

# A Decade of Change

Inspiring and empowering people to create equal, diverse and inclusive environments for 10 years





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#### **About us**

EqualiTeach is a not-for-profit provider of equality and diversity training and consultancy services for businesses, local authorities, schools and education settings.

Our vision is an equal, inclusive and diverse society where everyone is valued and able to achieve.

#### **Our Story**













2013 **EqualiTeach** is formed

2014 **Awarded** first funding

bid

2014-15 **Partnered** with teaching

unions

**Acquired our** first office

2015

2016 Hired our first

**Expanded our** offer with Agents employees for Change

2017



2018

**Branched out into the** corporate workspace



**Acquired and** re-launched the **Equalities Award** 





2019

Developed and delivered Free to Be

2020

Increased reach with online learning

2021

**Equally Safe** began

2022

**Co-directors'** book 'More Than Words' is published

2023

EqualiTeach Empowered launched

2023

Launch of 'Investing in the Future'











#### Introduction

Welcome to EqualiTeach's 10th Anniversary Review! The review is a celebration of our work and its impact over the last ten years. We have been privileged to watch the organisation grow from the seed of an idea to an institution with over 20 staff who are all driven and passionate about EqualiTeach's vision of an equal, inclusive and diverse society where everyone is valued and able to succeed.

The equality landscape has changed over the past decade. When we started EqualiTeach, one of the main barriers that we needed to overcome was apathy; many people just weren't aware of the importance of promoting equality, diversity and inclusion throughout their practice and the need to proactively engage with this work. Since 2013, people's awareness has been greatly increased. The response to the racist murder of George Floyd thrust anti-racism work firmly into the spotlight. Campaigns such as 'Me Too' and 'Everyone's Invited' highlighted the prevalence of sexual harassment and its devastating impact. People began to feel that change was possible and started writing to their schools, universities and workplaces demanding change across all protected characteristics and many began to listen.

However, the landscape hasn't all been positive. As we write this, trans rights are under severe threat, falsely being pitted against women's rights; the government is currently debating a bill which will allow asylum-seeking children and victims of human trafficking to be detained indefinitely before being deported without their cases being heard; and a report has been released, yet again highlighting that the Metropolitan Police is institutionally racist, sexist, and homophobic. Our work is as important as it ever has been, and we are committed to build on the platform that has been created and continue the fight into the next decade.

Earlier this week, Becky, an EqualiTeach Youth Education Officer shared that she was sitting at the station waiting for her train home after a day working with young people, when she heard a pupil excitedly telling his parents all that he had learnt in his EqualiTeach workshop that day. It's moments such as those that remind us that the work that we are doing touches people's lives and makes positive change, and we are extremely proud to have reached this important milestone of a decade of creating moments of change every day. Please enjoy this journey through the highlights of EqualiTeach's work in the last decade. We hope that it inspires you in your own drive for equality, diversity and inclusion.

Best wishes, Sarah Soyei and Kate Hollinshead



## **Getting Started**

"Do you know what? We should set up our own equality training and consultancy organisation."

It started off as just another late-night chat in a Birmingham hotel room.

Our jobs had seen us share hotel rooms in places as far apart as Glasgow and the Isle of Wight and there was no reason to think that this chat was any more significant than the time that we had decided to open a bohemian coffee shop or the time that we were going to set up a self-sufficient commune on a remote island. However, this chat seemed to stick and we decided that spending some evenings brainstorming some ideas wouldn't hurt.

The plan began to look less like a fantasy and more a possibility. We created an optimistic three-year business plan and spoke with banks, friends and grant providers to accrue £26,000 of start-up funds, before officially beginning work at Sarah's dining room table in September 2013. We had six months to make the organisation financially viable.

We set ourselves weekly financial targets, and celebrated every booking, every positive email, every phone call returned. Slowly but surely, we could feel others understand and engage with our vision, believing that EqualiTeach was the organisation to help them to create equal, diverse and inclusive environments where everyone feels safe, valued and able to succeed.



