



SAMEE Leadership and Mentoring Programme

SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION
OF MINORITY ETHNIC EDUCATORS
samee

Chair's Message



SAMEE is a community-led organisation providing support to educators and those in support and guidance roles across the Scottish Education system – nurseries, schools, colleges and universities. SAMEE offers a platform for parents, students and educators to discuss key changes in education in Scotland.

Our activities and initiatives aim to support the vision of the Race Equality Framework for Scotland 2016-2030, in particular, teaching and learning, community engagement, employability and diversity at all levels of society.

SAMEE provides a strong voice to social and professional communities, empowering parents, to support young people and students and practitioners to progress in their learning and career journeys. The Board work tirelessly, to provide opportunities to engage in critical dialogue and celebrate the 'added value' we all bring to our environments.

I look forward to welcoming you to our events and activities throughout the year.

Khadija Mohammed



Members of the Board



Furzana Ahmed
(2013 – 2020)



Yasmeen Hussain



Mélina Valdelièvre



Monica Medina



Nighet Riaz



Anthony Adams
(2018 – 2020)

Vision Statement

Providing safe, collaborative spaces for BME Educators, to listen, share, support, mentor, seek advice and facilitate leadership opportunities in education.

SAMEE is a nation-wide organisation led by Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) education professionals. SAMEE has a presence across West, East and Central Scotland, with heightened visibility in areas with the highest concentration of Scotland's BME practitioners and learners in nursery, primary and secondary schools. SAMEE education professionals provide support to BME educators and learners through Continued Professional Learning, workshops, seminars, conferences, one-to-one consultations and bespoke mentoring activity.

The skillset and knowledge of SAMEE's 80 members through their research in education, race equality, youth policy and lived experiences, encourage a stronger sense of identity and belonging among BME education professionals and create a stronger cohesion between BME pupils, parents, educators, school executives and national educational organisations. The organisation is supported by Education Scotland, the General Teaching Council for Scotland and other public bodies.

Rationale for our bespoke Leadership and Mentoring Programme

Underrepresentation of BME teachers

BME teachers in the Scottish workforce are severely under-represented. At the same time, the few BME teachers who are working in educational institutions face challenges as they navigate their workplace and integrate with the majority White teaching population. Current research has shown that BME teachers continue to be marginalised and experience both covert and overt acts of discrimination in their educational settings and as such, lose trust in their employers and are leaving the profession (Mohammed, 2019, CRER, 2018, EIS, 2017). The same research has identified that BME teachers also experience difficulty in gaining promotion in the workplace.

With this in mind, SAMEE designed a bespoke leadership and mentoring programme for BME education professionals that acknowledges, discusses and affirms their lived experiences and the multiple barriers they encounter. The programme offers a safe space for BME educators to discuss the sector wide professional challenges for marginalised groups and provides tools, resources and enablers that can facilitate progression, career advancement and retention. SAMEE's leadership and mentoring programme is centred on acknowledgement of the competencies and contributions to the education setting of participants and facilitating opportunities for further enrichment.

Overview of the SAMEE Leadership and Mentoring Programme

(Mohammed, 2019)

The face-to-face sessions are centred on the Four A's model. The key elements are:

The Four A's Model



Over 30 BME educators took part in the programme in 2018/2019.



Feedback from BME educators

The first session prompted discussions among participants where they shared their lived experiences of working in educational settings where they have faced structural, interpersonal and pedagogical barriers.

Establishing a safe space enabled them to develop their voices and begin to think critically about their experiences. Members spoke openly about their own schooling in Scotland and noted that they had internalised the racism they experienced within a system that does not challenge discrimination. In the session, it was important for BME educators to explore a clear and descriptive language to describe their experience as those who suffer cannot coherently convey their pain, let alone heal. Some members reported how the racism they had experienced led to severe health and wellbeing issues where they began to question their own ability. Hardy (2013) explains that those who are often marginalised because of their ethnicity experience racial trauma:

“Racial oppression is a traumatic form of interpersonal violence which can lacerate the spirit, scar the soul, and puncture the psyche” (p.25).

In the second session we took a very proactive role in encouraging conversations about race with the third session supporting members to re-channel their frustrations and their hurt into a powerful energy source helping them to discover and cultivate what is great about them – in other words, the added value they bring to their teaching.

It was therefore important that SAMEE’s programme offered a space for learning and healing for its members (Pour-Khorshid, 2018).

