggested that the lesson that I conducted with them was the only input they could remember about cultural diversity in lessons.

IM: *I just wanted to know what sort of things you might have talked about in the classroom that are around the subject of cultural diversity?*

(Silence and shuffling)

IM: *Have you talked about it much?*

We learnt about it when Yaa was with us and that was about it

IM: *Can you remember anything?*

We learnt about, I can't remember what it's called, prejudice and I can't remember the other one

IM: *Racism?*

Yeah, and then we watched a video and it said about not judging people (Year 9 focus group, Valley High, 27.10.07)

The Year 9 focus group in Bexlington School made a more detailed analysis of the impact of the film they watched with me:

AG: *If we go back to looking at other races and cultures, you don't think you've covered that very much so far, is that what you're saying, in PSE?*

George: *In PSE we sort of did in the lesson with you, we watched a video, I actually thought that was really good, because they were real people and it actually showed us how they were coping in school because of their race or whatever and it showed how they like were picked on or bullied really and it wasn't really fair, just because of something they believe in or something they were.*

YA: *Did all of you here see it?*

(Most had as indicated by a show of hands)

AG: *What did you think of it?*

Miriam: *I thought it was good because it wasn't just some made up story that we had to try and empathise with, it was genuine empathy. (Year 9 focus group, Bexlington School 22.11.07)*

Of interest here is their assessment that the power of the film lay in its portrayal of real people, actually living out their lives in which racial and cultural positionings were seen to have a significant impact. It was this element of real life that the pupils suggest provides for a genuine learning experience. This finding confirms some of the previous chapters, particularly the approaches from Maclaren and Torres (1999) and Sleeter and Montecinos (1999) discussed in Chapter Two. There is a discrepancy revealed here, in that despite the teachers emphasising how important it is to teach about cultural diversity, few pupils were able to remember any lessons in PSHE, with the exception of those that I had delivered, when cultural diversity had actually been discussed in lessons.

When asked to give further details about what actually gets taught in cultural diversity lessons, the responses of some of the teachers is less committed than their conviction that this subject needs to be addressed in the curriculum, for example:

YA: *Again, looking at the cultural diversity curriculum and you can take the term 'cultural' as widely as you like, what do you feel are the main issues that need to be taught?*

Mark: *I think just an acceptance that everyone is different and comes from different backgrounds. (silence)*

YA: *And an exploration of that?*

Mark: *Mmm, Oh definitely yes, yeah. And obviously an exploration of how their own culture fits into other people's cultures as well. I hadn't really thought about that before to be honest. (Mark, teacher at Valley High, interview 6.11.07)*

There seems to be a difficulty here, even to begin to verbalise what the actual objectives of teaching about cultural diversity should be and Mark's exposition of how these should be constructed is fairly vague. Similarly when interviewing Anne, she can be seen to de-racialise the idea of a cultural diversity curriculum,

suggesting that its focus should be on putting across the idea of respecting difference.

YA: *Can you think what the main issues are that need to be taught in a cultural diversity curriculum, can you identify what does need to be taught?*

Anne: *I suppose it comes, maybe not even to cultural diversity as such, within race, but everybody's diversity you know the fact that people like the colour blue and somebody else likes the colour red I think the ownership of an opinion should be backed up and say 'yes that's fine' but understand that within that they have to understand that other people are going to think different things or have different beliefs. I think it comes across in everything, I think that's the main thing that it's alright to have a different idea on something but you've got to accept other people's ideas on it as well and I think whether that comes under your cultural diversity banner, but I think that's the main thing of everything because I think that kids can be very blinkered and it's just trying to get them to realise that 'it doesn't matter if someone thinks anything different from you. They're still a person and you just have to accept that', so I don't know if that comes under your question. I think that's the main thing, if you can uphold that throughout all of your PSHE lessons... its important to appreciate everyone for their own beliefs and opinions. (Anne, teacher at Valley High, interview 6.11.07)*

Anne also expresses concern about making too much fuss about cultural diversity, through 'over addressing' it in the curriculum:

I suppose the profile could be raised a little bit but whether you go from a balance between it to over addressing it maybe and making an issue to where there isn't an issue, I don't know... (Anne, teacher at Valley High, interview 6.11.07)

There is a concern here that 'over addressing' the subject of cultural diversity could prove to be counter-productive. Anne's framing of difference is situated in the idea of people having different perceptions, rather than in the concept that some people are 'othered' by social structures. She sees the prime objective in teaching about 'difference' as being to encourage pupils to be open to the perceptions of others. Her viewpoint can be seen to suggest that a focus specifically on cultural diversity has minimal relevance, as everyone is different in some respect. In her reply, Anne goes so far as to distance herself from the idea of education for cultural diversity itself by referring to it as 'your cultural diversity banner,' thereby signalling that for

her, racial and cultural diversity education should be subsumed into the idea of accepting that people are different and allowing them to express their opinions.

Other teachers indicate what their understanding of the issues are, that they feel need to be taught through the cultural diversity curriculum. For example Vicky, a teacher at Bexlington School suggests:

... it's about raising awareness and challenging stereotypes, those are probably the two main things (Vicky, teacher at Bexlington School, interview 23.11. 07)

Rose frames her reply within the concept of 'valuing diversity':

... just off the top of my head, what springs to mind is something about valuing diversity... (Rose, teacher at Bexlington School, interview 30.11. 07)

In contrast to Anne's perspective that it was a mistake to highlight racial and cultural diversity, Joanna, feels that cultural diversity, should have a far higher profile in schools. Joanna was the only teacher who contested the question about 'the cultural diversity curriculum', suggesting that it should not be confined to particular subject areas, but needs rather to be integral to the whole school ethos. She signals the impact of the 'hidden curriculum' in a school, as a cultural position that determines the way in which diversity is perceived:

YA: *What do you feel are the main issues that need to be taught in the cultural diversity curriculum?*

Joanna: *I would question are you talking about a specific aspect of the curriculum which would be the culturally diverse curriculum or are you saying the whole curriculum should be culturally diverse?*

YA: *It's for you to say what you feel?*

Joanna: *Can you repeat the question?*

YA: *What do you feel are the main issues that need to be taught in the cultural diversity curriculum or what are the main issues of cultural diversity that need to be taught in the curriculum?*

Joanna: *I prefer the second because I think the first might suggest that there's an area of the curriculum which you can hive off issues of cultural diversity to and I think it's very important that cultural diversity is actually addressed throughout the curriculum, both in terms of the overt curriculum,*¹²⁷

that is specifically and consciously taught and planned for but also in terms of the hidden curriculum which actually would involve everything in terms of display, how a racist incident is actually mediated for example, how one talks to parents, how one welcomes them in induction etc, what it feels like to go through corridors, what it feels like to be in the playground, or be at lunch etc...

(Joanna, teacher at Bexlington School, interview 23.11.07)

There is evidently a divergence in the attitudes of the teachers I interviewed in the course of this research as to the extent to which they feel that cultural diversity should be addressed within the curriculum of majority white schools. In speaking about the curriculum imperative for his pupils in a majority white school, Derek, a PSHE teacher at Valley High, makes some observations about the negative underlying views and attitudes about minority ethnic people that some of his pupils have. In being asked how young people feel about racial, cultural and religious difference, Derek suggests that the influence of the media and the cultural understanding of their home communities create views, which may contain 'subtle aspects of racism'. This idea of racism as being able to have 'subtle' manifestations is interesting in relation to discussions of dealing with racist incidents, (to be raised in the next section) since it suggests that Derek recognises racism as existing outside of the remit of clearly distinguishable racist incidents:

YA: In your opinion how do young people here feel about those pupils who are different in terms of culture, race or religion?

Derek: Well I'd say as within most schools and throughout the country, their attitudes do vary depending on the individuals and their friendship groups, their family, there are a lot of influences on their attitudes. I've witnessed really extreme right wing views here at Valley High, towards what the kids call 'asylum seekers' and 'they're taking our jobs', 'what good are they here?' and to that extent, but really extreme views, which you can think that they've read from red top newspapers maybe or you can imagine that's been heard at home or it's been heard amongst friends and so on to very, very sensitive approaches towards, ethnic groups. I think the majority of youngsters that I discuss these issues with, do not feel that they're racist. I think that they feel that they're tolerant and understanding, but I think that they need to look a little bit further to sort of more subtle aspects of racism that maybe not be as obvious and I think that some of them may look introspectively and feel slightly differently. I think there's a NIMBY element amongst, again I'm generalising, but amongst some of the youngsters. (Derek, teacher at Valley High, interview 6.11.07)

Derek's view that racism underpins some of the pupils' views about 'the other' is significant in this context, and could be used to inform the approach taken to delivering the cultural diversity curriculum. Derek goes on to suggest that the pupils need to engage directly with minority ethnic people's experience:

I think they need to ... actually look at diversity issues and what we mean by them and to try to understand the issues that young people and people of minority groups face, to understand their issues, the problems and concerns that they have. I think there's a danger maybe, particularly in an academic school like our own where the youngsters see it almost as a lesson, rather than as an experience. (Derek, teacher, Valley High, interview 6.11.07)

Derek, in reflecting on the needs of pupils in the majority white school, in which he teaches, makes the claim that lessons about cultural diversity need to be based on exploring the lived experience of people from minority ethnicities, rather than having a traditional 'academic' focus.

It may be a lack of guidance as to how to go about delivering a cultural diversity curriculum, or teachers' lack of confidence to be able to engage in discourses in which 'race' and possibly racism needs to be addressed, but there is a gap which has been expressed here between teachers appreciating that something needs to be done to introduce discussions of diversity in majority white schools and their confidence, knowledge or ability to address this. Although the teachers interviewed felt in principle that cultural diversity needs to be addressed in the curriculum, there was a range of opinions to how this could be done, and on closer questioning, some teachers were reluctant about placing, what they considered to be undue emphasis on teaching specifically about cultural and racial diversity. The pupils spoken to in this research also expressed a variation of opinion, with some pupils being eager to receive more input in this area, while others seemed less interested. However, all the pupils felt they had very little input about cultural diversity and regarded cultural diversity as an important subject to address. In the light of the initial response from the teachers that this is an important curriculum topic, questions must be raised about why an area of education that is deemed by teachers and pupils to be important, is not being given a higher profile within the curriculum.

6:05 Framings of racism and racist incidents

this disavowal of complexity for the sake of pursuing moral certainties
(Phil Cohen, 1992, 63)

In this section I will consider what the research findings suggest about ways in which teachers and pupils in these majority white schools may frame the concept of racism. In particular, attention will be given to how racist incidents are responded to and the extent to which members of the school community feel that these responses are appropriate and effective. As in the previous sections, the influence of official discourse in affecting both the way that racism is understood and reacted to, will be considered in the context of the schools' own bureaucratic structures.

