

# BLACK LIVES MATTER

**ACTION PLAN  
2022 UPDATE**

**Emil  
Dale**  
ACADEMY





*Emil Dale Academy is committed to building a creative and dynamic workplace that celebrates individual differences and diversity, and treats everyone with fairness and respect.*

## **RACISM IN ALL FORMS IS ABHORRENT.**

In June 2020, following the murder of George Floyd in America and the unravelling stories surrounding police brutality and further unjustifiable murders of Black people, the Black Lives Matter movement was instrumental in uncovering the true depths of racism and privilege that exist in modern society, not just in the USA but importantly in the UK also.

Prejudice and systemic racism in drama schools was challenged in the UK. The Black Lives Matter movement encouraged students, alumni and staff to speak up about their experiences, and highlighted that all of us in the industry had our part to play in contributing to the marginalisation and oppression of Black people, their history and their futures within the industry. There was a demand that Drama Schools respond by reflecting on their processes and practices regarding Race.

## **WE HAVE BEGUN TO DO THIS, AND ARE CONTINUING TO STRIVE FOR ACTION IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:**

- Representation
- Curriculum
- Training and Education for Staff & Students
- Policies
- Student Experience
- Listening & Supporting
- Advocating



*We believe that diversity is important to enrich the training we offer at Emil Dale Academy. We believe equality is fundamental to ensuring an environment that is open, creative and progressive.*

*Emil Dale Academy faculty members meet with our student council members to evoke meaningful and honest conversation, including conversations regarding race in training and around the college. From this, we continue to put together a set of initiatives and time frames to implement, and this remains under constant review.*

Emil Dale Academy does not discriminate in practices or employment opportunities on the basis of an individual's race, colour, national or ethnic origin, religion, age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status or disability.

Emil Dale is committed to diversity at all levels: on our stage, in our audience, in our staff, and within our leadership.

**THE FOLLOWING PAGES DETAIL THE ACTIONS WE HAVE TAKEN AND INITIATIVES WE WILL BE IMPLEMENTING FOLLOWING OUR DISCUSSIONS**

# REPRESENTATION

## **ACTION**

Actively engaging and recruiting students from black and (other) under-represented backgrounds/communities.

Actively recruiting and employing staff from black and (other) under-represented backgrounds/communities.

Show a breadth of representation in our advertising to include and promote people from under-represented communities.

## **INTENT**

Emil Dale Academy is committed to and will continue to host more West End workshops/ Masterclasses within the college led by a more diverse line up of performers; this is to include our weekend school also.

Emil Dale Academy is committed to hosting more West End Workshops for Outreach Days at the college, led by a diverse line up of performers. The intention behind this is to encourage a more diverse participant pool to come to the college and experience the training at EDA, and build connections for potential future teaching faculty.

Recruiting more faculty members from black and (other) under-represented communities - starting with West End Workshop opportunities to create more connections. Heads of Department (HODs) will continue to schedule even more in-college Masterclasses with performers from more diverse backgrounds.

Outreach activities/days to take place in areas representing low participants groups.

## **WHAT HAS BEEN DONE SO FAR**

More workshops and masterclasses led by black and (other) under-represented performers are now on our Academy and part-time school timetable.

Existing black and (other) under-represented faculty members have moved into full time roles at the academy.

Masterclasses led by black and (other) under-represented performers have been and will continue to be timetabled in college.

Racism, equality and diversity policy has been developed.

## **WHAT IS IN PLANNING**

Change the Code of Conduct to include a specific section on racism, equality and diversity (issue planned for September 2022).



# CURRICULUM

## **ACTION**

Diversifying the curriculum content to include stories that educate and open up discussions on race, and lead to a wider appreciation of the contribution of black and (other) under-represented people to the musical theatre industry.

## **INTENT**

Curriculum to include more material that is written for and by black and (other) under-represented communities.

Song material - to facilitate and encourage conversations with singing teachers in regards to appropriate song choices, including determining what is suitable material to learn.

## **WHAT HAS BEEN DONE SO FAR**

More workshops and masterclasses led by black and (other) under-represented performers are now on our Academy and part-time school timetable and will continue to be.

Existing black and (other) under-represented faculty members have moved into full time roles at the academy.