They also felt that the opportunities to discuss their cultural and linguistic skills fostered conversations around agency and a sense of wanting to take action and explore opportunities to promote and encourage leadership through professional activism. The final session focused on understanding how to evaluate performance and understanding GTCS professional benchmarks underpinned by themes of leadership.

What did you gain from taking part in this programme?

“A powerful arena, to grow, develop resilience, to be proactive, to stand up and be counted, and listening to the testimonials of others was encouraging and uplifting.”

“This has been a safety net to express my feelings, around prejudice, discrimination. I now feel empowered to challenge barriers.”

“I left teaching I was so demoralised. I am so glad that my friend told me about this programme – I have signed up for supply teaching and feel prepared to address the challenges.”



“This has been a great experience, and good to know that there are other people who can relate to the same experience as I do.”

“A great sense of solidarity of likeminded people concerned about racism in teaching.”

“Their experiences were refreshing... a safe space for teachers of colour, and a source of strength and reassurance in hard times.”

“A great deal of empathy, knowledge and understanding.”

“I felt part of a community that would like to see change for BME people.”

“Confident, more informed, but would like a longer period for the mentoring relationship to develop.”

What next?

“There should be a similar programme for BME children – they really need it.”

“I have become more confident and enjoyed being a mentor, but would now like to be a mentee [to support own career progression].”

“The feedback should be shared with HT’s and PT’s to raise their awareness.”

“A training programme for senior leaders in education.”

“This should be delivered in other areas – my union rep would benefit from it.”

National Mentoring Network Launch

In November 2019, following delivery of SAMEE's leadership and mentoring programme, SAMEE in partnership with the GTCS launched the Scottish Black and Minority Ethnic network.

The network provides a sense of community, safety and solidarity for BME educators. It provides an exciting opportunity for BME educators to have access to mentors who can support and encourage them to meet/ shadow colleagues in a variety of promoted posts. The network will also include information on a range of professional learning opportunities with a focus on recruitment, retention and promotion. This follows the recommendations of the national report on 'Teaching in a Diverse Scotland: Increasing and Retaining Minority Ethnic Teachers' which was published in November 2018. Seventeen recommendations were made and approved by Scottish Government. Recommendations 14 and 15 are of particular relevance to local authorities and BME teachers:

Recommendation 14:

Local authorities should recognise and support aspiring minority ethnic teachers and encourage them to apply for promotion both within schools and across the wider education service. As part of this, local authorities should examine how racism, institutional racism, bias (conscious or unconscious), and lack of awareness act as blocks to the promotion of BME teachers. This should be done in partnership with BME teachers who can inform such an exercise.

Recommendation 15:

A national mentoring network for minority ethnic staff should be established by March 2019. This network should be developed and led by the GTCS, working in partnership with BME teachers and relevant groups who have experience in this area. The mentoring process should include the ability to spend time in another school or authority to shadow a promoted member of staff.

In an effort to address the lack of ethnic diversity in the teaching profession, this network is essential for sustained and meaningful progress in race equality in Scottish education. We were delighted to launch the national network in November 2019 at Glasgow City Chambers. The event was strongly supported by key education stakeholders:

Fearghal Kelly, Learning Directorate,
Scottish Government

Professor Rowena Arshad, University of Edinburgh

Lesley Whelan, Education Scotland

Dr Pauline Stephen, GTCS

Maureen McKenna, Glasgow City Council

Rob Henthorn, EIS

Muzafar Hussain, NASUWT

Dr. Lisa McAuliffe, University of the West of Scotland

Katya Allcott, Scottish Mentoring Network

Tahir Mohammed, Scottish Qualification Authority

Melina Valdelievre, The Anti-Racist Educator

Approximately 60 delegates from across Scotland representing Early Years, Primary, Secondary, Further Education and Higher Education attended. Members were welcomed by the Chair of SAMEE and key stakeholder representatives. SAMEE members presented, describing the impact of the leadership and mentoring programme. This was followed by roundtable discussions – the way forward with positive solutions identified.

Case Studies

Participants of the Leadership and Mentoring programme discussed the impact the programme has had on them.

- Two participants, worked collaboratively to support each other and together founded the Anti-Racist Educator platform
- A Secondary Science teacher mentored a peripatetic EAL teacher – both supporting each other in their quest to decolonise the curriculum and advocating the need for a culturally relevant pedagogy

Pre-launch Questionnaire

Prior to the network launch, forty-one BME educators completed an online questionnaire and the results are shared over the next few pages.

