

TEACHERS FORUM REPORT JULY 2024

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INTRODUCTION

The Teachers Forum was created as a collaborative space for educators, administrators, policymakers, council members, and all those involved in education, to co-design and implement creative innovative approaches to teaching Black British history in schools across Wales. Kumbukumbu's (a project under SSAP) Teachers Forum aims to enrich the curriculum through creative workshops and lessons, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of Black British heritage in Wales.

This report presents the insights and findings gathered from participants of the 1st Teachers Forum, held in July 2024.

“*It has been great and inspiring to SSAP and especially the Kumbukumbu team to see how teachers are engaging with the project and seeing the potential impact of it within schools and communities at large.*”

Fadhili Maghiya- SSAP CEO



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THE SUMMARY

The group discussed the lack of Black history teaching in schools and the causes behind this. The group emphasised the need for more inclusive learning environments which included meaningful Black history learning experiences. The group shared insights on teaching strategies, professional development, and the significance of establishing a shared purpose for learning. The importance of collaboration, use of technology, and the use of community-based resources were raised.

LACK OF RESOURCES

Participants discussed that teachers often lack confidence and knowledge to effectively teach Black history, due to a lack of accessible, age-appropriate resources and initial teacher training on the topic. Lack of educational resources available in Welsh also mentioned.

LACK OF DIVERSITY IN CURRICULUM DESIGN

The participants noted that curriculum designers and school leaders are often from a white majority background, which can lead to a lack of representation and prioritisation of Black history and perspectives.

UNCONSCIOUS BIASES

Even in diverse schools, there can be unconscious biases and a reluctance to fully engage with and reflect on Black history and its importance for all students.

PRIORITISATION CHALLENGES

Schools have many competing priorities, and Black history may not be seen as a top priority compared to other curriculum demands. There are challenges in getting Black history education to be viewed as an important and necessary part of the curriculum.

71%
OF PARTICIPANTS
WEREN'T AWARE OF
**BLACK HISTORY
RESOURCES**
RELATING TO
THEIR LOCAL AREA

PERSPECTIVES ON UNCONSCIOUS BIAS, CULTURAL DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSIVITY IN EDUCATION.

Participants observed the following under this heading...

1

Embedding education to reduce prejudice

The participants acknowledged the need and importance of embedding Black history education to reduce racial prejudice.

2

Reluctance to engage with diverse perspectives

Even in diverse schools, there can be a reluctance to fully engage with and reflect on Black history and its importance for all students.

3

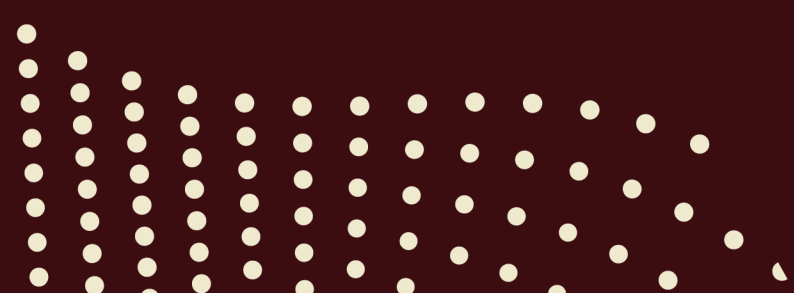
Importance of representation and multiple perspectives

Participants emphasised the need for inclusive and diverse resources that addressed colonialism and slavery.

4

Participants emphasised the need for inclusive and diverse resources that addressed colonialism and slavery.

One participant mentioned the importance of international exchanges through an educational lens. However, they had observed that when teachers and students from Wales visited Lesotho, some exhibited privileged behaviour that did not align with the organisation's values. This highlighted the need to address unconscious bias and promote more inclusive practices.



LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN TEACHING BLACK HISTORY IN SCHOOLS.

Participants observed the following under this heading...

1

Desire to teach, but need for support:

Participants acknowledged that teachers generally want to teach Black history, but they need more resources, guidance, and support to do so confidently and effectively.