In Spring 2014, with thanks to Daniel Sullivan and Yvette Thomas at Buckinghamshire County Council, we won our first large contract; a real turning point for the organisation. The contract involved delivering critical thinking workshops in secondary schools in High Wycombe, funded by Wycombe District Council. We designed critical thinking workshops and delivered 33 workshops across five secondary schools over the course of a year. This was the start of our Think!, Second Thoughts! and Rethink! workshop programme which has since been delivered in 18 local authorities across England to over 94,500 young people in subsequent years.

"I have been working with EqualiTeach since 2014. The feedback from pupils and teachers has been amazing. Their work helps young people see the world from a different, and more positive perspective. EqualiTeach first started working in secondary schools and their workshops were independently reviewed and found to be outstanding. So much so, that they were requested to develop similar programmes for primary schools." Daniel Sullivan, Wycombe District Council



According to an external evaluation report on our Critical Thinking Programme, 99% of teachers agree or strongly agree that after the workshop, young people better empathise with, and respect, difference and diversity.

5,332

adults have taken part in our Critical Thinking training programmes

97,705

young people have attended our Critical Thinking workshops

## **Building Relationships**

No man... or organisation... is an island, and a large part of EqualiTeach's success over the last 10 years has been down to working closely with others.

Trade Unions have been a part of EqualiTeach's story from the very beginning. Our very first delivery was at a conference for the then Association of Teachers and Lecturers. Back in 2014, Voice the Union partnered with us to co-fund a programme of anti-racism training for those working in the Early Years together with the Big Lottery, and we have worked with the NEU developing joint guidance on issues and providing training at both regional and national levels. Special mention should go to the NASUWT with whom we have worked on many different projects throughout the years.

Linking through networks such as Equally Ours, Diverse Educators and the Anti-Bullying Alliance and with other organisations working in the same space as us such as Diversity Role Models and the Anne Frank Trust, has provided us with a support network when times are difficult, an opportunity to learn from others and an opportunity to create joined up thinking and a collective voice when speaking on issues of equality.

Over the last ten years, we have had partnerships with over 30 local authorities, with great thanks to Buckinghamshire County Council in particular with whom we have worked with on programmes of workshops for young people, staff training, Model United Nations events, Agents for Change events and the production of educational resources. They even linked us up with colleagues in France and Spain to produce a resource which would support schools in all three countries to work with young people on controversial issues.

"The quality of the work produced by the team is exemplar.

The work EqualiTeach does has a positive impact on teachers who go back to the classroom equipped with the tools to engage with diverse groups of students. Students receive thought-provoking and informative sessions which build their confidence to navigate the world in which we live." Yvette Thomas, School Improvement Manager, Buckinghamshire County Council

There have been the schools that we have worked with for many years such as Goldington Green Academy and TASIS to name a couple, where we have seen their equality work grow and develop across the years, starting with workshops for young people, staff training, to the development of EDI advisors and creating systemic change.

It has been a privilege to support this change at Trust level with trusts such as The Aquinas Trust, King Edward VI MAT and the River Learning Trust, where the drive for equality, diversity and inclusion from the top has provided a foundation where all Trust schools have been able to strengthen their policies, recruitment, curriculum and ability to recognise and respond to incidents.

In more recent times, it has been an honour to sponsor the APPG for Race Equality in Education to influence and inform government to promote equality, diversity and inclusion

"EqualiTeach has throughout decision-making."

"I would definitely recommend EqualiTeach as both a partner organisation and trainer. Their work is up-to-date, inclusive, and of high quality. The team listen to your needs and partner with you to provide a first-class and bespoke learning experience." Jason Tait, Director of Pastoral Care, TASIS

"EqualiTeach has provided training to our teacher and headteacher members for a number of years. EqualiTeach has positively changed hearts and minds by educating school staff and young people on the importance of equality, challenging injustice and all forms of hate. We look forward to continuing our working relationship for many years to come." Jennifer Moses, National Official (Equality & Training), NASUWT

#### **Staff Team**

Two and half years after the start of EqualiTeach came a large milestone in our history. After working with a number of facilitators on a sessional basis, we recruited our first official employee in January 2016, Rachel Elitty, who I'm delighted to say is still an employee today! We are now a staff team of 20, with people in a variety of roles and distinct departments which have developed as the organisation has responded to demand and need. We are grateful to all of the staff who have worked with us and then left for pastures new, as well as those who are a part of the organisation today; from those who organise stationery deliveries to those delivering challenging training content, from those who create and manage sales to those who provide spaces for the team to reflect on their practice and look after their wellbeing; every task contributes to the smooth, effective running of a small and busy team, meaning that we can work towards our vision and mission every day.