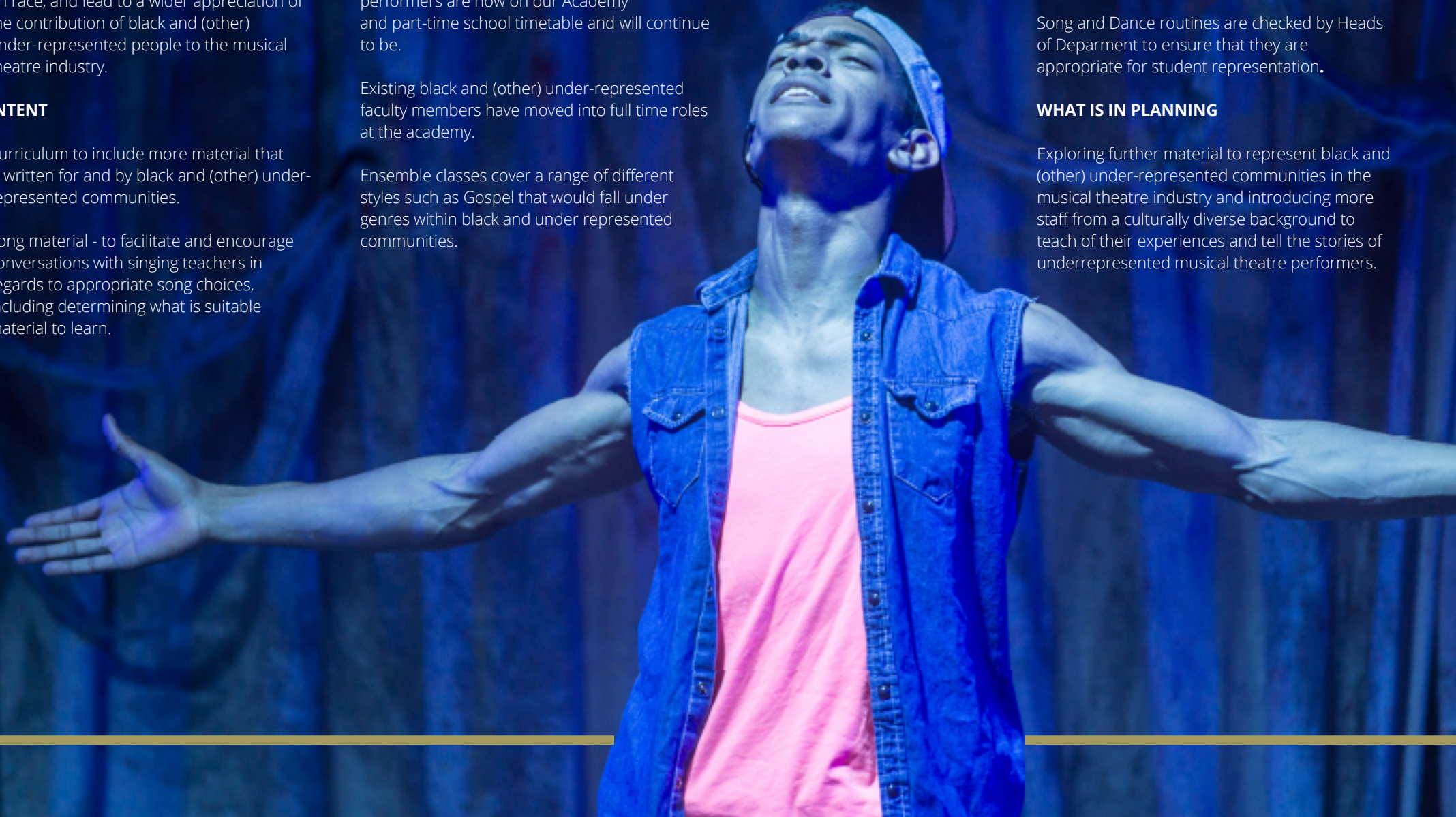
Ensemble classes cover a range of different styles such as Gospel that would fall under genres within black and under represented communities.

Rule introduced where no white student should be singing a solo song or performing a monologue written for an under represented character.

Song and Dance routines are checked by Heads of Department to ensure that they are appropriate for student representation.

## **WHAT IS IN PLANNING**

Exploring further material to represent black and (other) under-represented communities in the musical theatre industry and introducing more staff from a culturally diverse background to teach of their experiences and tell the stories of underrepresented musical theatre performers.



# TRAINING AND EDUCATION FOR STAFF & STUDENTS

## **ACTION**

To ensure all staff and students are educated about racism and the importance of race, equality and diversity, ensuring they can recognise systemic racism and bias in actions and conversation.

## **INTENT**

Training for race equality forms part of the wider framework for reducing race inequality, and will be embedded in Emil Dale Academy's governance systems. We will challenge complicity and unconscious bias, and in doing so educate staff and students beyond not just being non-racist, but to being actively anti-racist.

We will provide Race, Equality and Diversity training for Staff, providing them with tools to reflect on their role in the circulation of racism, and to build their capacity to challenge racism. This will include recognising and challenging microaggressions.

Race, Equality and diversity information will be circulated to guest staff before working at EDA.