2

Concerns about delivering it "the right way"

There was a sense that teachers may be hesitant to teach Black history if they are not sure they can do it in a way that is accurate, sensitive, and meaningful for students.

3

Lack of knowledge and experience

Participants noted that teachers often lack confidence in teaching new subjects or topics, such as Black history, due to a lack of knowledge or prior experience with the subject matter.

4

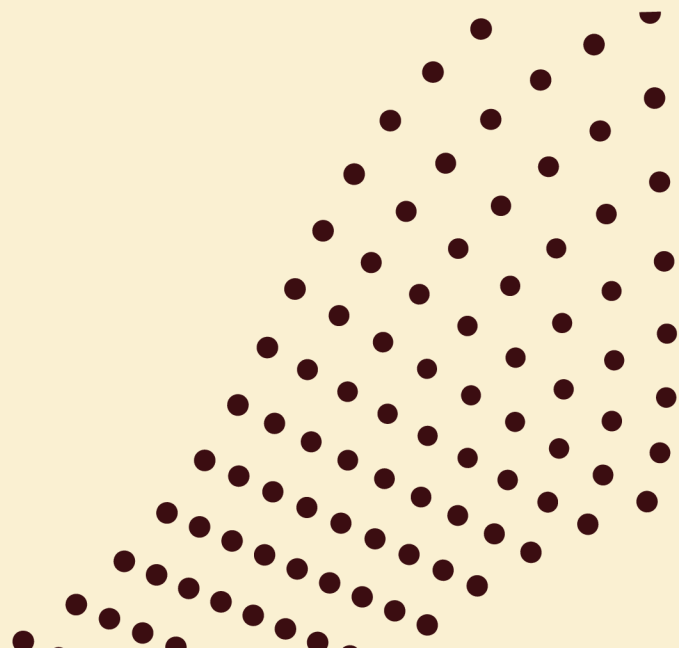
Feeling unprepared

The participants felt that teachers don't necessarily have the resources or training to teach Black history effectively, leading to a lack of confidence.

5

Prioritisation challenges

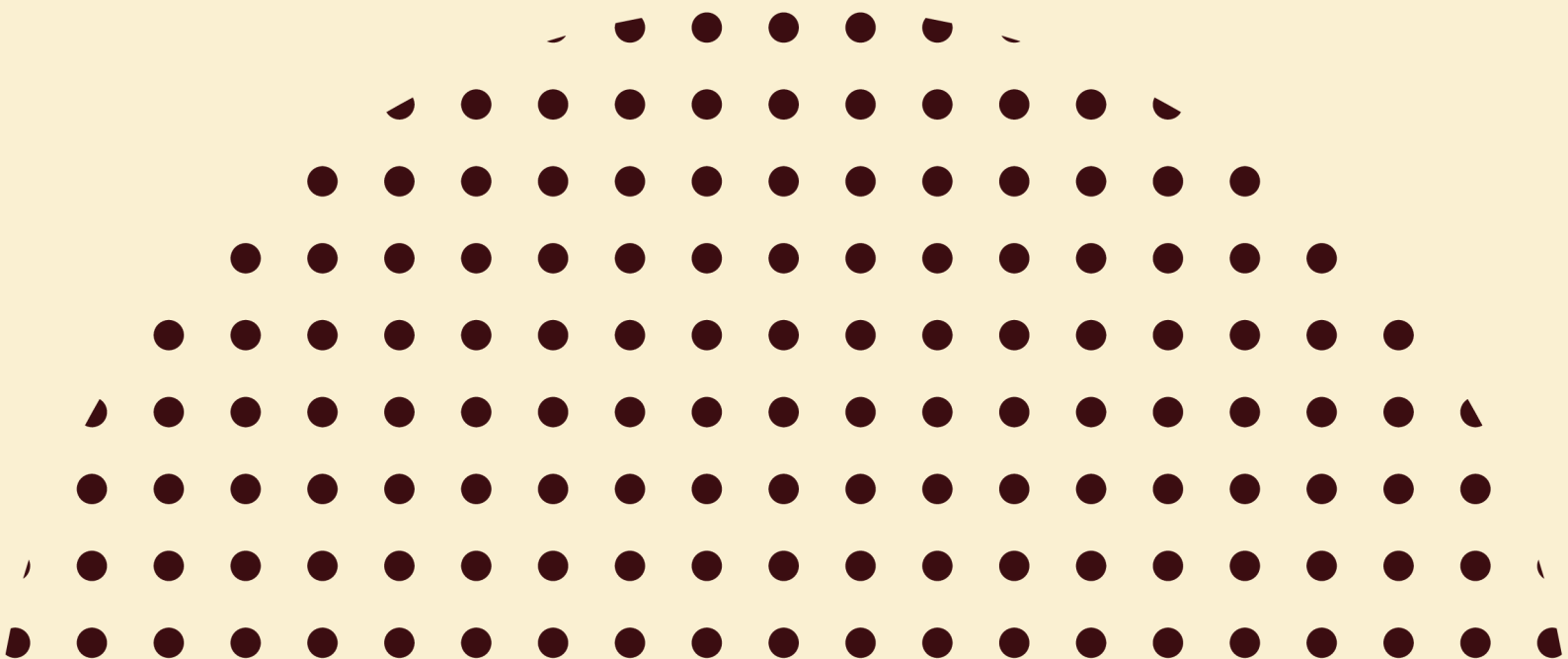
With many competing priorities in schools, Black history may not be seen as a top priority, making teachers less inclined to invest time and effort into developing their confidence in teaching it.