It is striking that the question of the schools' reactions to racist incidents is approached in a confident and authoritative manner by all the teachers who were interviewed, particularly in comparison to how some teachers found it difficult to explain what a cultural diversity curriculum needs to deliver. For one teacher the concept of cultural diversity seems to be conflated into the idea of dealing with racist incidents. This understanding, that cultural diversity is about racism, is suggested in the following exchange

YA: *Do you think that these issues (of addressing racial and cultural diversity) are dealt with more effectively in RS (religious studies) than they are in PSHE?*

Mark: *I would hope they're covered in both areas equally as important and I suppose being a majority white school, I suppose a lot of the problems you might get somewhere else, you don't necessarily have here. I'm trying to think of the handful of people we've had in the past, they've never had any bullying, they've never experienced any bad animosity, but if it did happen it would be dealt with very severely, very severely. It's like the whole culture of the place is that it's just not tolerated.* (Mark, teacher at Valley High, interview 6.11.07)

The suggestion in Mark's response is that the school should only intervene in matters to do with 'race' in the event of racial bullying rather than considering how the curriculum content needs to address issues of racial and cultural diversity. Mark is equating the question that he was asked about 'addressing racial and cultural diversity' with the school's ability to deal firmly with any racist incidents, rather than looking at equality through a wider lens of classroom work to open up discussions of

the way that 'difference' is perceived. He expresses confidence that the institutional procedures of the school are effective in dealing with racism:

Mark: Yes there was one incident of racism and that pupil was permanently excluded, so I'm not saying it hasn't happened, it has, but when it did happen, it was dealt with very severely, that pupil got permanently excluded, which was good and we made sure that everyone in the school knew that, the message went out that this has occurred, there has been an incident and that pupil has now obviously left the school.

YA: Well, I'm sure that went out anyway, didn't it, on the grapevine?

Mark: Of course it does, it does yeah, but you know whenever there are incidents, the senior staff want that message to go out, that you know it will not be tolerated. (Mark, teacher at Valley High, interview 6.11.07)

Mark's firm endorsement of the school's position on how incidents of racism are dealt with is reinforced towards the end of the interview:

YA: My research is split into looking at cultural diversity in teaching in the classroom and the views and experiences of teacher and pupils, and looking at how racist incidents are dealt with. I think you've probably covered this but the question is how do you think that racist incidents occurring in schools should be dealt with? My feeling is that the discipline ethos here is very strict.

Mark: Oh it is, yeah, definitely. The whole ethos is, you're here to learn, you're here to achieve, you're here to do well and anything that gets in the way of that won't be tolerated. So if people do mess around in lessons they're dealt with, we don't accept any swearing or bad behaviour and you know we can't accept any racism or any violence towards another pupil. (Mark, teacher at Valley High, interview 6.11.07)

The occurrences of racist incidents are incorporated in the school's policy response to unacceptable behaviour and as such, Mark does not engage in an analysis of wider cultural influences which inform racist behaviours. This response to racism through such a lens of official discourse, loaded with the importance of definitions and institutional procedures, can be discerned in the responses of the following teachers to the question about how they feel racist incidents should be dealt with:

YA: How do you feel that racist incidents occurring in schools should be dealt with?

Rose: *I think that they should be dealt with according to the law, which means we have to report them and they have to be recorded. I think that they should be taken very seriously they should be investigated fully.* (Rose, teacher at Bexlington School, interview 30.11.07)

Joanna: *Well, it was the Stephen Lawrence Report that did highlight just how woefully inadequate institutions were and actually frankly still are in terms of even recognising a racist incident and indeed definitions change and continue to change and have broadened but many of us are catching up even with that.* (Joanna, teacher at Bexlington School, interview 23.11.07)

Occurrences of racism are framed by the schools' policies (and the teachers' stated interpretations of those policies) as being transgressional and subject to disciplinary processes, as is exemplified in Derek's response to the same question:

... a teacher would pick up any racist or homophobic comment and deal with it. We would refer it through the House system and at some stage a decision would be made to isolate or exclude the child. If it was aggression as a result of racism, I think the pupil would be excluded straight away but I think that that would happen for other incidents of aggression too. So I think it's certainly got a definite place in the hierarchy of sanctions at Valley High. I feel absolutely confident that racist comments for example or bullying would be followed up, I'd be very, very confident, it's tough to say 100 %, certainly in 95% of cases, I feel certain that action would be taken and if a child were to be excluded, then parents are invited in and the whole issue is discussed with parents as well and I think that's an important part of it, for the children concerned and the parents who are concerned to understand why action was taken and hopefully to learn from that. (Derek, teacher at Valley High, interview 6.11.07)

There is a confidence being shown here that the institutional practice is effective in ensuring that incidents are dealt by the implementation of bureaucratic procedures, which includes ensuring that discussions take place with those involved. In a detailed description of process, much of which she herself had worked to institute within the school, Joanna describes how a racist incident would be dealt with at Bexlington School:

*...the procedures are followed when an incident is reported and student managers who are trained and very practised and actually one student manager in particular would be specialised more in this now, would speak to and take a statement from the victim, but also from witnesses and the Pan County Racist Incident Form would be filled in... sometimes anonymously, the case worker that the Racist Harassment Forum has actually trained, came and spoke and helped to improve practice in that*¹³²

area. There is experience now in liaising with that particular agency and with the community police officer for the school. Parents and carers of all involved would be contacted the same day of a racist incident, as far as is humanly possible, so that no child should go home and say to their parents that they've been the victim or witness to a racist incident and for them to feel that nothing's been done about it, the parent or carer to feel that nothing's been done about it. There is support offered to the victim, but also to perpetrators. (Joanna, teacher at Bexlington School, interview 23.11.07)

Vicky, a teacher at Bexlington School endorses the approach to dealing with racist incidents at the school as being 'best practice'. Along with all the other teachers interviewed, she expresses approval of and confidence in, the response to racist incidents instituted by the school, on being asked, *how do you think that racist incidents occurring in the school should be dealt with?* Vicky replies:

Right, I couldn't quote every single part of our policy, because our policy is very, very specific and exacting and as you know Joanna's being working on it really hard for the last couple of years or so, but I think we've got a really strong policy here... I mean if anything's logged electronically or if an email comes through we know how to follow it up, I think most the staff here know how to follow it up. I do actually think the way Joanna's been working with things it could easily follow to be best practice, personally.

YA; *You mean best possible practice?*

Yeah totally... (Vicky, teacher at Bexlington School, interview 23.11. 07)

In the interviews, which I carried out with teachers, there was generally no dissent from this position that schools were equipped and able to deal with incidents of racism. However, one teacher, Rose, did raise some concerns as to whether the racist behaviour that the pupil was being punished for was always clearly understood by the pupil as being racist. This part of Rose's interview response is worth quoting at length because it stresses the point being made here, albeit tentatively, that the underlying intent and the interpretation of racist incidents can, in certain instances, distort the effectiveness of bureaucratic sanctions:

*...There are times when I think that children say things and if you like they're joking, they don't realise they're being offensive, it's a general thing, there's one instance that I've had this term where I don't think that the boy realised just how offensive he was being and I think there's an educational role in this. So basically what happened was, I was doing a round in my class where everybody in the room had to say what was the best thing about their holiday and the worst thing about their holiday and this girl said that the best thing had been going to Saudi Arabia and she*¹³³

also went to Bangladesh and this boy then mimicked her and said something about Bangladesh, in a mock Asian accent which obviously he thought was hilarious. Now the entire lesson came to a halt because I heard it and obviously I was not prepared to accept that and of course it was a racist incident and of course it was recorded and reported and he got into a lot of trouble, he was excluded for that. I think he genuinely didn't realise what he'd done, so there is a role where we calmly, rather than yelling and shouting and saying 'Aaagh that was racist therefore you are below contempt' that actually you can't do that, you do need to do the 'put yourself in their shoes', 'how would you feel if', 'what do you think she thought', that sort of thing, which in fact was done. I was actually very pleased with the way it was dealt with, I really don't think he'll do anything like that again, partly I think because of the huge response but also because somebody sat down and talked to him about it. (Rose, teacher at Bexlington School, interview 30.11.07)

Rose's observation that the incident may be couched in joking behaviour between children, has parallels with Back's research about the levels of awareness needed to effectively sanction 'winding up' and 'cussing' behaviour between children (Back, 1996, pp.73-98). In describing this incident, Rose stresses the importance of discussing with the boy how hurtful his behaviour may have been, she feels positively about the effectiveness of that process on his understanding. What is also worthy of note is Rose's own role in this episode which caused it to be marked as being a racist incident. It was only because she, as the teacher, heard the boy's comment that sanctions were initiated. If she had not overheard it, would the boy's comment have been merely absorbed into the sub-cultural discourse of the pupils? What is of interest here is that the boy felt it was a joke, regardless of who it was directed at, that would be enjoyed by his fellow class-mates, to speak in the mock Asian accent in the first place.

Several people that I spoke with, both teachers and pupils offered examples with which to illustrate racist incidents that had occurred and to discuss how these had been dealt with. This reinforces the concept being considered in this thesis, that the notion of a racist incident cannot usefully be abstracted by only looking at the language that has been used in terms of instituting a policy-led reaction to it. I am arguing that the understanding and interpretation of a racist incident is fully conditional on the contingencies of the context in which it occurs. Anne illustrates this point effectively at the end of our interview, when she recalls an incident in which the accusation of racism was levelled at her, as a teacher.

YA: *Do you have any other comments suggestions or observations to make in relation to race and ethnicity in the school curriculum in a school such as Valley High, which is mainly white?*

Anne: *... I did have a situation once where I asked a boy to move and he was mixed race and he actually said 'why is it cos I is black?' and I just said 'Yeah, just sit down' and he went 'Oh my God you're a racist' and he just completely flipped it the other way and parents came in, because I was then racist, even though everyone else in the class said 'well that's just ridiculous, he was joking, and he always says it' but he was the one who brought up the joking, 'is it cos I is black', Ali G, and I just said 'yes, sit down' and he completely flipped it on its head and he made a big thing about the fact that I was racist. And that was horrible and that really, I don't think he meant it, in fact I hope he didn't and I think once he'd said it he didn't feel he could back down. But it's quite interesting because the whole class were quite a mixed bunch and normally they'd probably want to get one over on a teacher and they were all just saying 'well that's just stupid' and another girl who is mixed race, she came up to me at the end of the day and said 'oh, I hear Dan's called you racist' and I was like 'oh yeah' and she said 'well, that's just stupid'. So I had quite a lot of backing from the kids and it was quite interesting that they were very supportive when obviously it could have been quite a nasty situation. (Anne, teacher at Valley High, interview 6.11.07)*

The context in which this incident took place is of prime importance in this case, in terms of how the incident of 'racism' described here is framed. In Anne's perception and that of other pupils (including significantly the girl of mixed 'race' who has been given a certain racialised authority by Anne to dispute the charge of racism being made by the boy and his family), Anne was claiming to be a racist as a joke in response to the boy jokingly referencing Ali G. There is a signalling in this situation that what would normally pass as classroom banter, is disrupted by the use of the concept of racism being mentioned. There is seemingly a huge weight attached to any play with the concept of 'racism'. This weight was also revealed in the classroom work that I carried out with the Year 9 PSHE class in Bexlington School. When the pupils were asked to define and give examples of terms such as 'racism', stereotype and prejudice (Appendix 1), one pupil, George, who later became part of the focus group, refused to define 'racism' or to give an example, because he felt that to do so, would in itself be racist. This process of attaching significance to the labelling of racism, rather than to the manifestation of racism was also revealed in a conversation I had with a teacher at Bexlington High, during a training session that I conducted at the school, which was recorded in my field notes:

Research Diary, 27th May 2007

Fascinating feedback from a young teacher in one of the groups.