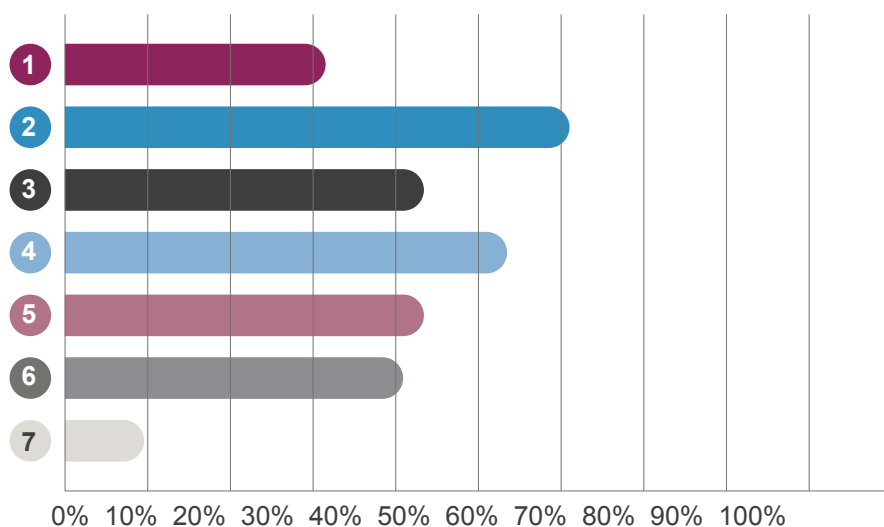
The questions which formed the survey were derived from the first stage of the leadership and mentoring programme. The delegates responded to seven questions in the survey relating to their area of interest in Scottish education, their place of work and their subject specialism. This information was considered relevant to evaluate the professional experiences of the practitioner and provide appropriate support:

- **Which area(s) would you like to develop through this BME mentoring programme?**
- **What skills can you offer as a mentor?**
- **What would you like to gain from this national BME network?**

Which area(s) would you like to develop through this BME mentoring programme?

61%

of respondents would like to enhance their career progression through the BME mentoring programme.



ANSWER CHOICES:

RESPONSES:

1	Confidence as a Black and Minority Ethnic teacher	31.71%	13
2	Career progression and/or promotion	60.98%	25
3	Finding support from people with shared experiences	43.90%	18
4	Anti-racist activism (standing up to racism within education, sharing good practice and ideas, etc.)	53.66%	22
5	Inspiring and supporting my students	43.90%	18
6	Gaining leadership experience and contributing to SAMEE (organising events, contributing to new projects, supporting BME communities, presenting at events, etc.)	41.46%	17
7	Other (please specify)	9.76%	4

TOTAL RESPONDENTS: 41

OUTCOME:

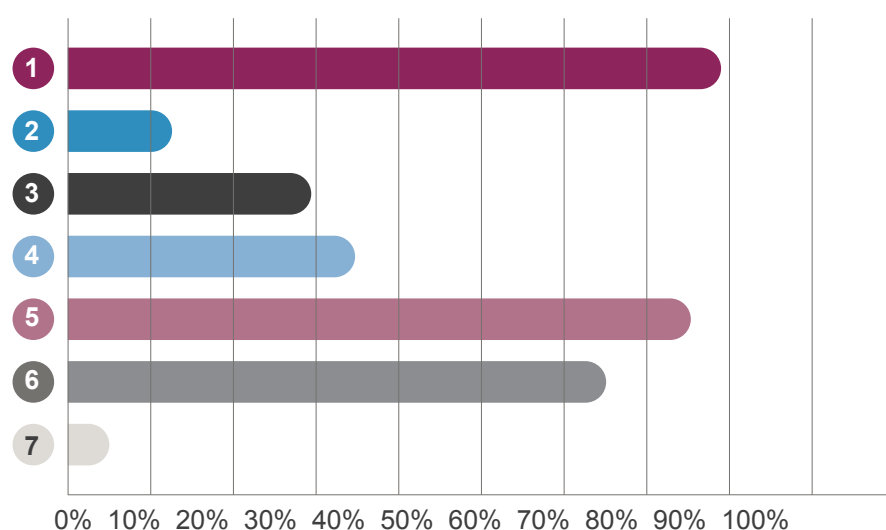
Based on the responses to this question, the key areas that the participants would like to develop through the BME mentoring programme are:

Career progression (61%), anti-racist activism (54%), supporting students (44%), leadership experience (42%) support and confidence as an educator (42%).

