



# ETHNIC MINORITY NATIONAL RESILIENCE NETWORK

## THEMATIC SUBGROUP MEETING NOTES

|                                   |                                 |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Group</b>                      | Children and Young People       |
| <b>Chairperson / Organisation</b> | Vicky Wan, Children in Scotland |
| <b>Date of meeting</b>            | Thursday 9 July                 |

### Attendees

Vicky Wan – Children in Scotland  
Megan Burt – Children in Scotland (note-taker)  
Tanveer Parnez - BEMIS  
Fariha Thomas - YCSA  
Ruby Zajac – Licketyspit  
Sarah Robinson Galloway – Youthlink Scotland  
David Donaldson - Progress in Dialogue  
Soumi Dey – Independent Academic

### Key discussion Points (bullet point format)

#### Education and Learning

- The sudden change from 'blended learning' model to 'retuning to school full time' has caused concerns that the schools do not have sufficient time to prepare and as a result the needs of BAME CYPs will not be met
- National/strategic provision – what are the measures in place for those not able/ready to go to school. How can we support them better?

#### **a. Planning and information.**

- Clearer communication is required. Information is not accessible especially for those whose first language is not English or those with literacy issues.
- Parents need clarity: What happens to parents who want to go back to work? What are the childcare arrangements that will be in place? Are local authorities also taking a joined-up approach with schools on breakfast programmes etc.?
- There needs to be more guidance around after school clubs; will social distancing still apply?

- Ambiguity around practicality of schools going back full time is leading to anxiety in some families. Some BAME families expressed reluctance to send their children back to school as a result.
- The Education Recovery Group has produced guidance for schools and practitioners; was advised that there will be a Q&A document and guidance for parents and carers, however it would also be good to have something similar for CYP.

**b. Supporting CYP's mental health**

- Children and young people's (CYP) mental health is at risk. Those who experienced mental health issues before lockdown have had intensified.
- Some families may have to isolate, resulting in a loss of education and a further mental health crisis. Suggested a national provision of online activities, in parallel to attending schools, to support CYP's education and mental health.
- The Pupil Equity Fund could help with setting up outdoor and online activities. This is something that the Third Sector can provide and work with schools to address mental health issues and CYP who are not in school yet.

**c. Summer Provisions and Play**

- The constantly changing guidance make it difficult to plan events for the summer.
- Some families do not have networks in local areas to let under 11s play with other children. There may be no public spaces, no toilets, and the weather can be changeable. This leads to huge amounts of isolation, so there is a need for better guidance to support these families.
- There should be identified spaces for CYP to gather at certain times of the day. We need play streets in places where there are no parks.

**Digital inequality**

- Not just about learning but also social isolation.
- Some families have relied on school devices like iPads, which will go back to schools once they resume in August.
- Even if someone is given a tablet, they may not have access to the internet, especially with lack of libraries.
- Some libraries in Glasgow are not opening until October. This is an example of a wider issue around prioritising to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged people.
- Not everything should be digital, but it is important as a bridge.
- A strategic approach is needed; organisations are having to apply for multiple funds to access enough money to address digital exclusion.
- A national conversation led by the Scottish Government with telecommunication companies is needed. There are examples of successful negotiations between Housing Associations and EE to address digital exclusion.

**Young People's voice and rights**

- Discussed how this group could support BAME CYPs to have their voices heard and drive changes.

- Suggested that this group organise a series of meetings with BAME CYPs to plan and build their direct participation into the network, and engagement with Scot Gov officials at a later stage.
- Discussed and agreed that principles of these meetings should be: age appropriate (might have to split into groups); adapted to meet the needs of young people; have clear outcomes and meaningful for CYPs themselves (not tokenistic).
- Also discussed the logistics relating to digital exclusion issues. Is there a way of involving CYP who do not have internet access? Could a safe space be created for a group to meet in? Phoning into the Zoom meeting is another option for those CYP who have a phone. We could ask CYP to create videos to send in.

#### **Actions or next steps**

- Meeting notes will be circulated to the group.
- Based on the notes, Vicky will draft a letter and circulate to the group via email for comments. Once agreed, Vicky will invite SG representatives from Education and Attainment to attend the next meeting.
- The interactive CYP meetings will be treated as a project in stages:
  - An invitation will be created – Ruby will develop this based on notes.
  - There will be an introductory session with members of the sub-group.
  - The meeting with policy makers will happen later in the year.
  - In terms of policy makers, we need to think about who will listen and has experience engaging with CYP.

**Date of next meeting:** Vicky to circulate doodle poll.