Joanna has started an initiative in which all the form tutors are telling pupils about the racist incident policy and one boy in her (this teacher's) form (year 7) gave a brilliant definition of discrimination and then, almost in the next breath, started saying there are too many foreigners here and they should go back. When she challenged him, he became very confrontational and put his face up to hers, shouting at her that she was calling him a racist. At break he fetched some older friends and they were banging on the classroom door shouting at her because she had called their friend a racist.

There is a gap then between what they say, what they believe and how they identify themselves. (Research diary extract, 27.05.07)

This incident points to a reification of the notion of racism which seems to have become divorced from the thought, attitudinal, cultural and social processes that produced it. Links can be made between these incidents and Troyna and Hatcher's model which points to centrality of the social and institutional construction of racism (Troyna and Hatcher, 1992a) to help us to appreciate that a 'racist incident' can be understood only by reference to the context within which it occurs.

The pupils interviewed and spoken to in focus groups shared the view that racism should be strictly dealt with by the school authorities. For example Nasreen, in Year 11, felt that racism should be firmly disciplined, but she is unable to understand the motivations for pupils to be racist, and feels that schools are not positioned to intervene in the development of pupils' racism:

YA: What do you think that schools should do to deal with racism when it happens?

Nasreen: I, myself think that they should be like excluded from the school because I'm really against racism. But I think that they should have like a suspension the first time and then the second time should be exclusion because I think it's a really serious matter.

YA: Do you think that there is any preventative action that schools could take to deal with racism to stop it from happening in the first place, do you think schools have got a role there?

*Nasreen: I don't think they do, I think it's more on pupils, because pupils like my age, it's like they're so, I don't know why, I don't even know why.*¹³⁶

they're racist, I can't understand why, I don't think the school's fault at all, I think it's down to the individual person. (Nasreen, Year 11, Bexlington School, interview 15.12.08)

This position of expressing the idea that racism needs to be responded to firmly by the school authorities was also evident in the work carried out in the cultural diversity lessons that I taught, in which the pupils were asked to suggest what sanctions were suitable in case study examples in which pupils had been racist (Appendix 1). The focus groups with pupils raised the concept of how schools should work with pupils who had been racist, to address the causes for their racism, for example the Year 11 focus group at Valley High indicated unanimous support, as did the other focus groups, for a policy on dealing with racist incidents that includes the idea of counselling the perpetrator:

IM: Do you think it's important to have a policy in place in school that actually deals with racist incidents?

Yeah, yeah definitely (chorus)

YA: Would you say what you think that policy ought to be?

Right now I think it's suspension which is good and then they do counselling afterwards, it would just help because then they'll have a more rounded view of what it is, so I think if that is the system then that would work.

The bully could have problems as well if they're in a bad home environment then they could take it out on other people in different ways. (Year 11 focus group, Valley High, 27.10. 07)

Similarly, Natalie, one of the year 11 pupils who was interviewed felt that the person being racist might be unaware of the hurt that they were causing, so attention needed to be paid to educating pupils about what constitutes racism:

YA: Right...do you think that there is any preventative action that schools could take to deal with racism?

Natalie: I don't know, things like drawing attention to what kind of things are being racist, I mean some kids don't actually understand that what they're saying could actually be hurtful and they'll just think, 'oh we're just joking about' but the person they're doing it to might actually take it seriously and get really hurt by it and I think they should draw attention to what kind of things people would consider racist. (Natalie, Year 11, Bexlington School, interview 15.12.08)

There was an interesting discussion concerning the effectiveness of sanctions in the Year 9 focus group at Bexlington School, which raised the limitations of sanctions and the difficulties of persuading someone to address their own racist views:

AG: Right, the next question I think you've probably covered as well. Is anyone aware of any racist incidents in your school?

Miriam and George: Yeah

George: Yeah my friend. We were just throwing a tennis ball against the wall, me and my friend and they said 'can we just use that' and we said, 'no, we're using it at the moment' and they just kept moaning but we were using it and then one of them goes like 'f'ing Paki' like that but we told a teacher.

AG: You did, oh good, good

George: And they spoke to him

Miriam: Teachers do do that but it doesn't stop them just because they speak to them

George: But you can't say they don't do anything when they actually are because they did speak to him

Miriam: I'm not saying they shouldn't tell the teachers, but the teachers should do more than saying 'don't do it again'

George: But what else can they do though?

Jack: Surely give him a detention

Chloe: But even if they do give him a detention, let's just say half an hour, that's only half an hour, it's not going to stop them doing it again

Jack: Nothing they can do is going to stop them from doing it again, they've just got to make them realise, make the person realise not to do it

Chloe: But surely not by just talking to them, not by saying 'don't do that again'

Jack: But I think giving them a detention is just going to make them more angry

George: You can't stop someone doing something, they have to do it by themselves

AG: *So how would you do that, you've got to change their perceptions haven't you?*

George: *The only thing that can change them is themselves, you can't do anything*

(Year 9 focus group, Bexlington School, 22.11. 07)

This discussion shows a level of engagement with the heart of the issue of imposing sanctions for incidents of racism, which is to do with how to challenge the cultural constructions which give rise to some people feeling that expressions of racism are acceptable. Within the above discussion, and contained in some of the other responses is the discourse of how pupils can be punished while at the same time being persuaded to reflect on the idea that they have done something wrong. As Jack, a year 9 pupil, later suggests, the punishment of exclusion may be interpreted favourably by a pupil to whom it is given:

Jack: *Sometimes, they might want to be, like I've heard some cases, where people are naughty and when the teacher says 'right you're excluded' or whatever they go like 'YES' because they just want to go home and it's just like a good thing.* (Jack, Year 9 focus group, Bexlington School, 22.11. 07)

Natalie, in Year 11 raises concerns about the (sub cultural) difficulties of pupils being required to inform teachers about racist incidents, she suggests that peer mediation may be more effective:

YA: *What do you think that schools should do to deal with racism when it happens?*

Natalie: *I like the scheme here that they have, the peer mentoring scheme which is good, but I don't know, I don't know how they could tackle it, but I think there should be something but I know you can't come running to the teacher or whatever. You should, but you can't always because you're stuck in a tricky situation where that's not what you should do because it could make things worse but then you have to do something about it and I think there should be something in-between which is good with the peer mentoring thing because you're not running to a teacher, you're running to a student who's like a friend, who can actually help you and do something about it without actually like interfering directly and saying, 'now you've got to start doing this', because it's not going to make any difference. Some of the time it doesn't make any difference, it just makes things worse.* (Natalie year 11, Bexlington School, interview 15.12.08)

This response, which suggests that when a racist incident occurs in school, things might be made worse by telling a teacher, links to the previously referred to Year 9 focus group discussion in its questioning of the authority of a teacher's implementation of the school's protocols, to make any effective impact on the thinking processes that underlie racism.

Another question which underlies the discussion here regarding how racist incidents should be dealt with, is the relationship that is suggested, albeit obliquely, to exist between working class pupils and racist incidents. This is not spelt out directly by the responses in the interviews, although several teachers imply that the pupils learn racist views from their parents and some of the pupils interviewed and in focus groups refer to the backgrounds of those who are responsible for racist incidents. It is Rose who comes closest to identifying racism as a class issue in making the suggestion that as the school's intake becomes more working class, incidents of racism increase:

The sorts of backgrounds that the children come from has changed as well and it could be that we've got a higher proportion of less, if you like, liberal children, I mean children coming from liberal, middle class politically correct backgrounds and that there are more children who come from the sort of backgrounds where, you know it's perfectly acceptable to be racist, in fact that's part of that culture that's the way they've been brought up, that's the way they always think and it's the sort of 'they're coming and taking our jobs' mentality, that sort of thing, you know, 'they come here and sponge off the' all of those things sorts of 'they' meaning a sort of vague, anybody that's probably not white. (Rose, teacher at Bexlington School, interview 30.11.07)

This view can be seen to perpetuate notions of 'us' and 'them' as it blames working class culture, which is viewed here as being unitary and fixed, as being inherently racist, and causing problems in a previously middle class school, which used not to have as many incidences of pupil racism. This view can be seen to reflect the section about 'the location of the problem' that opened this discussion about my research findings, although Rose is referring to a different frame of analysis. I am suggesting that in an 'us' and 'them' conception the 'problem' is always located elsewhere and is seen to come in to disturb a settled state of affairs. Whether it is located in the presence of problematic black pupils or in the influx of working class, racist pupils this positioning of the 'other' does not fully embrace the educational

role of schools as being to look beneath surface appearances, to encourage dialogue, to address differing perspectives and to reveal socially reproduced injustices.

This section has highlighted the complexities of racialised views and behaviour, which as discussed in Chapter 3 are dealt with by schools in the identification of and sanctions afforded to 'racist incidents'. However, as seen in this section, some of the pupils are questioning the efficacy of 'speaking to' or punishing the perpetrator, while leaving the impulse or the attitude that led to the incident intact. The findings have also indicated the dislocation of the word 'racist' from the actual functioning of racism, as if the word itself has an accusatory power, only loosely related to what racism means in practise. This trend may be related to the behaviour management of racist incidents as often being framed around the expression of any particular word, identified as being racist.

This chapter will end with the voice of one of the pupils who was interviewed, she is a Year 11 student coming to the end of her school career, when asked whether she has any last comments to make about teaching about cultural diversity or dealing with racism in majority white schools, her response is simple:

Educate people more on it, because we're not really educated about that at all really. (Nasreen, Year 11, Bexlington School, interview 15.12.08)

Chapter 7: Conclusions

7:00 Introduction

In this concluding chapter, I will summarise the thesis, highlighting the most important points that I would like to draw attention to and I will reflect on some of the shortcomings of this work and how it might have been improved upon. In this discussion I will make reference to the 'cultural diversity' education film resource, *Unfolding Identities* (2009) that I was working on at the same time as carrying out the research for this thesis as discussed in Chapter 5. In referencing this resource I will consider what can be learnt from the experiences of the featured young people of minority ethnicities, to support claims made in this thesis concerning the effective positioning of 'race' in the curriculum and how racist incidents are understood in majority white schools. **I hope to have drawn attention in this thesis to the complexities and nuances of 'race' in considering how this most pernicious of social constructions is imagined and acted upon in majority white schools and how official discourse impacts upon this process.** The critical question is whether the changes, which the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, 2000 (RR(A)A) was designed to bring about, are fulfilling the Government's stated objective of *preventing* as well as addressing racism (HMSO, 2000: 23). It is my principle contention that much official discourse contains a fixed and essential understanding of the task of delivering an equalities agenda in schools, which does not take into account some of the nuances and contradictions through which young people may negotiate experiences of difference. Rather it is suggested that the experience of cultural or racial difference is complex, fluid and highly contingent to the individual and the situation they are in. This complexity raises challenges for the delivery of a cultural diversity curriculum. The point is also made in this thesis with reference to critical analysis of the pedagogy underlying cultural diversity curriculum intervention, that the task of such intervention should also include an analysis of the social forces that perpetuate social injustice. The argument is that the intervention objective must be to identify and relate to 'minority ethnicity' and racial and cultural 'difference' as lived and simultaneously to teach about racialised systems and constructs and their impact on the experience of individuals and communities.

