

## THE LAUNCH OF CHILDREN'S BOOK "IF RACISM VANISHED FOR A DAY..."

Congratulations to Year 7 students at Fairfield High School for their contribution towards the moving children's book 'If Racism Vanished for a Day', which was researched whilst in their latter years at May Park Primary School. Researchers at the University of the West of England (UWE) worked with a number of young people to amplify the lived experiences of racism, successfully conveying this in a respectful, beautiful and tangible way.

The first funded project of its kind to actually ask children's experiences of racism (rather than just assuming them), the results showed many could recall racism from a young age; not surprisingly this has had an impact on their mental health and contentment within society as a whole.

**"WE MADE THIS BOOK BECAUSE RACISM IS NOT OKAY, AND WE WANT PEOPLE TO UNDERSTAND THE WAY IT AFFECTS US. OUR BOOK IS ABOUT WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE IF RACISM VANISHED FOR A DAY, AND WE HOPE THAT READING IT WILL HELP PEOPLE THINK ABOUT HOW THEY CAN CHANGE WHAT THEY DO. RACISM IS A REALLY BIG DEAL. IT SHOULDN'T HAVE EXISTED IN THE FIRST PLACE."**

**You can read the book and find out more here: [respectprojectbristol.org](https://respectprojectbristol.org)**

Using body maps to encourage the sharing of feelings (so that young people were able to express how racism made them feel) it was made clear they were the experts. Focus groups and pre and post surveys to check wellbeing, a substantial amount of research was collated. Only at this point were the research team in a position to channel everyone's hard work into a book, which can be used primarily by teachers to empathise, educate, promote discussion and positive change.

One of the research team shared their personal experiences of working on this project: "The team were unprepared for the high levels of emotion felt when talking to children about their subject. It was very raw

and very real. The challenge then lay in portraying this in a positive way, hence coming up with concept of how they would feel if racism were to vanish."

A proud parent adds: **"The launch of this book is an emotional time. My daughter, together with all the children involved can now take a step back, hold the book in their hands and feel incredibly proud of their honesty and contribution."**



Fairfield High School students Sade, Mariam, Anaya and Julia.