

- Thank you for inviting me here this evening.
- I am delighted that Cardiff is hosting the prestigious annual Five Nations Network Conference.
- Congratulations to the organisers for bringing together such an impressive list of guest speakers, teachers, practitioners, and key stakeholders to listen and learn from each other.
- This year's theme 'Achieving Climate and Racial Justice - Is Citizenship Education the key?' resonates strongly with Welsh Government.
- Promoting race equality, and social cohesion, have always been priorities for us – with the principle of commitment to equality written into our DNA.
- Our Race Equality Action Plan, 'An Anti-Racist Wales' is built on the values of racial justice, and calls for zero tolerance of racism in all its guises.
- Co-constructed with our Black, Asian, and Ethnic Minority communities, it identifies a vision and values for an anti-racist Wales.
- The Plan contains goals, actions, timelines, and tangible outcomes which will help us to move from the rhetoric on racial equality and ensure we deliver meaningful action.
- It is also grounded in a recognition of the need for fundamental change.

- It reflects our commitment to listen to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people - then take action to make change in ways that are tangible to their communities.
- A key part of our Race Equality Action Plan is the action to improve the experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic learners and teachers in schools.
- We are committed to taking an inclusive and anti-racist approach to teaching and the school experience.
- The Plan prioritises how we will support schools to address racism and race inequality behaviours in a visible and tangible way.
- We have also addressed how learners in Wales engage with different historical, racial, cultural and ethnic experiences
- An understanding of this diversity and the need to challenge racist behaviours, is a core part of the new Curriculum for Wales.
- And I am proud that our schools will once again lead the way as Wales becomes the first UK nation to make teaching of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic histories and experiences mandatory in the school curriculum.
- Our new Curriculum also recognises that citizenship education is an essential part of the school experience.
- One of the four purposes at the heart of the curriculum is that learners leave education as ethically, informed citizens who understand and exercise their human and democratic responsibilities and rights.

- In Wales, we believe that increasing opportunities for young people to engage with government and politics can only make our democracy stronger.
- It is through listening to diverse voices that elected representatives can make better decisions, decisions that can support and enrich the lives of all people, no matter where they live or the background they come from.
- We has shown our commitment to this principle through expanding the voting franchise for local government and Senedd elections to 16 years olds in Wales.
- As part of this process, we have listened to young people to understand how we can support them to register to vote and exercise their rights at the ballot box.
- They have told us they want more education regarding citizenship and politics so they can cast their votes with a fuller understanding of the institutions and political parties for which they are voting.
- We are proud to work with organisations, such as the Association for Citizenship Teaching, to ensure our learners get the support they have asked for.
- Through this collaborative working, we will provide teachers with the knowledge and tools they need to teach topics related to citizenship and politics, such as elections, legislation and engaging with government to make positive change in their community.
- I look forward to continuing to work together as we embed the new Curriculum, and co-construct the final Race Equality Action Plan to create the truly anti-racist Wales we all want to see.

- If we get this right, we will create a society where everyone is valued for who they are and the contribution they make.
- When that happens, we all win.
- Diolch Yn Fawr

Minister for Social Justice Jane Hutt MS
Welsh Government