In these conclusions I will also assess the relatively recent duty on schools to promote 'community cohesion' in the light of the arguments made in this thesis, reflecting on what implications these duties have on the teaching profession.

7:01 Summary of the literature review

In Chapter 1, I began by looking at the language used to talk about 'race' and ethnicity, reflecting on my own work experience to claim that this language used to discuss 'race' and to describe racialised interventions is always located in specific social and political positionings, framed in a particular moment of history. Some of the changes in the nuances of the terminology of 'race' that have occurred since the early 1980s are discussed, paying particular attention to changes in official discourse which would have *appeared* to have shifted, since the early 1980s to a position that incorporates an awareness of discrimination and an acceptance of racial and cultural diversity. Chapter One sets the scene for a closer investigation of official racialised discourse, to consider the extent to which this apparent awareness of racism and diversity is in fact played out effectively in majority white schools.

In Chapter 2 the question of what is meant by multicultural education was considered, and the argument made that the concept of cultural diversity education which has grown out of the idea of multicultural education, must be seen in a more dynamic way (and has been by numerous educationalists and theorists), than as the necessity to teach 'tolerance' for other cultures' (Rattansi, 1992, pp. 24-25) as expressed in the Swann Report (DES,1985), the first influential official document suggesting the need for multicultural education. Critical analysis of this document in Chapter Two leads to the claim that despite the efforts to announce an inclusive approach, the Swann Report's framing of multiculturalism encompasses an ethnocentric understanding, particularly in suggesting that common values should be taught about, but failing to discuss whose values these should be.

In Chapter 3 I considered the framing of racist incidents, suggesting that the way official discourse understands racist incidents has led to a de-contextualising of the incident from the immediate climate and wider structural and political context within which it has occurred, in this way failing to allow for the development of more cohesive and further reaching strategies to influence the way in which racial differences are understood and experienced. Concepts developed by Troyna

and Hatcher (1992a, pp.39-47) and Ifekwunigwe (1999 pp12-13) are introduced to elaborate on and support these claims of the limitations of the current focus on the manifestation of 'racist incidents' as a key marker of racialised intervention in schools (CRE, 2000).

In Chapter 4 I carried out an analysis of more recent guidance documents suggesting that official discourse, despite repeated references to 'diversity', does not equip schools in majority white areas to move away from the idea that the fact of cultural or racial difference in the pupil body equates with a potential problem. (QCA, 2001) Supported by reference to social theorists, the exploration of social and structural justice is suggested as being an integral aspect of cultural diversity curriculum intervention in order to ensure that the idea of difference is not merely conceived as being 'exotic' and outside of the norm of 'whiteness'. In this chapter I also discussed the most effective framing of cultural diversity in classroom delivery, raising considerations of working with the identity formations of pupils from which to explore cultural diversity from the perspective of the student's own first-hand experience. Considerations of classroom dynamics and the difficulties of delivering cultural diversity in the classroom context (low status of subject, disruptive or overly compliant students, attitude of teachers) were also raised.

7:02 Summary of empirical research

In discussing the research perspective, I situated this research as a critical social enquiry, as such the findings were framed in analytical reflection which was 'suspicious of the constructed meanings that culture bequeaths to us' (Crotty, 2003, p.60) and made recommendations for further intervention. Similarly, I declared an interest in constructionism (Crotty, 2003, pp.47-48), with the objective of locating and representing the construction of racialised meaning, both within official discourse and within the discourse of the teachers and young people. I explained the methods used in a small-scale qualitative research study carried out in two majority white schools, in which I attempted to gain insight into how teachers and pupils made sense of teaching and learning about cultural and racial diversity and set out to investigate how racist incidents were understood and responded to.

One of the key findings to come from the research is that although most teachers agreed that the delivery of a cultural diversity curriculum was important, particularly in the context of majority white schools, they gave evidence of a wide range of different ideas about what was meant by 'cultural diversity', and in this discussion of classroom intervention, some felt that it was inadvisable to focus too much curriculum attention on racial and cultural diversity, thereby not even acknowledging the need for a multicultural curriculum of the kind envisaged by Swann in 1985 (DES,1985). The teachers' understanding of, and positioning around, racist incidents was much more consistent, contrasting significantly with the wide range of interpretations given regarding the concept and desirability of a cultural diversity curriculum. The teachers' responses to questions about recognising and dealing with racist incidents indicated a clarity and confidence in their schools' capacity to identify and to deal with such incidents. It is this conceptual clarity and delineation of a racist incident that is heavily contested in this thesis, in a critique of the simplistic discourse by which racist incidents may be understood, identified and dealt with. A significant finding has been to do with the identification of racist incidents from the use of a 'racist' expression rather than by the investigation of the intention or sentiment that underlies that expression. The marking of a racist incident therefore may be signalled by the use of a particular word or phrase, which may be unconnected to a racist sentiment by the 'perpetrator'; the use of the term 'racism', it is argued, may be losing its connection with the tendency that it once described.

From the basis of my research investigation I am suggesting that the cultural diversity curriculum and the question of how racist incidents are dealt with could more effectively be understood through a shared conceptual lens which links the two interventions. The implementation of a move towards such a unitary framing of the implications of 'race', particularly within official discourse would enable a more carefully thought through understanding of 'racist incidents' and a refocusing of the need for classroom intervention in schools in which there are relatively few pupils and teachers who have significant experiences of minority ethnicity. In particular my findings revealed that very little actual teaching about cultural diversity seemed to be taking place in the schools in which my research was based. This dearth of curriculum intervention focussing on cultural diversity contrasted with an

apparent willingness of the pupils to address themes of racial and cultural diversity in lessons, as evidenced in the focus group discussions and the classroom interventions carried out in the course of this research. In considering the future direction of official racialised discourse, it would seem that it is moving away from a 'race' specific framing towards a more general equalities agenda. This implies a return to culturalist understandings of racial difference rather than an understanding of these differences as stemming from structural and institutional forces (Alexander, 2004, Gilroy, 1992). This tendency has implications for the framing of racialised difference in majority white schools.

In conclusion, it can be stated that concerns about 'race equality' would seem to be addressed in official directives given to schools through policy and procedural documents but this research points to a lack of intervention through the curriculum, and an essentialised understanding of racist incidents that, in effect, leaves unchallenged the 'othering' of minority ethnicity, in majority white schools.

7:03 Official discourse: targeting the 'other' as the 'problem'?

The argument here is that official racialised discourse makes possible the problematised perception of racial and cultural differences from the 'white norm' rather than drawing attention to the problems inherent in how those differences are imagined and acted upon in a hegemony. This tendency is reflected in the understandings of some of the teachers who have been interviewed and has particular implications in majority white areas in which the assumption may be that because the school has few minority ethnic pupils, the school has no significant racial 'problems' and intervention around 'race' and ethnicity is not seen as important. Furthermore the research has suggested that some teachers may frame interventions to address cultural and racial differences in an 'us' and 'them' context, built on assumptions of what is 'normal' which may be exacerbated by the continued stress in official discourse on the promotion of 'diversity' (QCA, 2001).

As discussed in Chapter 3, the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report, which recognises the pernicious effect of institutional racism on social relations in Britain, has had a direct influence on the policy formulations of the RR(A)A. The *specific duties for*

schools presented in the RR(A)A can perhaps be best understood as a policy framework that is applied to the task of dismantling structural and institutional racism, which is defined in the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report as ‘the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin...’ (Macpherson, 1999). This frequently cited definition attaches the idea of institutional racism to the necessary presence of black or minority ethnic people. **What this definition fails to encompass is the possibility of institutional racism being present in majority ‘white’ contexts without the necessary presence of minority ethnic people being ‘disadvantaged’ by it.** It is this continued positioning of minority ethnic people as ‘the problem’ or ‘the victim’ (Gilroy, 1992, p.60) that continues the discourse indicated by repeated claims of ‘still no problem here’ (Gaine, 1996) from majority white schools. **Another key critique made here is the way that much official discourse continues to advance the belief, as illustrated by the above definition of Institutional Racism (Macpherson, 1999), that it is primarily processes and behaviours, rather than systems and ideologies that perpetuate the institutionalisation of racism.**

7:04 The perceptions of pupils

This thesis has made use of the concept of bi-racialization (Ifekwunigwe, 1999 pp.12-13) through which to explore the perspectives and experiences of pupils and teachers in majority white schools. In the following extract from the film resource, *Unfolding Identities* (Asare and Mensah, 2009), Nkosi’s experience can be understood as having been determined by a more nuanced process than that of ‘racism’. The concept of bi-racialization makes possible a more subtle consideration of the stereotypical constructions that define him in the imaginations of others. If the ‘group of teenagers’ and other people who meet him, are merely defined as being ‘racist’, this gives an oversimplified and misleading analysis of what is going on:

*How people see me, it’s weird because you’ve got my friends and my family, they see me how anyone who knows me sees me I suppose, but then it’s kind of annoying, because I’ve had experiences where I’ve met a new person, it tends to happen with a lot of white people and adults as well as children, they expect that I’m a troublesome person or I’m going to go out and rob someone. Like I’ll be walking down the street and I see a group of teenagers and they’ll all move out of the way, out of my path, even*¹⁴⁷

*if I move to the side to let them pass, they'll still kinda seem wary, seem difficult around me, just because they've never seen me before and I'm mixed race. (Nkosi, *Unfolding Identities*, 2009)*

A bi-racialized lens can more usefully be applied to this situation, in which previously formed stereotypes of 'mixed race' young people, as well as how they see their own racialised positioning, determine the teenagers' reaction to Nkosi, causing them to 'other' him in this way. Their behaviour may also be seen through the lens offered by Troyna and Hatcher (1992a, pp36-47) as being influenced by sub-cultural, cultural and structural framings that impact on the way that teenagers may perceive an unknown 'mixed race' teenager on the street. Framing such an incident in this way, without simply defining it as 'racist', can suggest some of the possible underlying dynamics that may have influenced the teenagers' reaction to Nkosi. Such alternative framings to 'racism' it is argued may help to open up to more intensive scrutiny what is actually taking place when a 'racist incident' is identified in schools. Nkosi goes on to speak of his discomfort with the category of 'white' when describing his friends; in this way Nkosi may be seen to be in the process of ejecting the idea of 'race' from common sense constructions: (Back, 1996, pp.123-159)

*Most of my friends, my day- to- day friends are white. I mean I have a lot of black friends, don't get me wrong, but the majority of my friends in this town are white. We'll be in a situation where people will come up to me and be talking about my race and my skin colour and my culture or whatever and we'll just laugh about it because I know none of it is true, none of what these people are trying to say is true and my white friends understand that. I mean, I don't even like to call them my white friends, they're just my friends, do you know what I mean? (Nkosi, *Unfolding Identities*, 2009)*

In this statement Nkosi expresses a rejection of any labelling based on other people's assumptions made about his racial or cultural references. He suggests that people are trying to say something about him that is untrue, something that is, in fact, laughable. Following this rejection of racialised stereotypes, Nkosi goes on to challenge his own use of the label 'white' to talk about his friends, preferring to refer to them as 'just my friends'.

