

28th October 2022

Anti-Racism and Online Safeguarding

Dear colleague,

Over the past month, you may be aware that several education professionals and learners have experienced racist abuse on Twitter. Alongside this abuse, there appears to be a rise of extremist conspiracy theories appearing online, including [white genocide and replacement theory](#). Such white supremacist fears are increasingly arising online as a direct response to anti-racist efforts and the normalisation of diversity in Scottish education.

It has also come to our attention that some of the offenders are being directed and organised by YouTube videos that are targeting certain individuals, organisations and the [Building Racial Literacy](#) professional learning programme. We have reported this to the police, however we would advise you to be vigilant. **Please [inform us](#) if you believe you, your colleagues or your learners are receiving abuse as a result of your participation in the Building Racial Literacy programme.**

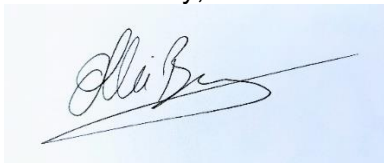
Many educators use Twitter as a platform to share good practice, spread learning and celebrate success. We won't let racism stop us and we will continue to use [#EdScotBRL](#) to celebrate and share the learning from the Building Racial Literacy programme on Twitter.

However, based on our recent experiences and advice from the [TIE campaign](#), who have had to deal with similar incidents, we have collated suggested resources and steps that individuals and/or establishments can follow if you, your colleagues or your learners experience abuse on Twitter and YouTube.

We condemn the racist narratives of these individuals focused around their beliefs about who does, and who does not, belong to Scotland and we stand in solidarity with the colleagues who were affected and the communities of St Albert's Primary school. The offenders are trying to stop us from committing to anti-racism but, in the words of Maya Angelou, still we rise.

We hope you will join us in our acknowledgment that racism is our collective problem and that anti-racism is our collective responsibility. Together, we can ensure that everyone feels safe and welcome in Scottish education.

Yours faithfully,



Ollie Bray
Strategic Director
Education Scotland

Suggested Steps When Facing Hate Crime On Twitter

Do not engage

Don't engage with whoever is posting comments and immediately report anything to your line manager.

Take Screenshots

Take screenshots of anything offensive as you will need this later if you decide to report racist hate crime to the police. It will be difficult to retrieve evidence after reporting and blocking offenders.

Report, Block and/or Mute on Twitter

You can report a comment that is abusive and harmful following this guidance: [Report a Tweet, List, or Direct Message \(twitter.com\)](#)

To prevent offenders from commenting on your posts again, you can block them so that they can no longer access your profile: [How to block accounts on Twitter](#). Please note that they will no longer be able to see your profile.

If racist comments keep appearing relentlessly and the notifications are affecting your wellbeing, you have the option of muting the conversation to prevent further notifications: [How to use advanced muting options \(twitter.com\)](#)

Change who can Reply

You might want to consider selecting the option "Change who can reply" on the post if the racist abuse persists: [About conversations on Twitter](#)

You can do this after having posted a tweet. Please note this doesn't prevent "quote retweet."

Institutional Solidarity and Condemnation of Racist Comments

Nobody should suffer from racist abuse in silence. Schools and institutions can make a difference by privately checking in with any victims and by publicly condemning racist comments. A template response is provided below and it can be adapted as appropriate:

"While there were many positive responses to our recent post on [e.g. anti-racist education], the series of racist comments that have followed prove the importance of this work. [Name of school/institution] will not tolerate any racist comments on our social media channel [and that of our colleagues/communities]."

If the racist abuse starts appearing on this post too, you may again wish to "Change who can reply" on the Tweet. Tagging in the post any partners who might also offer their support and condemnation can raise awareness of the issue.

Make your Twitter Account Private

If the racist abuse persists and is affecting your wellbeing, you have the option of privatising your account, even just temporarily. To privatise your account, please follow the instructions to protect your tweets: [How to protect and unprotect your Tweets | Twitter Help](#)

This restricts who can see your profile and tweets.

Report to the Police

You can report racist Twitter comments as hate crime to Police Scotland.

It is recognised that the process of reporting can be emotionally challenging, especially for a victim of racism suffering from racial trauma. Victims will be offered support from Victim Support Scotland, they have staff who are able to explain the process if necessary and provide support as appropriate. Their support helpline number is 0800 1601 985 and a self-referral can be made here: [Request support - Victim Support Scotland](#)

If hate crime is having a detrimental effect on health, victims should contact their GP.

To report online hate crime, you can phone 101 to report hate crime or report online using the [Police Scotland form](#) or [third party reporting centres](#). Reporting hate crime contributes to vital hate crime data (race-related hate crime is the [most reported hate crime in Scotland](#)).

The police might ask for a full statement explaining what was racist or harmful about each tweet. For this, a collation of screenshots will be helpful.

Due to the ability of individuals to create social media accounts without verification of identity, please note that police may not be able to track offenders hiding behind fake accounts. At present, it can also be difficult to prosecute for online hate crime, however [Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003](#) is currently being [reformed](#), and should recommendations be accepted, new legislation should enable harm from online abuse to be more effectively addressed.

YouTube Privacy Complaints

For YouTube videos that have been posted about an individual sharing any information (e.g. personal social media profiles, footage from a professional learning event you delivered that was recorded without permission, and/or targeting viewers towards social media profiles), you might be able to submit a privacy complaint to YouTube and request that certain parts of the video which target a person are removed by filling in this form: <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/142443>

In some circumstances they will be able to help you, and to stop the channels targeting further abuse towards a person. If you have reported this particular instance to the police, you should retain a copy of the video as evidence.

The [Professionals Online Safety Helpline](#) is also available to anyone working with children and young people dealing with any online safety issues who may be able to provide advice.

Further Support and Resources

[Hate Online: A Guide to Responding to Online Hate Speech and Hate Crime](#)

[Hate Crime for Scotland \(nasuwt.org.uk\)](#)

<https://hatecrime.campaign.gov.uk/>

[No Hate Speech Youth Campaign Website \(coe.int\)](#)

[NASUWT | Social Media and Online Abuse of Teachers](#)

[Safeguarding - Prevent radicalisation and extremism | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

[Professionals Online Safety Helpline - UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

SLF Code of Conduct (to prevent hate crime during a live online event)



SLF Code of Conduct
2022.pdf