What skills can you offer as a mentor?

75%

of respondents said they could offer emotional support as a mentor



ANSWER CHOICES:

RESPONSES:

1	Supporting BME students	78.05%	32
2	Career advice (building CV's, job applications, etc.)	12.20%	5
3	Events organising (engaging BME communities in your local area for example)	29.27%	12
4	Anti-racist activism	34.15%	14
5	Listening and offering emotional support	75.61%	31
6	Helping BME teachers recognise their true value in Scottish education	65.85%	27
7	Other (please specify)	4.88%	2

TOTAL RESPONDENTS: 41

OUTCOME:

These responses highlight the importance of BME specific support that BME teachers can provide for their students and for each other. The responses also highlight the need for a BME specific network which offers a safe space where their experiences are acknowledged and where they find emotional support and an opportunity to listen to fellow BME educators.

What would you like to gain from this national BME network?

The responses ranged from gaining confidence through sharing experiences, knowledge and good practice to benefiting from a peer support network and subsequent professional development.

The respondents would like to:

- Acquire impartial and unbiased advice
- Experience mentoring from peers within and beyond the teaching sector
- Understand and develop their existing skill set aligned to the GTCS standards
- Take ownership of their professional development and support the development of others
- Develop a sense of belonging amongst peers; recognition from the SLT and a stronger presence with national educational bodies
- Build bridges – an opportunity to restore trust between practitioners and employers.
- Improve outcomes in the early years, primary, secondary and tertiary education sectors

“I would like to see teachers from BME backgrounds to be acknowledged for their skills and be promoted due to their creditability.”

“As a mentor I would be offering a supportive role to build confidence in teachers who are starting their career or are returning to education after a break. Being part of the BME network I would also be giving and getting emotional support.”

Research has shown that BME educators face many additional barriers in the workplace (Bhopal, 2019, CRER, 2018, EIS, 2018). Both the Leadership and Mentoring programme and the launch of the national network gave SAMEE an opportunity to explore how BME educators, can create a more equitable environment and opportunities for all.

Round Table Discussions

The round table discussions were to deliberate how some of the issues shared through the questionnaire could be navigated and potential solutions found.

The conversations were facilitated by SAMEE Board members and strategic partners. This allowed strategic partners to learn from the lived experiences of the educators first hand and engage in discussions around possible solutions. The ground-breaking dialogue created opportunities to address power dynamics between BME teachers and key education policymakers.

The findings from each discussion group are shared below.

Table 1

- Rather than make it the BME teacher's responsibility to push change, there needs to be more collaboration with white allies
- More partnership working
- BME female educators have specific barriers with family obligations – therefore a more intersectional approach is needed.
- Want to see more promotion of education as a career within our own communities
- Not enough support for black teachers to study education
- Leadership has to be invested in anti-racism education
- Looking to learn how to create change in our institutions
- Support is essential to keep going and improve retention of BME Educators
- Allies – known through the organisation to help champion issues of racism

Table 2

- Not part of the social network
- Not in the mix for career progression
- Biases in recruitment and promotion processes
- As BME female educators – face double whammy of sexism and racism
- At work – qualified twice as much, but treated half as equal
- Frustrated at poor promotion prospects.
- Difficult to challenge as often a lone voice ‘chip on your shoulder’
- Often challenging views of colleagues as well as children and parents

Areas for development:

- Mentoring as an informal support or more specific support to achieve promotion/career progression
- Positive networking and supportive agents to enable change of outcomes
- Securing action points from councils/GTCS on tracking/measuring the impact of initiatives such as this one

Table 3

Career progression:

- After challenging racism with head teachers etc. there is no career progression for me

Anti-racism:

- Combatting ignorance
- Acknowledgement that institutions/majority is at fault
- Leaders don't accept the issue
 - Lack of accountability
 - Challenge with staff

Leading Change:

- We can train white and non-BME leaders to tackle systemic problems
- Having these difficult conversations with pupils, parents and staff
- Get BME mentors to visit schools and train staff
- We are not the problem
- Barriers: Schools, local authorities and institutional leaders who are not educated about racism – they need to be changing, not us
- There is so much racial illiteracy
- Expect more non-BME educators to be part of this programme

Table 4

- Support each other, even if we disagree with each other – not personal if you disagree with someone or someone disagrees with you
- Job security
- Equal opportunities for interviews
- Training – especially for BME related issues – there should not be a need to justify the reason to attend BME related events
- Listening to /accommodating needs of BME staff
- Compulsory training for non-BME staff/raising awareness of issues related to BME staff/pupils
- Compared to England, there is less opportunity for promotion in Scotland – why?