Working in this field comes with challenges, particularly for those who are delivering workshops and training on aspects of their own identities, and so health and wellbeing of staff is a priority for EqualiTeach. Across the years, we have developed a

number of initiatives,
including an internal
Ethnicity Discrimination
Support Group and
Queer Support and
Alliance Group, to allow
staff to reflect on and share
their experiences; access to
a number of therapists, some with

lived experience of discrimination; regular wellbeing checks through supervisions and team meetings; and reporting mechanism after each delivery, so that issues can be flagged and further support provided to staff where necessary.

ome to The Blue School

The success of EqualiTeach must also be attributed in no small way to our Advisory Board, who have consistently provided invaluable advice and guidance; have celebrated the successes and helped to navigate the losses; and have ensured that EqualiTeach stays true to its aims and values throughout all of its operations.

"I think my favourite thing about working for EqualiTeach is when you get to see the positive impact of the work that we are doing; when people are excited to implement change, when an organisation tells you that they can tangibly feel the difference in their workplace, or when a young person says that they feel seen and listened to. That's a tonic that keeps me going every day." EqualiTeach staff member

"EqualiTeach is the best place I have ever worked. I loved the variety on offer with different projects, the scope to develop, the great internal culture and passion for the work." Former EqualiTeach staff member

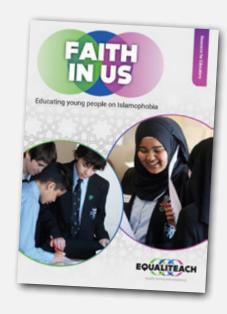


## **Empowering Young People**

In 2017, we secured funding from the government's Hate Crime Communities Fund to deliver a programme of work with young people in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. This innovative programme empowered 38 young people from eight primary and secondary schools from across the borough to become Agents for Change. Through the programme they developed their understanding of Islamophobia and shared their own experiences. They were then equipped with the confidence, skills and knowledge to investigate the issues in their schools and implement strategies to tackle Islamophobic bullying and ensure targets are well supported. They went on to create more robust reporting mechanisms; to deliver workshops and assemblies to peers and staff; and to make educational films.

Click or scan the QR codes to watch the thoughtprovoking films created by Agents for Change students to help tackle Islamophobia. The Agents for Change also contributed lesson ideas and activities to EqualiTeach's Faith in Us resource, which is a comprehensive and practical guide to challenging Islamophobia in schools.





This programme heralded the start of our wider Agents for Change programmes, which have since been delivered in over 150 schools across the country on a large variety of topics such as critical thinking, identity-based bullying, gender and race equality. Alongside these programmes, we have a comprehensive and ever-expanding suite of workshops with young people. Our dedicated workshops team develop, deliver and refine workshops throughout the year, and the past 10 years have seen the offer expand across all areas of equality. We have a suite of workshops for young people aged 7-18, which we tailor and adapt to allow us to meet individual learner's needs and to work in alternative provisions alongside mainstream schools. Our workshops remain a hugely popular offering, with our team delivering 346 workshops last financial year alone.

- Our workshops create a safe space for young people to talk about difficult issues, ensuring that everyone remains valued and included throughout the session.
- Workshops are learner led and participatory allowing learners the opportunity to explore ideas and information for themselves in a positive, engaging environment.
- Throughout our work, we seek to empower learners with the knowledge and confidence to take active steps to make positive change in their settings and communities.



## **Empowering Adults**

EqualiTeach empowers adults to promote equality, diversity and inclusion; educate others; and tackle prejudice and discrimination. One of the ways we fulfill this aim is by providing bespoke training and consultancy support to organisations across the country. Over the past 10 years we have adapted and tailored our training to an exciting variety of organisations across varying sectors including housing associations, the National Trust, local authorities, museums, media and communication agencies, football associations, dance and circus training organisations, as well as a huge variety of education settings.

One of our first major contracts outside of education was with National Museums Liverpool, in which we delivered a set of training events for their entire staff and volunteer team of over 900 participants.