Race, Equality and Diversity talks and training to be held during induction week in September. These mandatory sessions will be used to reinforce being actively anti-racist. They will be used to educate

the student body about the history and fundamental importance of diversity within society.

Career talks from black and (other) under-represented individuals to be on-timetable to provide insight into the challenges faced by these communities within the musical theatre industry, to provide role models and also for the entire college community to understand their part to play in challenging and thus changing the future of the industry.

## **WHAT HAS BEEN DONE SO FAR**

Race, Equality and Diversity training is facilitated annually for Emil Dale Academy staff.

We have shared links to policies and emphasised the importance of equality and diversity with guest teachers.

Race, Equality and Diversity training took place with all new students in all year groups during induction week.

## **WHAT IS IN PLANNING**

Ongoing annual timetabling of training sessions, including induction week training for students every year.

Further talks by black and (other) under-represented guest speakers on their experiences and navigation of the industry.

Creating new ways of raising awareness and identifying strategies to educate students and staff about racism.

Explainer videos are being created to share with all Emil Dale Academy resident and guest staff that illuminate the importance of equality and diversity at Emil Dale Academy.



# POLICIES

## ACTION

Ensure all relevant policies include Race, Equality and Diversity at the heart of their aims.

## INTENT

Casting Policy states that in public performances and in-house projects/productions, roles written specifically for black and (other) under-represented performers should only be played by students from those backgrounds.

Review and rewrite the Equality and Diversity Policy, in consultation with external specialists.

## WHAT HAS BEEN DONE SO FAR

New casting policy has been written. Race, Equality and Diversity policy has been written and reviewed by solicitors as well as consulted with teaching faculty.

## WHAT IS IN PLANNING

Constant review and mindfulness of the importance of race, equality and diversity in all policies.



# STUDENT EXPERIENCE

## ACTION

Ensuring students feel represented whilst training at EDA, and that their race or other protected characteristics have no bearing on their training experience.

## INTENT

Addressing uniform concerns of our black and (other) under-represented students, for example Ballet tights and shoes.

No black or other under-represented students should have to feel that their success in the musical theatre industry is limited by the colour of their skin, and equally no students should feel they are only given parts or awarded a place because of the colour of their skin.

## WHAT HAS BEEN DONE SO FAR

Head of Dance and Head of Faculty have discussed and updated the kit list, addressing the concerns that our black and under-represented students have raised.

We consistently encourage on-going discussion with our students to ensure they receive ongoing support and advice; Immediate communication about people to speak to and how to contact them.

Casting policy has been actioned in the announcement, rehearsals, and performance of our latest musicals and projects.

## WHAT IS IN PLANNING

Ensuring students have a heard voice through ongoing student council meetings.

A constant review of the handling of reports of racism or inequality to ensure these are dealt with robustly and transparently, and that outcomes are fair and traceable through a process.





# LISTENING AND SUPPORTING

## ACTION

Ensure all students feel safe and supported, and building an environment where they feel listened to.

## INTENT

Encourage Race, Equality and Diversity discussion with staff and students to raise any concerns or review ongoing changes and issues.

## WHAT HAS BEEN DONE SO FAR

There have been multiple Race, Equality and Diversity meetings within the Emil Dale staff and student body.

Senior Management members have participated in Anti-Racism workshops to ensure they are trained in how to listen and support any problem that centres around a persons race or cultural heritage.

## WHAT IS IN PLANNING

Continuing to have an open dialogue between staff and students to ensure every member of the Emil Dale student body feels listened and support.



# ADVOCATING

## ACTION

Being actively anti-racist and ensuring students understand how to speak up and advocate for each other.

## INTENT

Understanding how to tackle racism and injustice, through constant discussion and understanding of what unconscious bias and systemic racism involves.

## WHAT HAS BEEN DONE SO FAR

Ongoing education of students through training sessions and also through what they learn within the studio and classroom.

Active celebration of Black History month, including the creation of interactive display boards that showcased artists, readings, movies, series, documentaries, shows, and pioneers in Black History.

## WHAT IS IN PLANNING

New ways to educate people against bias and racism, inspired through Race, Equality and Diversity forum, curriculum and the experience of guest teachers.

Look at further ways to support the Black community and under-represented groups through signage and display, advertising, language and performance.



# THE JESSE CLEMENTS EQUALITY & DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP

Emil  
Dale  
ACADEMY

His spirit will forever live on. In loving memory of our dearest, dearest friend Jesse Clements; we are honoured to be able to offer one student a year (forever) from our full time courses the **“Jesse Clements Equality & Diversity Scholarship”**.

This scholarship will be awarded towards fees after a successful audition for our courses, will be means tested and subject to a final interview with Emil Dale.

This very special scholarship is in addition to other funding options, part and full scholarships which are means tested.