The process of polyculture has been discussed (Hewitt, 1991) as a cultural re-positioning by young people, taking place within racially and culturally

heterogeneous contexts. This idea could also, I am suggesting, provide a conceptual basis for understanding the process through which some young people, particularly those from minority ethnicities, may operate with the idea of their own difference when living in majority white settings. A negotiation of cultural and racial difference may be used to find an identification, particularly for those young people of 'mixed race', as is suggested in the following extracts from the films in the teaching resource, *Unfolding Identities*, 2009:

It's good having that British culture and also the South African culture – it's alright 'cos it means I'm different and it means I can also relate to being not different (Nkosi, Unfolding Identities, 2009)

Being the same as everybody else and having nothing very distinctive about you, I think it would be slightly boring having straight hair, yeah. I wouldn't be as unique as I am, I think. I'm happy to say I've got an eternal tan, which is very cool and I don't look English either or at least I don't think I do, do I? (Daniel, Unfolding Identities, 2009)

These quotations suggest a fluidity through which these young people's identity negotiations may straddle two points of reference. The suggestion has been made in this thesis that this critically important notion of identity can be taken as an effective basis from which to explore cultural diversity through the curriculum (Aluffi-Pentini 1996, Brown, Barnfield, Stone 1990, Sleeter and Montecinos, 1999). It is the contingent and shifting nature of identity, as described, that offers a way to explore cultural and racial diversity in the classroom without essentialising the idea of racial and cultural difference. Bhavnani and Phoenix express the dynamism as well as recognising the differential power relations contained within the concept of identity:

...the notion of identity as a static or unitary trait which lies within human beings, rather than as an interactional and contextual feature of social relationships, has been laid to rest. Identity as a dynamic aspect of social relationships, is forged and reproduced through the agency/structure dyad, and is inscribed within unequal power relationships. (Bhavnani and Phoenix, 1994, p.9)

Nkosi and Daniel are not seeing themselves as rooted in one specific cultural or racial category. In Nkosi's case, his bi-racial identity enables him to be able to relate to more than one cultural experience and for Daniel, his skin colour is equated to the notion of a 'tan'; he is able to engage with his difference and the discussion of

whether or not he looks English. Bhavnani and Phoenix's discussion of the 'agency/structure dyad' is a reminder that in addition to thinking about the agency of choice in identification, considerations of the institutional and cultural processing of 'difference' should be incorporated in a classroom-based exploration of identity.

The willingness of pupils that I encountered in my research to explore the implications of cultural and racial identity is evidenced in the documented classroom work of the Year 9 and Year 11 pupils in the course of my fieldwork. Some of their responses to questions about what it means to belong, such as those illustrated below, evidence a sensitivity to the contingencies of belonging, which could be further explored to discuss how the formation of identity, both chosen and imposed, relates to the experience of belonging or not belonging.

<i>kisses</i>	<i>friends</i>	<i>interaction</i>	<i>similarities</i>	<i>feeling needed</i>
<i>Belonging</i>				
<i>hugs</i>	<i>communication</i>	<i>being included</i>	<i>having family around</i>	

<i>seclusion</i>	<i>lonely</i>	<i>appearance</i>	<i>pushing</i>	<i>evils</i>
<i>bullying</i>	<i>Don't Belong</i>		<i>shouting</i>	<i>neglection(sic)</i>
<i>unwanted</i>	<i>isolated</i>	<i>being ignored</i>	<i>left out</i>	

(Valley High, Year 11, classroom work, 11/10/2007)

Similarly, when asked to consider how, imagining they were teachers, they would react to the racism displayed towards a school-girl (who features in the filmed resource *One of Us*, 2004), many of the pupils' responses, both verbal and written, suggest that they react forcefully against manifest racism and also that they appreciate the limitations of enforced sanctions to change the underlying attitudes of pupils who express racist views. **These sensibilities shown by pupils in this small scale research signal opportunities for further classroom work to encourage an exploration of pupils' experiences including those who are 'othered'**. The following group response, written out during the lesson and handed in at the end, encapsulates the possibilities of this approach to cultural diversity delivery in majority white schools.

1. *Shock, how dare they! She's human as well. Shocked they would treat her that way.*
2. *Detention given to those who are mean. You can force them not to be mean to her but you can't force them to like her.*
3. *Prepare a lesson where everyone gives a talk about where they come from, this way they have to listen to her and will learn about her past, it may change their opinion of her. (Valley High, Year 9 classroom work, 22/09/2007)*

Firstly, the pupils express a shock and dismay at the injustice of racial discrimination. Secondly, they suggest that sanctions should be meted out to the offender, but recognise that underlying attitudes determine social interaction between pupils. Thirdly they suggest classroom intervention that is structured around encouraging pupils to relate to other people's experiences of difference and to address negative attitudes. The findings of my research suggest that there is the capability and interest among young people to consider and discuss complex issues beyond the exploration of 'cultural differences' towards an awareness of how 'race' and racism operate in society. The classroom-based research has indicated that in majority white schools, in which classroom contexts may be lacking in cultural and racial diversity, filmed resources featuring other young people can be used to facilitate discussion and increase awareness.

7:05 Reflective appraisal

The need to be reflexive of my own impact on the research process, its outcomes and the analysis was first raised in Chapter 1. As the conclusions about the research process and analysis are formed, this discussion focusing on my own reflexivity will be reviewed.

Findlay and Gough offer an interesting perspective of the role of the researcher using the phrase 'the reflexive potential of our research' which creates a space not to see our own backgrounds, assumptions and positionings only as a barrier to 'objective' research, but also as an asset, which can be utilized to make us more effective researchers:

It is the task of each researcher, based on our research aims, values and the logic of the methodology involved to decide how best to exploit the reflexive potential of our research...For all the difficulties inherent in the task, to avoid reflexive analysis altogether is likely to compromise the research. (Finlay and Gough, 2003, p17)

As explained in Chapter One, this research was initiated from a life-long fascination with the social weight that is given to 'race' and culture in British society in particular in the field of education. My choice of the focus of this research was initiated by my own schooling experience (spanning from the mid 1960's to the mid 1970s) of having gone to primary school in a predominantly white context and of being the only 'black' pupil in the grammar school that I later attended. In entering the schools as a researcher, not only was I carrying the visible markers of my 'race', gender and age, which would have impacted the way that I was viewed and responded to in the course of my research, but I was also bearing the less visible but equally present markers of my past experience as a pupil and my own life history as regards interacting once again with some teachers who were of the opinion that 'race' was of little relevance to a pupils' experience of school. Thinking reflectively, it may be that my early experience enters my research perspective more forcefully than I am fully aware of. While I was fairly successful academically in my schooling, the awareness of being racially 'different' to everyone else impacted on my experience of school in a context in which 'whiteness' was taken for granted and the possibility of racial or cultural difference was not seen as being relevant to education, either implicitly or explicitly in a provincial secondary school in East Sussex.

This experience was possibly a reason for my research interest in the curriculum and the attitudes of teachers and pupils, rather than in pupils' attainment, and for basing my research in secondary schools that have similar compositions to the one that I attended and that my children attended from the early 1990's to the present. As a mother to five children born between 1983 and 1995, I have had an insight into how 'race' and ethnicity is understood in schools today and how this perception continues to change according to the social, political, economic, and importantly to my study, geographical context in which we live. My experience of moving, with my children, from London to the south-coast in 1991, brought me face- to face with stark differences in schools' perceptions of 'race', for a while I was in culture-shock; for example as I watched blacked-up children dancing around a 'cannibal's cooking pot' in a school play at the majority white school that my children attended. Such experiences sharpened my interest in education and in the way that difference is represented and taught about in majority white areas.

The initiation of this thesis in itself must be understood as having being influenced

by my life experience and my political positioning as discussed in Chapter 1 and Chapter 5. As regards the themes that I have highlighted for analysis, the data that I choose to forefront in discussion of these themes and the sense that I have made of them, the subjectivity of my approach must be acknowledged. While my own immersion in this research field can be seen as being framed in an extremely personal perspective, which may bring into question the objectivity of my approach, this same subjective experience can also be understood as being of potential benefit in terms of providing me with some insight into the dynamics of culture and 'race' from the perspective of being of mixed-race. Ifekwunigwe, suggests that the positioning of being of mixed-race may itself offer a subversive perspective on the idea of *all* racialised subject positioning. Citing Gloria Andzaldua as a woman of mixed-race, Ifekwunigwe, herself identifying as a 'mestiza', repeats Andzaldua's claim:

I, a mestiza, continually walk out of one culture and into another, because I am in all cultures at the same time (Andzaldua, 1987, p.76 in Ifekwunigwe 1999, p.21)

My own experience and personal and professional profile has led me to want to explore, with as much care and transparency as I am able to offer, exactly 'what is going on' today, in majority white schools' approach to 'race' and cultural difference in the curriculum.

In considering reflectively what I would do differently in the research with hindsight, I need to reiterate the opinion expressed previously (in Chapter 5) that ideally I would have liked to have carried out an ethnography and spent more time in getting to know and understand the teachers and pupils who were the focus of this research, even though the teachers that I interviewed did appear to be fairly open in expressing their views, and some of them felt able to be critical of the idea of cultural diversity education. However, given more time in the school, it would have been interesting to have more informal conversations with teachers and to have observed PSHE lessons which had a particular focus on cultural diversity (although such lessons were apparently rare) in order to observe how these issues were taught, the extent to which open discussions took place and whether the pupils were encouraged to interact with and explore the perceptions and experiences of each other and of other people. It would also have been interesting to observe the extent

to which such lessons were presented in the context of discussions about social justice and how 'racial and cultural difference' was framed.

Near the beginning of the research process I considered whether to make the experience of minority ethnic pupils central to my thesis, but decided that my interest was very much in the perceptions of the 'white' constituency of majority white schools and their relationship to the tenets of official racialised discourse and as such I made a decision not to narrow my focus in this way. Further research on the experiences and understandings of minority ethnic pupils in majority white schools would develop this area of research. The insights that I did use of minority ethnic pupils' experiences, both from filmed resources and from the interviews and focus groups which featured several pupils and a teacher of minority ethnicity, were fascinating in the telling circumstances of their experiences and their views on the cultural diversity curriculum and the framing of racial incidents as carried out within majority white schools. Some of these experiences and filmed testimonies have been used to reinforce the claims made here that the broader context of racialised experiences and structural dynamics go unrecognised both in planning curriculum intervention and in understanding and responding to racist incidents. Although key documents to represent official discourse have been explored and critiqued, it would also have been useful to further explore the 'official discourse' of the Citizenship curriculum, as representing a directional change in the racialised curriculum. As the subject of Citizenship has become a compulsory part of the curriculum (Citizenship curriculum, 2009), it would be interesting to critique more fully the way that 'race' is imagined in accompanying documents and the implications of this for curriculum delivery and racialised understandings, particularly in majority white schools. A discussion of the *duty on schools to promote community cohesion* is however initiated in this chapter.