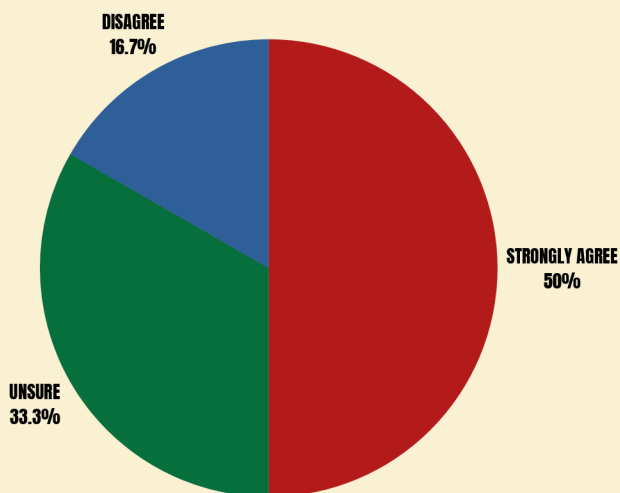
SURVEY

The (7) participants were asked the following questions relating to Black history in school:

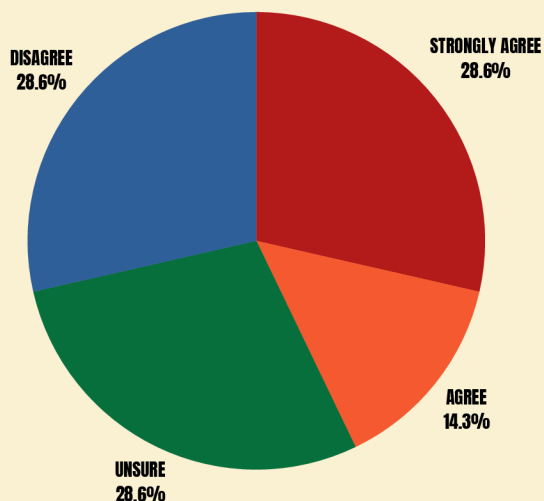
- **Comfort level with language related to Black history:** Participants were asked to rate their comfort level with using language related to Black history sources. This aimed to assess their familiarity and ease with discussing the topic.
- **Access to Black history resources:** The survey asked about the participants' access to and use of Black history-related resources, which could indicate the availability and quality of such materials.
- **Comfort with exploring Black history:** Participants were asked to rate their comfort level in taking a creative approach to exploring aspects of Black history in their teaching and learning.
- **Organisational support for Black history:** The survey included a question about whether participants felt supported by their school or organisation to deliver Black history content, which could reveal the level of institutional prioritisation and resources dedicated to this area.
- **Willingness to engage with local community to explore Black history:** The final question aimed to gauge the participants' overall comfort and openness to incorporating Black history into their work, which could inform the need for further training, resources, or advocacy.