"The session gave us an overview of what's acceptable, what's not, focussed on our sector and NML in practice." Training participant, National Museums Liverpool

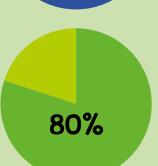
Our training sessions cover a wide range of equality, diversity and inclusion topics, from broad introductory sessions, training on equality legislation and exploring terminology, to deeper dives on topics such as unconscious bias, racism, sexism and homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. Training can be tailored to specific teams, such as a senior management team, teaching staff or Governors or Trustees.

These topics can be emotive and controversial, so we create a safe space in which people are able to raise concerns. We adopt a non-judgemental, non-confrontational, open and honest approach to training. We ensure that our training provides plenty of opportunity for people to interact, discuss issues and develop proactive approaches to create change. Our overarching aim is to inspire people to further develop their understanding after our intervention has ended and to implement their learning in practice. Since then, we have developed large scale programmes of work with several local authorities, including Surrey County Council, Oxford City Council and all seven authorities in the Liverpool City Region, alongside bespoke programmes for organisations such as the London FA and the Police Uplift Programme.



"Really good and informative course. Course co-ordinators have a really easy and inclusive style and I felt so comfortable in being able to share experiences and thoughts. It really is a positive course to attend." Training participant, Surrey County Council





85%

85% of participants in our training for noneducational settings felt highly confident or very highly confident to challenge microaggressions and prejudice after the session, compared with 24.5% before the training.

80% of managers in our training for noneducational settings felt highly confident or very highly confident to engage in inclusive recruitment practices after the session, compared with 20% before the training.

"A really useful session. very clearly presented, good pace and interesting content." Training participant, London Borough of Merton

#### **Capacitating Senior Leaders**

One of EqualiTeach's core aims is to capacitate senior leaders to embed equality, diversity and inclusion through policy and practice.

There is no one solution that will suit all schools, so over the years we have developed a range of bespoke consultancy packages. This has included:

- Working with schools and organisations to review their equality, diversity and inclusion policies, providing clear and actionable recommendations and corresponding equality impact assessments.
- Supporting schools and organisations to develop robust procedures, for example, on how to respond to prejudicerelated incidents.
- Working in partnership with senior leadership teams to develop SMART equality objectives with accompanying action plans.
- Undertaking consultations and research in schools and workplaces and reporting on our findings, providing key data to inform future approaches.

Empowering leaders can also take the form of developing and delivering tailored train-the-trainer programmes, ensuring a long-term approach to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion, beyond our intervention, and upskilling team members to drive this important work.

"The friendly and supportive consultation team helped us enormously in developing a framework of related policies and procedures, which aided us optimising our processes, ensuring we were compliant with the latest legislation and which reassured and provided clarity to our staff." Business and Culture Manager, social inclusion charity

hours of consultancy to schools and organisations

In 2018, EqualiTeach was thrilled to be contacted by Professor Chris Derrington who was looking for an organisation to take over her accreditation programme for schools, the Equalities Award. The Award is an online auditing tool providing schools with the opportunity to review, build on and celebrate their work on equality, diversity and inclusion.

100%
of schools
surveyed would
recommend the
Equalities Award

After acquiring the Award in 2018, EqualiTeach undertook a consultation with schools to explore how to best update and strengthen the Award.

The Equalities Award by EqualiTeach features Bronze, Silver and Gold levels, which allows schools to work towards the level that suits them and build on their commitment to equality over time. Schools are given access to a host of materials to support them on their Award journey and have the dedicated support of an Award Representative who has individual meetings with each school and provides them with tailored feedback as they work towards their Award.

The programme has now supported over 200 schools throughout the UK and beyond!

"I thoroughly enjoyed using the Equalities Award as a way to check and to improve our provision and practice. The help we had from the team was great, and the feedback was always very constructive and positive. Gaining the Equalities Award Gold has been something that our whole school community has been very proud of." Arbury Primary School



\*Schools awarded from November 2018 to February 2023.

## **Whole-Organisation Change**

Since EqualiTeach's inception, our goal has been to be able to create long-lasting and meaningful change for schools and organisations to equip them to promote equality, diversity and inclusion throughout their practice and create settings where everyone feels safe and able to succeed.