The other factor that may be of concern in assessing the impact of this thesis is the small scale of the research. Interviews were only held with six teachers and three pupils (although, as explained these were pupils with whom I had worked throughout the summer, so a relationship had been built with them). The teaching carried out with four classes over eight lessons however, provided a fair insight into the racialised perceptions of the pupils in carrying out group work and through

watching and then discussing the issues raised in the film, *One of Us*, which offers the perspectives of teenagers of minority ethnicity. Perhaps greater consideration could have been given to the nature of documented data from the lessons, which could have indicated the level of pupil interest and engagement in a more direct way than provided by field notes from my research diary. It may indeed have been possible to devise a classroom activity by which the pupils themselves could have signalled their responses to the film, in an interactive activity, perhaps involving recorded interviews with each other. This would have provided additional evidence of what it was that they gained from the session and how they perceived the filmed material, adding to my assertion that the pupils engaged with various aspects of the lessons and the illustrations of engagement provided by the documented materials that were collected.

The focus groups provided useful data for this thesis and it was valuable to be able to use transcripts of the interactive discussion on issues of 'race' in the curriculum and in terms of racist incidents. Having acknowledged their value in developing this thesis, it is disappointing that only three focus groups were held. In particular, the Year 11 group at Bexlington School, who were the missing focus group, were very engaged with the subjects under discussion in the classroom, and the focus group for that class promised to yield interesting results. I should perhaps have tried harder to get the school to arrange this focus group when I had no luck with the replacement teacher for the maternity cover. Another potential weakness of this research comes from the fact that in order to carry out an ethically sound piece of research, the focus group members volunteered their participation. This has implications for the validity of the focus groups as representing the pupils' perspectives and in reality no claims can be made for the groups to have been representative. The focus groups were made up of those with an interest in issues of diversity and with the confidence of being able to express their views within a group setting. It would have been interesting to also hear the views of those students who were more apathetic or even hostile to the idea and delivery of cultural diversity within the curriculum, and would have perhaps made for a more rounded thesis. I would also reiterate in bringing to a close these concluding remarks that although the research was on a small scale, the results have been interesting and could potentially be used to generate further discussion and insight about the

implications of official racialised discourse on the commitment to and the teaching of cultural diversity lessons in PSHE and the framing of racist incidents in majority white schools.

7:06 The impact of Standards for Community Cohesion

In September 2007, schools in England became obliged to implement Standards for Community Cohesion. From September 2008, OFSTED was tasked to inspect schools' compliance to these standards; the consequence of a school's failure to meet these Standards being that a 'limiting judgement' was applied to the OFSTED inspection. This had implications on the school's overall OFSTED grading. The Standards for Community Cohesion define community cohesion as:

working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community. (Community Cohesion Standards for Schools, 2007, p3)

This section will consider the implications of this duty on schools for professional practice within schools, particularly as it impacts on the delivery of the curriculum. I will draw attention to some of the concerns discussed in this thesis relating to teachers' perception of cultural diversity education and will assess the Standards for Community Cohesion in relation to this.

Claire Alexander has critiqued the Community Cohesion initiative as symbolic of a return to culturalist explanations for the anger and alienation felt by young Asian men who participated in disturbances in Oldham and Bradford in 2002 (Alexander, 2004). Alexander suggests that politicians, policy makers and much of the media have imagined the source of the problem which led to the disturbances as being intergenerational conflict and lack of cultural assimilation of Asian communities and have for this reason envisaged the solution as being to construct an agenda to connect disparate communities and to promote 'community cohesion' as a way of overcoming what are perceived as being problems caused by differences in cultures (Alexander, 2004).

The discourse of the need for shared values, which runs through the Standards for

Community Cohesion can be seen to replicate the concerns of the 1985 Swann Report, which at the time was critiqued for its focus on teaching about differences between cultures rather than, as some social theorists felt necessary (as discussed in Chapter 2), highlighting the racism of teachers and of institutional processes (Sivanandan, 1985, Figueroa, 1991). To what extent do the Standards for Community Cohesion address the critique that has been made of multiculturalism, that schools should be using the curriculum to address structural and institutional forms of injustice rather than teaching pupils about the diversity of cultures different to 'the norm'? Key to the effectiveness of any intervention based on these Standards must be the way that they are interpreted and enacted by schools. As they are written, in rather loose and rhetorical terms, the Standards can potentially be interpreted by schools and teachers in a variety of ways ranging from the exploration of underlying racialised social relations, to an engagement with the lived experiences of people who have a variety of cultural norms and perspectives, to a factual analysis of the customs and traditions of a range of cultures represented in Britain. Each of these forms of implementation could arguably be seen to address the following extract from the Standards for Community Cohesion, 2007:

An effective school will have a high standard of teaching, learning and curriculum provision that supports high standards of attainment, promotes shared values and builds pupils' understanding of the diversity that surrounds them, recognising similarities and appreciating different cultures, religions or beliefs, ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds. (Community Cohesion Standards for Schools, 2007, p8)

The suggestion then, is that these Standards, in being open to such a wide range of interpretations by schools, may fail to ensure that there is a serious exploration of diversity in schools that goes beyond what may be understood as a surface level 'multicultural perspective'.

With reference to what is currently being taught in schools regarding cultural diversity within the curriculum, this thesis suggests that at the time that my research was carried out, in the autumn term of 2007, it was evident that some majority white schools were offering very little education in this area. As such, the Standards for Community Cohesion, in particular the revised secondary curriculum for citizenship education, which, from July 2008 includes the strand "Identity and Diversity: Living together in the UK" is to be welcomed as an opportunity which ensures that *some* attention is given to raising and exploring the issue of cultural and racial diversity

in majority white classrooms. However, as stated, the form that this intervention takes is of utmost importance to the quality of learning and understanding about cultural diversity that results from this curriculum intervention.

The particular challenge of providing a curriculum that addresses cultural diversity in schools that are themselves mainly monocultural is recognised in the Standards for Community Cohesion:

For ... schools where the pupil population is less diverse or predominantly of one socioeconomic, ethnic, religious or non-religious background, more will need to be done to provide opportunities for interaction between children and young people from different backgrounds. (Community Cohesion Standards for Schools, 2007, p6)

As suggested, the details of the processes by which pupils learn about cultural diversity are not laid out in the Standards. This thesis suggests that before we can be confident that cultural diversity education will be effectively delivered in majority white areas, schools may need to address issues to do with teachers' capabilities and conviction to be able to engage with the theme of cultural diversity in a way that fully connects with their own professional competencies as well as with the experiences of their pupils and the lived realities of those communities in the UK who experience cultural or racial difference from the majority. This thesis is suggesting that while teachers may, in principle, applaud the implementation of 'cultural diversity' within the curriculum, this subject area may well be looked upon with suspicion, resentment or lack of confidence when it comes to the actual classroom delivery. This may particularly be the case for teachers who themselves may have only have experienced living or working in an area which is predominantly monocultural. The idea has been discussed here that racial and cultural diversity may be seen by some teachers as being synonymous with a 'problem' and may be linked with the idea of responding to racist incidents. It is further suggested that the lack of cultural and racial diversity in majority white schools, may be seen by some teachers as advantageous in that the monocultural composition associated with majority white school avoids the 'problems' associated with racial and cultural diversity. If teachers are to maintain this conceptual framework, it is hard to envisage how they could be effective in successfully delivering a curriculum that values cultural and racial diversity.

The Standards for Community Cohesion purport that the curriculum should provide the following:

...encouragement for learners to value diversity and develop a better understanding of UK society, for example by challenging assumptions and creating an open climate to address sensitive and controversial issues. (Community Cohesion Standards for Schools, 2007, p8)

Despite this laudable intention, the context within which majority white schools are situated needs to be considered before this aim can be fulfilled. I am suggesting, in the light of the findings drawn from my research, that additional training needs to be undertaken in initial teacher education and in-service training to enable and engage teachers towards becoming competent to deliver a curriculum in which cultural diversity is meaningfully addressed. The objectives of such training programmes would be to ensure that the official discourse of these Standards for Community Cohesion is translated into an effective teaching approach that teachers and school leaders are fully committed to. Such training would need to ensure that it goes further than merely to facilitate teacher 'compliance' with the Standards. As many previous initiatives have suggested (e.g. The Swann Report (1985), CRE, (2000), DfES (2005)) the Standards for Community Cohesion maintain that teaching about diversity should be integrated into the whole curriculum (Community Cohesion, 2007, p8). In reality though, it may be that in the absence of an unusually committed leadership team, such a concerted integrated approach is unlikely to occur in many majority white secondary schools in which cultural diversity is not an obvious, everyday fact of life. A more feasible professional practice-led approach may be to use the delivery of the citizenship curriculum as the basis from which these Standards can be fully and imaginatively implemented through the curriculum.

7:07 Implications of the duty to promote Community Cohesion on my own professional practice

As a lecturer in the School of Education at the University of Brighton, the professional implications of the duty to promote Community Cohesion in the context of the school curriculum is something that I am increasingly able to explore with students, particularly in working with them to discuss the historical and social context of these duties and the particular challenges of encouraging engagement with cultural and racial diversity in majority white schools. In my role as a trainer and consultant, particularly when working with teachers, the Standards for

Community Cohesion represent an opportunity to discuss with practitioners ways in which they can incorporate discussions of identity, difference and social justice into the curriculum to build on the pupils' own experiences and work to overcome stereotypes and misconceptions. In reviewing the Standards for Community Cohesion, it is pleasing that they focus on exploring identity as a way of understanding the implications of difference. This emphasis reflects the focus of the curriculum resource, *Unfolding Identities* (*Unfolding Identities*, 2009) that I have recently worked on as referenced in this thesis. The discipline of carrying out a literature review and researching in schools has increased my own understanding of the challenges of engaging with cultural diversity in majority white schools as well as confirming my conviction that to do this is a necessary and important task. The Standards for Community Cohesion must be seen as a useful impetus in ensuring that schools engage with this task, the onus on my own role as a practitioner is to support those student-teachers, practising teachers and schools that I come into contact with, to do so with sensitivity and commitment.

7:08 Recommendations for the future

The feedback from teachers in this research varied as to the extent to which they felt that the subject of cultural and racial diversity needed to be covered in the curriculum. As a curriculum area, cultural diversity has a resonance in preparing children for life in the 'real' world that few other subjects have. In response to my interview questions, some of the teachers that I spoke to spoke of the lack of attention paid to this curriculum area, suggesting that not enough was being done:

YA: Do you have any other comments, suggestions or observations to make regarding issues of 'race' and ethnicity in the school curriculum or outside of it?

Derek: It should probably be a higher priority in preparing our youngsters for the world they are going to live in and work in and we do address the issues largely by default apart from the PSE programme and the RE programme I would say. OK, so if something occurs we deal with it or we handle it, rather than maybe looking to raise the issue more frequently. (Derek, teacher, Valley High, interview 6.11.07)

and a similar point is made by another teacher:

Rose: Well I think that we need to do more; I am worried that we don't do enough. I don't think that we're preparing our children well enough for the

world in which they're going to live, I mean this is a bit of a cliché I know but I'm beginning to really, really believe it...and anyway (this town) is changing, (this town) is not the same place it was 10 years ago and good I'm glad its not, not that it was a bad place before, but I mean it's a great thing that we should have more of a racial, ethnic mix than (this town) ever used to have, but we need to be preparing our children much better for living in a world that is very different.