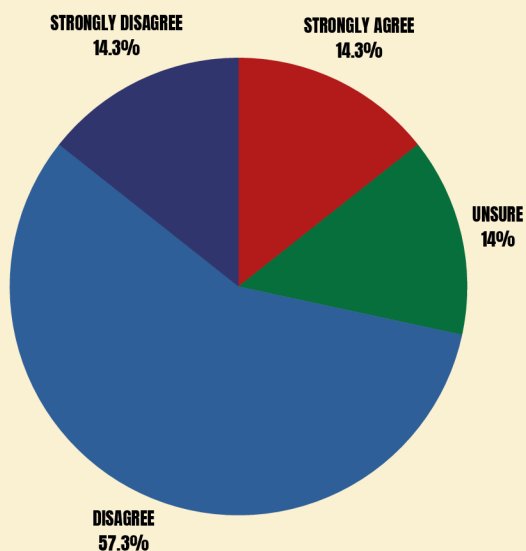
I AM COMFORTABLE WORKING WITH PEOPLE IN MY LOCAL COMMUNITY TO EXPLORE BLACK HISTORY



I AM COMFORTABLE IN MY USE OF LANGUAGE RELATING TO BLACK HISTORY

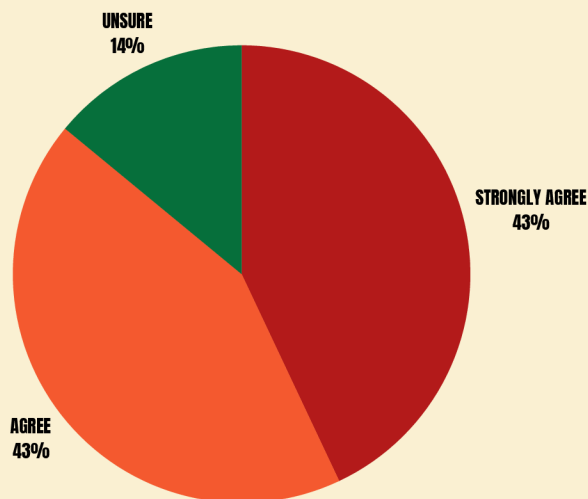


I AM AWARE OF BLACK HISTORY RESOURCES RELATING TO MY LOCAL AREA

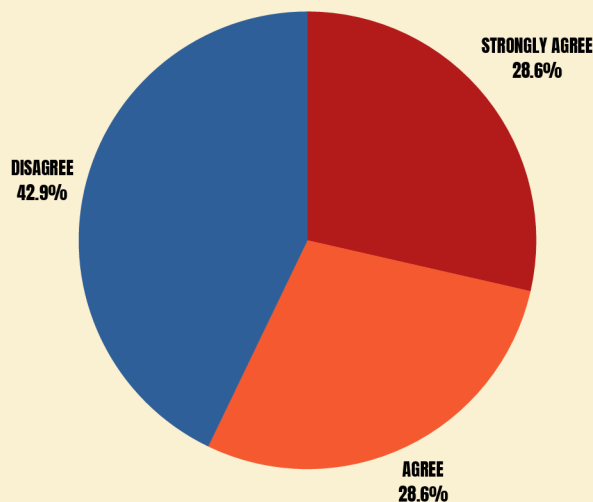


SURVEY RESULTS

I AM COMFORTABLE TAKING A "CREATIVE APPROACH" INTO EXPLORING ASPECTS OF BLACK HISTORY



I FEEL SUPPORTED BY MY SCHOOL/ORGANISATION TO EXPLORE/DELIVER BLACK HISTORY



LANGUAGE, CULTURAL SENSITIVITY, AND FUNDING CHALLENGES IN EDUCATION.

Participants observed the following under this heading...

1

Terminology and language use

There was a discussion around using more inclusive and culturally sensitive language such as "global majority". Acronyms like EAL (English as an additional language) felt pejorative.