However, the nature of funding and enquiries in the early years of EqualiTeach meant that often our involvement was often limited to one-off interventions, which are much needed, but people can often hit barriers after our intervention has ended; maybe the policies aren't there, senior leadership is not on board, or they lack the time or resources to implement their learning effectively.

From day one, we applied for support to be able to work with people on a longer-term basis and saw success in obtaining funding to create educational resources such as Outside the Box which provides a whole-school approach to promoting gender equality and tackling sexism and sexual harassment, which we were able to create thanks to funding from the

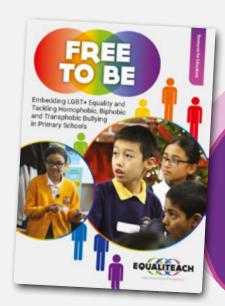
Rosa Foundation. Taking on the Equalities Award from Chris Derrington in 2018 meant that we had a brilliant vehicle by which schools could work with us over 18 months to benchmark and showcase their equality practice.





Another key milestone in our drive to be able to create this meaningful change was in 2019 when we secured funding from Government Equalities Office to run our Free to Be Programme with 30 primary schools across London. A key requirement for schools to take part in the programme was that they had done little or no work in this area before. The funding allowed us to work with the schools for a whole year, reviewing and updating policies, auditing practice, creating action plans and delivering whole staff training. The impact of having such a long period to work with the schools was incredible, and the good practice developed led to our Free to Be resource.

Since 2019, we have hugely expanded this offer of tailored, long-term support for both schools and organisations. Our consultancy packages range from providing materials to allow organisations to consult with their communities and undertake a self-evaluation, to creating new policies and undertaking focus groups and semi-structured interviews to undertake a deep-dive into an organisation's strengths and weaknesses with on-hand support to drive this work forward.



"We have been so impressed by and grateful for EqualiTeach's support and guidance. They have clarified, galvanised and accelerated the progress of the good steps we have been making and, most importantly, inspired reality and action-based conversations amongst our staff. As a result, we feel much better prepared to embed and build upon the changes we have pursued so far and we believe that these changes and the broadened perspectives they stem from have a very good chance of being maintained and enriched as a result." Free to Be school lead, SIAL School



## **Adapting Our Approach**

The challenges of 2020 are widely known; the Coronavirus pandemic and subsequent lockdowns saw schools and organisations closed and people working from home, but also saw a continued, if not increased, need for work on equality, diversity and inclusion.

In June 2020, three months into lockdown George Floyd was murdered by a police officer in Minneapolis and there was an immediate eruption of outrage, anger and desire for change. Schools and organisations were reaching out, seeking to develop their understanding of racism and their skills and confidence in promoting race equality and tackling racism in all its forms.

It was clear that in order for EqualiTeach to weather the pandemic, continue working towards our mission, and provide support and guidance to all the people reaching out to us for help, we'd need to adapt to a new way of delivering our work and operating more widely as an organisation.

Following research into the most effective and appropriate solutions, we began rolling out our online offer. This included live

online staff training sessions delivered via Zoom, pre-recorded workshops for young people to complete at home or school, and interactive e-learning courses for educators, parents and carers.

As the world began to re-open, we found that our new online offer continued to provide effective alternatives to face-to-face delivery of our work. Online delivery has enabled us to provide support to organisations whose teams are spread out at various locations, to schools in remote areas who may not have the budget for costly transport, and even to schools and organisations abroad.

This hybrid approach keeps us learning, adapting and really tailoring our solutions to our clients, and has ultimately led to the development of our brand new online subscription service, EqualiTeach

Empowered.

"Very informative. Best online CPD I've had – thanks to the surveys and breakout rooms. Sheza (facilitator) was terrific too." Online training participant, Kent

#### Since 2020 we have:

- Delivered 1,979 hours of online content (training and prerecorded workshops)
- 2,100 accounts on our e-learning platform
- Delivered online training to 13,927 participants
- Delivered online or pre-recorded workshops to 15,180 young people

"Thank you for creating a great virtual workshop! The workshops helped create a positive discussion to which the children were keen to contribute." Teacher presenting EqualiTeach's pre-recorded workshop, Southwark

"It's been great that you've been delivering online and moved/adapted your session to this platform so quickly - thank you." Online training participant, Enfield

## **Expanding Our Reach**

2021 began a period of rapid expansion and change for EqualiTeach. Over the next 18 months, the staff team doubled in size; sales of workshops, training and Equalities Awards all rapidly increased; and we took on large-scale, long-term projects to effect change nationwide.