It is my contention that although there may be principled agreement by teachers that cultural and racial diversity is an subject area that should be approached in the curriculum, when it comes to the details of *how* this should be done, there would seem a lack of either interest, support, confidence or experience among teachers to enable them to actually carry out this task effectively.

My argument has been that majority white schools need to be able (and enabled) to look beyond essentialised demarcations of 'race' and culture to understand the complex and contingent racialised constructions that determine the way that 'race' is experienced today. This thesis provides some cause for optimism in that the pupils that I interacted with in the course of my research seemed to be interested in exploring the realities and consequences of racial and cultural difference. The claim is made here, shared at least superficially by all those who participated in this research, that it is important for majority white schools in particular to teach and engage pupils in learning about the experiences and the implications of differences of 'race', ethnicity and culture. The findings of this research suggest that such teaching may at present be negligible, at least in those schools in which the research took place. My hope is that this thesis may join with other initiatives to encourage embedded and comprehensive curriculum interventions to ensure that in contemporary classrooms in majority white schools, pupils are able to examine the nuances and the consequences of 'race' and culture in our society today, in a framework that explores the impact of social structures on life experience and discusses what it is that we actually mean by social justice.

Glossary of Acronyms

BME:	Black and Minority Ethnic
CRE:	Commission for Racial Equality
DES:	Department of Education and Science
DfES:	Department for Education and Skills
HMSO:	Her Majesty's Stationery Office
ILEA:	Inner London Education Authority
IRR:	Institute of Race Relations
LEA:	Local Education Authority
OFSTED:	Office for Standards in Education
PSHE:	Personal, Social and Health Education
QCA:	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
SEAL:	Social Emotional Aspects of Learning

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Appendix 1

Plan of sessions carried out with Year 9 and Year 11 groups

Lesson 1

Introduction to lessons and to the research remit

Experiences of injustice (pairs work)

Share a personal experience of being on the receiving end of injustice (take notes of what your partner is saying)

Take some feedback (on behalf of partner's experience)

As a whole class take and write up feedback on the short term and the long term impact of these experiences on the person who had the experiences

A sense of belonging (group work)

Half the class;

In groups think of a place in which you feel a sense of belonging,

Discuss in the groups what makes each person feel that they belong somewhere and write it down.

Take and write up feedback

Half the class;

In groups think of a place or an experience in which you didn't feel

a sense of belonging and write it down,

Discuss shared ideas of what is common to the situations in which you have felt that you don't belong.

Take and write up feedback

Make links to not feeling a sense of belonging and the experience of being discriminated against.

Definitions

Divide the class into 5 groups and give each group one of these terms to define and to give an example of the term.

Direct discrimination / Indirect discrimination / Racism / Prejudice / Stereotype

Lesson 2

Give some background to the film, *One of Us*

You're going to watch a film which is about young people expressing their experiences in and outside of schools, some of which involve prejudice, stereotype, direct discrimination and indirect discrimination.

Watch the film

What did you think of the film (quick fire feedback)

I am interested in how you think that some of these things should be dealt with by schools

Divide the class into 6 groups,

Give out scenarios (based on the film) of issues of discrimination and belonging

Ask each group to look at a scenario and to make suggestions of what the school could have done in each instance to end the discrimination or discuss what Britishness means.

Take feedback

Finish session, thanking the class and picking up any residual issues

Scenario 1

A girl in the school is being abusive to another mixed race girl in a different class every time she passes her in the corridor.

You are the class teacher of the girl who is being abused. She comes to you with a friend to make a complaint about the other girl.

What will your reaction be, please give reasons for your reaction.

Scenario 2

You are the class teacher. You have a new girl in your class who is a gypsy and you notice that the rest of the class are shutting her out. One day she arrives late for your lesson and you hear students in the class whispering 'pikey' as she goes to her seat;

What will your immediate reaction be?

What things will you need to think about in reacting to this situation

Scenario 3

Please think about 'what does it mean to be British?

Why might people be either ashamed or proud to be British? Explain your answers

Do you think you can be British and belong to another culture or nationality at the same time?
Please give reasons for your answer

Please define the following term and give an example of it in practice

Direct discrimination

Please define the following term and give an example of it in practice

Indirect discrimination

Please define the following term and give an example of it in practice

Racism

Please define the following term and give an example of it in practice

Prejudice

Please define the following term and give an example of it in practice

Stereotype

Appendix 2

Guide Questions for facilitators working with focus groups

Yaa to introduce the remit of the group,

- **Give everyone chance to speak**
- **Be honest**
- **Confidentiality**

What is your favourite music and why do you like it?

What sort of things have you talked about in the classroom to do with cultural diversity?

Do you ever talk with your friends about 'racial' or cultural differences between people?

Has anything you've discussed in PSE made any difference to your attitude to people of other races and cultures?

Do you know whether there is an anti bullying policy in your school?

Do you think this works well? Can you give any examples?

Do you know whether there is a policy for dealing with racist incidents in your school?

Do you think this works well? Can you give any examples?

Is anyone aware of any racist incidents in your school?

In a mainly white school such as this, do you think that its important to teach about cultural diversity?

Why or Why not?

And is it important to have a policy about dealing with racist incidents?

Why or Why not?

Appendix 3

Guide Interview Questions for Teachers

- Can you say something about your background, where were you born and brought up?
- Can you say something about where you have worked as a teacher?
- How well equipped do you feel, either through your life experience or through training, to address cultural and racial diversity issues in your teaching?
- How important do you feel it is to address issues of racial and cultural diversity in the school curriculum?
- What do you feel are the main issues that need to be taught in the cultural diversity curriculum?
- In your opinion how do young people feel about those pupils who are different in terms of cultural background, race and religion?
- How do you feel that racist incidents occurring in schools should be dealt with?
- How do you feel that racist incidents are dealt with?
- Do you have any other comments, suggestions or observations to make regarding issues of 'race' and ethnicity in the school curriculum?.

Appendix 4

Consent form for teachers outlining remit of the research

Background to Research

My name is Yaa Asare and I am studying towards a Doctorate of Education at the University of Brighton. I am interested in how schools teach about cultural diversity and in how they approach and deal with incidents of racism in the school. I am also interested in investigating the views and experiences of young people in relation to 'race', racism and cultural diversity,

As part of my research I am conducting focus groups and interviews with both pupils and teachers to find out their experiences and opinions on these issues.

The findings from this research will be shared with those who participated when they have been written up before they are made public.

Consent Form

- I agree to take part in this research into the teaching of and the experience of cultural diversity
- I understand that any confidential information will only be seen by the researcher and will not be revealed to anyone else and that all names that could lead to identification will be changed.
- I understand that I will be able to see a copy of the research report.
- I understand that I am involved in this project voluntarily and free to withdraw from it at any time.

Name:

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 5

Interviews with pupils

1. Who are you? Age, gender, year group
2. Can you talk about any lessons you've had that teach about cultural diversity or about racism?
3. Have you covered these issues more in primary school or secondary school?
4. Can you explain any differences in approach?
5. Do you think there is a difference in how you express your identity inside and outside of the school?
6. Can you explain this difference?
7. How do you think that cultural diversity should be dealt with or taught in the school curriculum?
8. What do you think that schools should do to deal with racism when it happens?
9. Do you think that there is any preventative action that schools could take to deal with racism?
10. Do you have any other comments to make about teaching about cultural diversity or dealing with racism in schools?

Appendix 6

Example of a complete transcript of an interview with a teacher;

Interview with Rose

Can you say something about your background and where you were brought up, maybe in connection of this whole theme around cultural diversity.

I was born in London and brought up in Kent in a place called Sevenoaks and lived there for the first 18, 19 years of my life then went to University and have lived here ever since.

Can you say something about where you've worked as a teacher

I did my PGCE in Bristol and then came back here and worked for 13 years at another school and then I've been here ever since, so for the last 17 and a half years so in fact I've been teaching for 31 years in only 2 schools and only in this town.

How well equipped do you feel either through your life experience or through training to address cultural or racial diversity issues in your teaching?

I don't think through my own experience, upbringing or where I've lived at all. Other than a sort of, no, no, I'm not going to qualify that, no, not at all. Through my training, through training I have received whilst a practicing teacher, I think I know, I have an awareness of some of the issues, umm and I have done a fair amount of training through PSE principally about cultural diversity and equality, but that's it really, not a huge amount.

Its interesting that you said you trained in Bristol because that's quite a mixed place

It is, but not in my experience it wasn't. I did my teaching practice in a predominantly white school in North Bristol, there are various parts of Bristol and we're talking about 30 years ago anyway although having said that I think it was quite culturally mixed even 30 years ago erm well you know that experience was not, well it was inner city but it wasn't cosmopolitan inner city of, you know,

mixed intake at all.

How important do you feel it is to address issues of racial and cultural diversity within the curriculum?

Very important because, well particularly in a school like this where, actually its changing, its always been important, well I used to think that in this school there was, the predominating culture was one of acceptance of difference and I think that's still true to some extent, certainly the odd child that was different, like for example a couple of years ago we had a child who went all the way through the school who had an arm missing, I mean basically it was a birth defect, he hadn't had it amputated, he sailed through the school without being bullied, without being singled out, being totally accepted and I think that is very much within the Bexlington culture to accept difference and race being one of them. Over the years when I've taught about this in years 10 and 11 our topic, you know on race equality, it was extremely hard to get any sort of discussion going because there was unanimity about everybody's views, everybody was right on politically correct, there was not one hint of racism, that's not altogether true, from time to time somebody would say something that would be simply outrageous, like I had a year 10 class when I was doing this and there was this girl who was very vocal and who started talking about, to quote her, 'the Chinkies that ran a fish and chip shop in her area and how nothing that anybody said would change her view on all Chinkies because they were, you know I can't remember the detail, just that most the people in the room were shocked and horrified that she should say such a thing, but this was clearly a family thing that they didn't like those particular people who ran the fish and chip shop but for her the entire race, anybody that looked even vaguely Chinese were Chinkies and totally unacceptable, but that was very, very, very rare but I think that our intake has changed and that as we have become more culturally diverse, I think the prejudice, and you know I don't understand it because you'd have thought why would that be the case, that there's less acceptance of difference when we have more difference, but that is, that's my experience.

That's very interesting.

