

From the Head Mistress
Dr Frances Ramsey

11 June 2020

Dear students, Old Dolphins, staff, parents and friends

As a community, we were all shocked and appalled by the killing of George Floyd in America on 25 May this year. Since then many of you have been in touch to share your views and to ask how, as a school, we will further tackle issues of race and inequality. This has been warmly welcomed by all those who play a part in running the school and in shaping its character. We try to take a reflective approach in everything we do. This involves not being afraid to listen and to acknowledge where change is needed; and we value the thoughts and experiences of all those who in any capacity come to know Godolphin - particularly our students and former students.

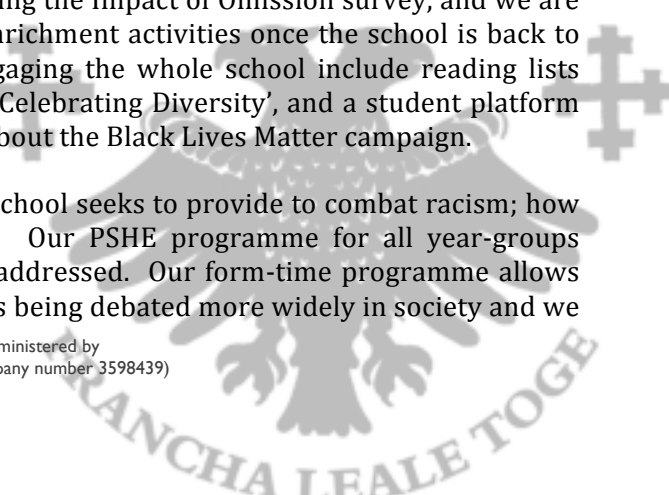
At Godolphin and Latymer we aim to foster an ethos of inclusivity, tolerance and respect: we want everyone, regardless of their background or ethnicity, to see this as a school for them. We recognise that as an institution which educates young people we have a responsibility to further the cause of anti-racism in our society and to continue the important conversations about race and inequality. Some of our recent initiatives and approaches, intended to address these responsibilities, are described below, but we acknowledge that there is more to be done.

Godolphin is a student-led community; this is central to its character. Last year's Head Girls' Team introduced a thoughtful range of inclusion days and our current Head Girls' Team has proposed a programme of sustainable engagement for students to support the Black Lives Matter movement. We welcomed and support both these initiatives and intend to ensure speedy implementation of the engagement programme via the School Council in order to build on the momentum that our students have already generated.

In the school year ahead, our Challenge Your Limits programme will have a specific focus on standing up for what is right. We will use this as a platform for the exploration of issues such as challenging racism, unconscious and conscious bias, and the importance of not being a bystander whose silence can be taken as complicity.

We will continue to review our curriculum (across all subjects, at all levels within the school, and in relation to compulsory and elective courses) to ensure that the histories, culture and literature of BAME people are all more fully covered and that euro-centric assumptions are avoided or challenged. One of the many positive aspects of being an IB school is an on-going focus on international-mindedness. Progress has been made in recent years and we are happy to provide detail in different areas of the curriculum to anyone who is interested. The History department, for instance, has recently put together a full statement of their approach to these matters. This was part of the very positive dialogue with two of our alumnae who are leading the Impact of Omission survey, and we are exploring ways in which we can involve them in our enrichment activities once the school is back to more normal operations. Other new initiatives for engaging the whole school include reading lists shared by our librarians, entitled 'Fighting Racism and Celebrating Diversity', and a student platform for disseminating information, articles and viewpoints about the Black Lives Matter campaign.

An inclusive curriculum is only one aspect of what the school seeks to provide to combat racism; how we are as people is as important as what we know. Our PSHE programme for all year-groups examines injustice within society and how this can be addressed. Our form-time programme allows the flexibility to respond to political and cultural matters being debated more widely in society and we

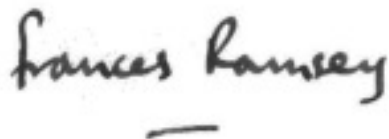


have arranged for every girl to have a form-time session with their tutor on the Black Lives Matter campaign. The programmes we follow are continually evolving and we are fully committed to embedding inclusivity and equality in all aspects of school life. This ambition informs our appointment process for teaching staff, during which either one of the deputy heads or I always question applicants about how they would respond to an incident of racist abuse in school, and discuss the expectations of our community in this area. We intend to introduce unconscious bias training for staff in the year ahead.

We are making progress on the issues of diversity, equality and inclusion, but recognise that there is still more for us to do. We will ensure that these themes are central to our school priorities and the activities of the whole school community. Staff will continue to reflect on everything we do in both academic and pastoral spheres and will seek to ensure that our school is a place where everyone feels welcome and where we can be sure that we are beginning to effect change. Students will be supported to lead action through their clubs and societies.

We welcome any further thoughts you may have on how we can make positive and meaningful change. Please do not hesitate to be in touch if you wish to share your experiences or to support us in any way.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frances Ramsey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Dr Frances Ramsey