In September 2021, we received funding from the Department for Education to deliver a three-year long programme of work with 240 schools across England, helping them to prevent and tackle identity-based bullying. The programme, entitled Equally Safe, is comprehensive, ensuring that all stakeholders are consulted and engaged in bolstering each school's anti-bullying practice. The programme involves EqualiTeach working with schools to; conduct a baseline assessment of their anti-bullying practice; review policies and procedures; upskill young people as Agents for Change ambassadors; and improve staff knowledge and confidence in effectively recognising and responding to prejudice and identity-based bullying.

160 schools have already been part of the programme, which has received extremely positive feedback about the meaningful change it has created.

"Your training sessions and materials have been really accessible and useful. The Agents for Change day was brilliant and the students loved it. Guidance on policies has also been super helpful. We've made loads of positive changes as a result." Thomas Pole, Associate Principal, Tudor Grange Academy Solihull

As we further explored routes to empower as many people as possible to create meaningful change, the directors of EqualiTeach, Kate Hollinshead and Sarah Soyei, were approached by Jessica Kingsley Publishers to write a book on promoting race equality and tackling racism in schools. More than Words was published in September 2022 and is a culmination of their years of work on equality in education and the experiences and testimonies of those who participated in the research process and the review of the final product. Our hope is that this book provides a practical tool giving educators across the UK a solid understanding of the

issues of race inequality in schools, with examples of good practice that will equip people to undertake this work more effectively in their settings. All proceeds from sales of More than Words go to EqualiTeach's Investing in the Future fund.

"This book is a vital tool for empowering teachers to be comfortable in having conversations about race and racism in the school environment and also has strategies for challenging the cause of systemic racism." Jennifer Moses, National Official (Equality and Training), NASUWT

programmes that we are most proud of is a comprehensive programme of anti-racism training with staff across all seven local authorities of the Liverpool city region, which we embarked on in June 2022. By the end of the initial phase of the programme, 1,500 council staff members from across Liverpool will have benefitted from in-depth anti-racism training, looking at a wide range of topics including how to effectively challenge inappropriate language and prejudice-related attitudes and behaviours; how to prevent and manage discriminatory incidents; and how staff can undertake effective conversations on race and ethnicity, become active bystanders and allies and raise issues.

Our work outside education has also grown. One of the



"The session was really good, I felt I learnt a lot and it is going to be a huge support within the division as we move forward. Our tutor was first class. Thank you for the opportunity, I will be looking to develop some further work around equality in my business plan for next year." Tony McDonagh, Business Operations Manager, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

#### **Investing in the Future**

2023 has seen EqualiTeach further extend its reach towards helping as many organisations as possible with their equalities work.

Firstly, we have further developed our offering with the launch of EqualiTeach Empowered, an online subscription service empowering schools with the tools, skills and confidence to embed equality throughout their school. We know from schools that there is often a great desire and motivation to improve equality, diversity and inclusion work, but that this can be hindered by being unsure of where to start, a lack of resources, budget constraints and busy workloads.

EqualiTeach Empowered provides schools with access to a huge range of equality, diversity and inclusion resources, guidance and support so school teams can make positive change at a pace that is right for them. Thanks to the Enterprise Development Fund for their support in setting up this service.

Secondly, we formally launched the Investing in the Future Fund and have already provided workshops free of charge to a school in Liverpool as a result of the Fund.

Over the years, we have recognised that schools, particularly those in deprived areas, are not always in the financial position to pay for crucial equality work alongside other necessities.

Therefore 10% of the fees charged for workplace training, as well as all proceeds from the sales of More than Words, are ringfenced to provide services free of charge for schools, including workshops for children and young people.

"The workshop was excellent. I liked the honest answers from the facilitators and the open discussion; all children were comfortable enough to share thoughts/questions.

The case studies were age appropriate." Staff feedback, Investing in the Future Fund School



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