

# Inclusive Practice Conference

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024

Inn on the Lake, nr Gravesend

9.30am - 4.30pm

## **Purpose of the conference**

The Children, Young People and Education directorate is holding a staff conference to consider anti-racist practice, disproportionality and intersectionality in our work with children, families and our communities.

Through the conference staff from all parts of Children, Young People and Education directorate, alongside colleagues working in partner agencies will have the opportunities to be exposed to speakers on the following themes:

- intersectionality (and if we are cultural curious in assessments and planning and how these intersect and overlay)
- cultural displacement and identity between and within generations and what it means to be dual heritage
- sense of identity, and the impact of identity through adolescence (including any vulnerabilities including mental health)

We will also have the opportunity to engage in discussions, network and reflect on how we engage with each other and uphold within our own working relationships our commitment to inclusion.

**Audience** – Practitioners in Integrated Children's Services. There are also places available for multi agency partners eg schools, police etc.

# AGENDA

- 9.30 **Opening** - Ingrid Crisan - Director of Operational Integrated Children's Service  
- Sue Chandler - Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services
- 9.45 **Royston John - Connecting Identities** - Who is in the room today and how are we connected? An opportunity for connecting and building relationships.
- 10.10 **Meera Spillett - Intersectionality** – My story and beyond, Labels and Identity, Me-We-Us, Anti-Racism, Intersectionality and Inclusivity, Cultural Competence, Covering and Code Switching, Active Witnessing Model to Tackle Discrimination
- 11.30 Tea/Coffee**
- 11.45 **Isabelle Brodie - Identity and adolescence** - 'She's nice'....'He cares about his job'. Racial disproportionality and diversion in the youth justice system – young people's experiences and perceptions of practice\*
- 1.00 Lunch**
- 1.45 **Royston John - The Power IN and OF Assessments** - Thought leadership and inclusive practise - examining power in our leadership, relationships, and decision-making processes.
- 2.45 Tea/Coffee**
- 3.00 Safeguarding, Professional Standards & Quality Assurance**
- Identity and Culture: the child's voice online – **Rebecca Avery Training and Development Manager and Online Safety Lead** - Education Safeguarding Service (45mins)
  - Learning from Childrens Outcomes Analysis, Audits, Celebrating Good Practice and Next Steps - **Leemya McKeown - Assistant Director** -Safeguarding, Professional Standards & Quality Assurance (30 mins)
- 4.15 **Close** - Ingrid Crisan
- 4.30 **Finish**

# Speaker Biographies

## Royston John

Royston John worked as a senior manager across local government for nearly 3 decades before becoming a Business Coach and Management Consultant, which has continued for over 2 decades now. The breadth of his experience includes appraising and supporting executives and senior managers through, leadership and management development programmes; service reviews and compliance changes, to enable organisation financial and operational integrity; a speciality in supporting cultural transition and professional integration. Skill set includes mediation, investigation at individual and organisational level, public speaking, setting up and managing staff groups and organising conferences.



Royston also has over 2 decades experience as an Equality Diversity & Inclusion facilitator and adviser. Activities include adviser to a Mayor and Cabinet on increasing Black staff in leadership roles; supporting organisations become anti-racist; advising HR & OD on race and equity matters; with Metropolitan Police reducing racial disparity; with Bristol Police and community increasing racial harmony in the city.

Royston clients include chief executives, executive directors, senior and middle managers. He works across Business, Health, Housing, Social Services; Local Government; Probation.

Royston is a TEDx speaker “Why did the Windrush?” Has a degree in Management Development and Social Responsibilities, the Institute of Leadership Management Level 7 Certificate in Executive Coaching & Mentoring, member of Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and a graduate of Common Purpose. Work includes British Council management development initiative working collaboratively with 19 African countries.



## Meera Spillett

Meera, a former Director of Children's Services, has 40 years' experience in the social care and health sector, including as an HMI for the London Region inspecting children's and adult services. A social worker by background, she has worked in several local authorities including London, the Southwest and Southeast.

Meera is an experienced anti-racist systems leader, facilitator and keynote speaker. Meera was integral in the design of the [Black and Asian Leadership Initiative \(BALI\)](#) for The Staff College (TSC) to support aspiring leaders, the initiative has run for a decade, and it has supported Black and Asian leaders to achieve their career goals. The BALI Alumni now has a CEX, several Directors of Children's Services and many other alumni have been promoted or found their niche. She is an author, her latest publication for Research in Practice and TSC is [Anti-Racist Systems Leadership to Address Systemic Racism 2024](#) other publications include [Black Leaders Missing in Action](#), [Cultural Competence for Organisation and Individuals](#) and co-author [Leading in Colour the Fierce Urgency of NOW](#).

Meera was co-lead for the 'Leadership in Colour' programme, commissioned by the All-London Directors of Children's Services (ALDCS). She was also part of the delivery team supporting London Council's to implement their Anti-Racist Strategy and part of the team supporting the London Association of Directors of Public Health, she has also supported Schools, Governors and charities to tackle racism and inclusivity. She was a member of the Department of Health and Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard (SC-WRES) Advisory Group, a member of the DfE Fast Track Advisory Group. Meera is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (FRSA). In November 2023 she was chosen for the Lifetime Achievement Award for Social Work and gave a speech at The Social Worker of the Year Awards Reception at the House of Commons.

Meera started life as a looked after child for Kent County Council and in 2006 she became disabled overnight; she is a breast cancer survivor following treatment in 2020 and 2021. She lives with several long-term health conditions. Meera continues to support BALI and contributes towards anti-racist and culturally competent approaches to support organisations, individual practitioners, and their communities.

## **Isabelle Brodie**

Isabelle is a Principal Lecturer in the School of Applied Social Studies at the University of Bedfordshire and is responsible for doctoral study. She has some 30 years experience of research in different aspects of child welfare and safeguarding, including children in care, the education of children in care, child exploitation and participatory approaches. This has included work for the Home Office, SCIE, the Scottish Government and different children's charities and local authorities. In addition to the Nuffield study of racial disproportionality in diversion in the youth justice system, Isabelle has been working on research into girls and gangs (funded by MOPAC) and also harmful sexual behaviour (funded by the Pilgrim Trust).

### **Presentation summary**

This paper presents findings from a current research project investigating racial disproportionality in the youth justice system in the UK, specifically in relation to decision making in diversionary practice. The project is a partnership between the University of Bedfordshire and Manchester Metropolitan University, funded by the Nuffield Foundation.

The over-representation of minoritised children in the youth justice system has been widely discussed in policy and research, which has consistently demonstrated a disproportionate likelihood of minoritised children experiencing formal sanctions, including custodial sentences. This raises important questions about the varying experiences of children and young people from initial interactions with police continuing throughout the youth justice system and challenging policy commitment to 'Child First' in the English and Welsh Youth justice systems.

This paper focuses on emerging findings from the study, specifically in relation to young people's experiences of these interactions with different agencies and what might represent inclusive practice in the context of diversion from the youth justice system. It will emphasise the importance of hearing directly from young people, their families and the professionals engaged in direct practice in order to better understand the processes through which disproportionality occurs.

**\*Please note that the research on which this presentation is based is funded by the Nuffield Foundation.**