2

Lack of resources in Welsh

Lack of educational resources concerning Black history available in the Welsh language.

3

Prioritising diverse perspectives

Participants emphasised the importance of valuing diversity in the classroom, including cultural, disability, and personal experiences, as a key element of great teaching and learning.

4

Inclusive curriculum design

The discussion underscored the need for resources and curriculum design that are inclusive, accurate, and representative of diverse backgrounds and experiences, particularly when addressing topics like colonialism and slavery.

5

Co-production with diverse communities

Participants highlighted the value of co-producing resources and learning experiences with diverse communities to ensure authenticity and relevance.

6

Challenges for teachers in Wales

Teachers in Wales face challenges accessing resources and funding for curriculum projects, which can impact their ability to incorporate diverse perspectives and cultural content effectively.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

Participants observed the following under this heading...

- **Identifying barriers and understanding needs:** The group discussed the importance of identifying barriers and coming up with questions to better understand the needs of the participants.
- **Shared sense of purpose and reflective teaching:** Participants emphasised the significance of creating a shared sense of purpose and reflecting on one's teaching practices to improve the learning experience.
- **Balancing knowledge transfer and curiosity-driven learning:** Participants highlighted the significance of creating engaging conversations and meaningful communication. The discussion touched on the difference between knowledge transfer and curiosity-driven learning, with a focus on ensuring inclusivity and representation.
- **Meaningful experiences and authentic contexts:** The group discussed the importance of connecting with learners through hands-on activities and authentic, real-world contexts, rather than relying solely on passive learning.
- **Holistic learning, creativity, and critical thinking:** The new college curriculum was mentioned as emphasising a more holistic approach to learning, including creativity, critical thinking, and authentic contexts.
- **Valuing diversity in the classroom:** Participants emphasised the importance of valuing diversity in the classroom, including cultural, disability, and personal experiences, as a crucial element of great teaching and learning.
- **Finding common elements and facilitating discussion:** The importance of identifying common elements among the learners' priorities and facilitating a group discussion around them.
- **Connecting with learners:** The overall discussion underscored the need for teaching strategies that prioritise meaningful connections with students, valuing their diverse backgrounds and experiences.

RESOURCES FOR TEACHING BLACK HISTORY IN EDUCATION.

Participants were asked to consider what new resources for teaching Black History should look and feel like, and how they can be designed to be useful in various settings.

- **Inclusive and representative resources:** Participants highlighted the importance of creating inclusive and diverse resources that accurately reflect the experiences of Black communities that are co-produced with diverse stakeholders.
- **Signposting and providing contemporary relevance:** The group discussed the value of resources that provide factual information but also help teachers connect Black history to contemporary issues and experiences, acting as a "map" to guide inquiry-based learning.
- **Addressing colonialism and slavery:** There was a strong emphasis on the importance of inclusive and diverse resources that address topics like colonialism and slavery, providing a more accurate and comprehensive understanding.
- **Aggregating local history and culture resources:** Suggestions were made to create a resource that compiles information on local history and culture, making it more accessible for teachers to incorporate into their lessons.
- **Age-appropriate resources and training for teachers:** Participants noted that teachers often lack confidence and knowledge to effectively teach Black history due to a lack of accessible, age-appropriate resources and initial teacher training on the topic.
- **Prioritising Black history curriculum development at FE level:** There was an emphasis on the need for the new college curriculum to prioritise the development of resources and learning experiences focused on Black history, culture, and perspectives.
- **Advocacy and support from organisations:** Participants mentioned that support from organisations like [DARPL](#) could help the development of anti-racist resources for schools. The importance of other advocacy groups such as Show Racism the Red Card was also mentioned.
- **Positive representation:** Participants stressed the need to ensure positive representation across all subject areas.

Black History Month Workshops:

We want to connect with schools or settings that may be interested in having a creative Black history session in October led by one of our artists. If you are interested please contact hannah.ringane@ssap.org.uk or robert.oros@ssap.org.uk.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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- **Heritage Fund in Partnership with the Welsh Government**

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THANK YOU

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