I don't know whether or not that's because as well as it being more cult, you know I've been here a long time and there are a lot of changes there's a lot of reasons why, you know, there's not a simple explanation for change. The sorts of backgrounds that the children come from has changed as well and it could be that we've got a higher proportion of less, if you like, liberal children, I mean children coming from liberal, middle class politically correct backgrounds and that there are more children who come from the sort of backgrounds where, you know its perfectly acceptable to be racist, in fact that's part of that culture that's the way they've been brought up, that's the way they always think and it's the sort of 'they're coming and taking our jobs' mentality, that sort of thing, you know, 'they come here and sponge off the' all of those things sorts of 'they' meaning a sort of vague, anybody that's probably not white. And I don't know if that's... You know I was almost sort of saying that as there is more difference we've become less accepting, as if the two were

connected, my instinct is that the two are not connected, that it is to do with the nature of the intake, the fact that we have more children who come from the sorts of backgrounds that are racist and that, I reckon that in the past, at Bexlington, we were able to be, umm, to appear to be accepting of difference because the loudest voices were accepting of difference and that the shift has been that there are louder voices now who, are not accepting of difference, but there's probably always been, people, children who've been racist, but they've just kept their mouths shut because its so clearly not the right thing to say in front of, you know its about critical mass isn't it. I mean we are more explicit about being inclusive and yet, the reality, I think is that its less accepting, I mean its interesting isn't it, but again I'm not connecting the two, I'm not saying that as we have become more explicitly inclusive that its backfired and we've actually done the reverse. I don't think that's the case, I just think that it's the nature of, we're a much bigger school.

What do you feel are the main issues that need to be taught in the cultural diversity curriculum?

I think this is off the top of my head, I mean this could be an essay couldn't it? It requires some thought and some research but anyway, just off the top of my head, what springs to mind is something about valuing diversity, but in order to value something you've got to know about it, so I think its about knowing about difference umm and, that's got to be taught so, you know so whatever it is, trying to get different experiences, different, its not just about views is it, its more about recognising that people with different backgrounds have different traditions, customs, practices, sometimes values, certainly experiences, so its about that, its knowing about diversity and then of course its about valuing it, recognising that, you know, its about celebrating it isn't it and not only is it just a fact of life but it's a good thing, it adds richness to everybody's experience, I think that's one of the things we're trying to get across so there's that whole diversity thing and then there's the issue about explicitly talking about racism and what it is and what the experience of racism can be like for people on the receiving end and getting students to think through their views on that and challenge their views, I'm not talking about me challenging their views, although that sometimes as well, but more in a safe place to be actually thinking about what their views are.

OK, this goes back to what you were saying before about shifts in culture maybe around acceptance of difference. In your opinion how do young people feel about those pupils who are different in terms of cultural background, race and religion.

I don't think you can generalise, I think some are very accepting for example I had, in my class, I've got a year 11 class I had a child come into the classroom for a period of 9 weeks, maybe less than that and she was from the circus, I can't remember where she was from, what her ethnic origin was, it was different anyway in the sense that her 2 parents came from totally different parts of the world and they rode a motorbike, they had some sort of motorbike dangerous business in the sense of this motorbike was going high up in the air, this little girl she definitely came from a travelling background, I mean she was with the circus apart from anything else, but I seem to remember there was some sort of Romany connection as well, she was very, very different, her experiences were very different, she wasn't even used to being in a school. My class loved her and drew her in,

included her, we were going on a school trip within a couple of weeks of her arrival when we were going swimming together and she really didn't want to go, it was something that was very alien to her, going swimming with her peers and they persuaded her to come, they included her, at one point she was in the changing room, refusing to come out to go swimming with them, the girls went in and there was no sense in which they were bullying her into it, they drew her out and she took part. I don't think she could swim, I think that was part of the problem that she'd obviously not had the opportunity to swim, most of them were quite strong swimmers, I think that for her was an issue, I mean I thought that was wonderful, absolutely wonderful.

And another time, we had a Thai boy that joined our class, sadly he left, they loved him, absolutely loved him, how interested they were in his experiences, his life, I mean he was a fascinating boy and he lived in a sort of community, fishing community basically in Thailand and he worked, mum had gone into a city to earn money, dad had died or dad had left or something, so he stayed with his aunt who fished, so as well as going to school, they had to work. I just think he was very interesting but I don't think any of children in my class found out anything interesting about life for a child in Thailand. But was he interested in their life, you know, this is part and parcel of being a child isn't it you know, that's it the here and the now rather than rather than the things that you do back home type of thing but they were very, very accepting. Interestingly, I've got a Nepalese boy in my class now who is very isolated, but I don't, I really don't think, there is a huge cultural divide, but no more than there was with the Thai boy, there's something about the Thai boy.

Is it to do with personality?

I think so, but you know having said that, it may well be a cultural thing because if, you know, the boy in my class, if, if his upbringing has made him reserved, I mean he's very reserved and very polite, maybe our brasher, sort of upfront kids just don't recognise that, don't understand and sort of can't connect, they're not horrible to him but he's not included in the same way and its quite interesting isn't it. Its looking at cultural comparisons really, because the two cultures, even though they're different are outgoing cultures and maybe there's more of a connection. Interestingly, that boy now has 2 other Nepalese boys who've come into the school and he is so happy it has transformed his life for him and he walks around with a smile on his face. He's got a lot of other issues to do with his home life which is deeply unhappy but he's been a source of worry for lots of people.

How do you feel that racist incidents occurring in schools should be dealt with ?

I think that they should be dealt with according to the law, which means we have to report them and they have to be recorded. I think that they should be taken very seriously they should be investigated fully. I think that you can take something seriously and say its unacceptable without

condemning the child so I think that there are times when children say racist things, I mean it depends what we're talking about, there was an incident fairly recently when a child was looking at some sort of map of the world and pointing at India I think and saying something along the lines of 'people who come from there smell and I hate them' or some such statement which in itself was hugely offensive to anybody in the vicinity whatever the colour of their skin, whatever their ethnic origin, but particularly to 2 Asian girls who happened to be standing directly next to it, I think the suggestion was it wasn't particularly directed at them it wasn't for their benefit but nonetheless hugely offensive. Now I really don't think that anybody could construe that as 'Oh well, it was just a joke he didn't realise what he was saying and, you know he's just a child'. That's just appalling and should be dealt with, I don't mean he should therefore be shot but it's clear cut in my view and I think that has to be dealt with severely. There are times when I think that children say things and if you like they're joking, they don't realise they're being offensive, it's a general thing, there's one instance that I've had this term where I don't think that the boy realised just how offensive he was being and I think there's an educational role in this. So basically what happened was, I was doing a round in my class where everybody in the room had to say what was the best thing about their holiday and the worst thing about their holiday and this girl said that the best thing had been going to Saudi Arabia and she also went to Bangladesh and this boy then mimicked her and said something about Bangladesh, in a mock Asian accent which obviously he thought was hilarious, now, the entire lesson came to a halt because I heard it and obviously I was not prepared to accept that and of course it was a racist incident and of course it was recorded and reported and he got into a lot of trouble, he was excluded for that. I think he genuinely didn't realise what he'd done, so there is a role where we calmly, rather than yelling and shouting and saying 'Aaagh that was racist therefore you are below contempt' that actually you can't do that, you do need to do the put yourself in their shoes, how would you feel if, what do you think she thought, that sort of thing, which in fact was done. I was actually very pleased with the way it was dealt with, I really don't think he'll do anything like that again, partly I think because of the huge response but also because somebody sat down and talked to him about it.

The next question is how do you think that they are dealt with, Maybe you could just say whether you think there's a difference between those two answers, what you think ought to happen and what does happen.

I think that sometimes what should happen doesn't happen. I think that although we have worked very hard, principally it has to be said, Joanna is the figurehead, well she's more than the figurehead she's the leader on this. And prior to her intervention we had a paper policy that in practice wasn't being stuck to at all. Now we have a very much better system but it doesn't always work and things get forgotten and for example one of my colleagues was called something absolutely appalling, he's Irish and it was some you know 'You Irish bastard' or something, I don't know what but in fact I think it was hugely more offensive than that but giving that you're taping this I don't want to repeat it. Anyway, it was dreadful and I still think, this was weeks and weeks ago, I still think that although the boy was punished for it and spoken to, part of what was supposed to happen was that you were supposed to go and apologise and that has never happened so that sometimes things get forgotten.

What I feel from talking to you is that here is much more of a live issue than it might be in another school were there are only a few children from other ethnicities. Your whole response really puts it across what a live issue this is.

It is a very live issue and its one that causes me a great deal of concern because I had rather smugly thought that I taught in a school where racism didn't exist, in any real sense, there might be the odd child with private, unacceptable to my mind, views but they'll keep their mouths shut in school and we wouldn't have that, but I have been really shocked by the amount of racism that has been going on

OK

And it seems like we have a lot of it

And has that been manifest through the work that Joanna has been heading up?

I think it has but I think the fact is that it's a bit of a chicken and egg this, I mean clearly the work that's been going on hasn't produced the racism, I mean we know that, but I think as a response to there being so much of it that's why Joanna has started, it isn't that its been that bad for ever and we've just ignored it up to now, do you understand what I'm getting at, I think that what we're doing is responding to a changing situation, which is one where its become worse, there's no two ways about it, it didn't used to be such an issue; it may be that some of it was hidden and it may have been that I lived in a smug little world of ignorance and there was more of it going on, in fact undoubtedly there was more of it going on than I realised, I think it would be dishonest of me to think otherwise

But I do think there is more than there has been in the past for the reasons that as we said, partly maybe because we are more culturally diverse than we used to be, but also I think that because the nature of the intake has changed.

Thank you and the last question, do have any other comments, suggestions or observations to make regarding issues of 'race' and ethnicity in the school curriculum? So is there anything else that you'd like to add.

Well I think that we need to do more, I am worried that we don't do enough. I don't think that

we're preparing our children well enough for the world in which they're going to live, I mean this is a bit of a cliché I know but I'm beginning to really, really believe it. My own experience has been one of a white world, a white middle class world, but I know that's a very narrow view and a very narrow experience. My daughter who after all is both white and brought up by me, in *this town* in a sort of middle class white world, she went to Manchester to do her degree and she is now saying she's not sure that she wants to really live in *this town* because it is so uniform that there isn't the cultural diversity of Manchester and she likes the excitement and the interest of that environment. That made me think, 'goodness me, if that's really the case many of our children will move beyond *this town* and anyway *this town* is changing, *this town* is not the same place it was 10 years ago and good I'm glad its not, not that it was a bad place before, but I mean it's a great thing that we should have more of a racial, ethnic mix than *this town* ever used to have, but we need to be preparing our children much better for living in a world that is very different.

Thank you very much

Appendix 7

Examples of Pupils' Classroom Work on 'Belonging'

Bexlington School, Year 11

Belonging

Not Belonging

Love	Isolation
Comfortable	Not felling loved
Needed	Lonliness
Wanted	Different
	Original
	Nowhere to go
	Out of place
	Unwanted
	Ignored
	Sadness
	Depressed
	Friendship groups
	Parents splitting up
	Confused
	Outcast
	Self-obsession

Belonging**Not Belonging**

Importance	Melancholy
Status	Scorn
People find you interesting	Feeling like a failure
You have to give to belong	Group mentality
Conforming	Feeling alone
Not being yourself	Feeling unimportant
Happiness	Overlooked
Fitting in	Undermined
Comfortable	Isolation

Valley High, Year 9**Belonging****Not belonging**

When your upset- someone to comfort you	Being with people different from you
Know that your appreciated	Being somewhere new
Someone thankful when you help them out	Atmosphere
Achievement	Being ignored
People welcoming you	Rumours
Share interests with a close group of friends	
Part of a group of friends and you know your important (needed, wanted, make people laugh)	
Memories	