Table 5

- Coming to share
- Security
- Voice concerns
- Support
- No organisations
- Career progression

Table 6

Career Progression:

- Shadowing opportunities (reverse mentoring) people in promoted posts
- Information on all professional learning opportunities available (not just BME specific)
- Opportunities to meet with other BME teachers
- Address the bureaucracy around application forms for courses and permissions
- Support and empower ITE students and probationers
- Possibly embed into other policy priorities, i.e. STEM

Anti-Racist Activism:

- Easier to engage with if you're not a classroom teacher – how can opportunities be made more accessible to classroom teachers?
- Promote what's happening across different local authorities
- Advocate that Anti-Racist education is a mandatory part of the in-service programme as in the approach to child protection
- How do we encourage conversations on racism which don't feel like an attack?
- Need a foundation of Anti-Racist knowledge
- 'What does BME stand for?'
- Who is included
- How do we support teachers to call out all instances of prejudice they witness?
- Activism needs to come from all levels – it is not an expectation of BME teachers alone. It should be everyone
- Anti-racism education should be included in HT induction programmes

Key themes that emerged from the discussions as potential solutions:

Conversations around the not seeing nature of Whiteness

Acknowledgement of BME teachers personal/professional identities

Career progression

Professional learning opportunities

Anti-racist education training for both senior leaders and white teachers

Allies

The themes identified above resonate with the key findings from the evaluation of SAMEE's bespoke leadership and mentoring programme.

As the launch drew to a close, a 'moving forward' activity was shared with the delegates, encouraging them to reflect on their experiences of the day and to consider how they can advance the network's aims.

The activity included:

Visualisation exercises

Goal setting tasks

Mentoring skills development ideas including a log of mentors/mentees details to stay in touch and offer emotional support

Moving Forward

The network can support in addressing the significant issues highlighted in this report.

It is a forum where key stakeholders can work collaboratively with SAMEE across the education sector. A two pronged approach is needed, one that supports the recruitment, retention and promotion of BME teachers, and also provides opportunities for white teachers to understand the manifestations and impact of racism and become race-cognisant white allies.

The network will offer support to BME network members and disseminate good practice more widely with fellow non-BME educators to share responsibility for change.

Recommendations

Our recommendations cover two important areas:

Career Support for BME Educators:

1. Pro-active sponsorship by leaders within educational institutions and agencies to mentor and prepare BME candidates for promotion/leadership. There must be a clear defined pathway/programme with support mechanisms along the way and willing institutions and leaders who can enable, monitor and provide feedback on activity.
2. It is essential to have a forum where BME teachers can support and communicate with each other, and feel safe/secure in their working environment.
3. BME teachers should be given the opportunity to undertake a bespoke programme which offers an understanding and acceptance of the premise that race is a critical factor in negotiating their teacher identity – acknowledgement and affirmation leading to a sense of validation and agency.
4. BME teachers from this network should serve on boards, interview panels, working groups to offer diverse and intersectional representation to support in the recruitment, retention and promotion of BME teachers.

Embedding anti-racism education in organisations across the education sector:

1. All Initial Teacher Education (ITE) institutions need to include a wider exploration of Teacher Identity – being and becoming a teacher.
2. Anti-racist education should be embedded within ITE course and Continuing Professional Learning (CPL) of all teachers
3. Leaders should ensure that their schools/campuses are places that offer a strong sense of belonging to diverse colleagues and families – policies and practices.
4. Leadership qualifications should introduce educators to Critical Race Theory and Whiteness studies.
5. Trade union representatives require to undertake anti-racist education training so that they can effectively listen, understand and support their BME colleagues.
6. Educators need to develop a culturally relevant pedagogy.

SAMEE and the GTCS look forward to working with its strategic partners including Scottish Government, Education Scotland, Local Authorities, EIS, NASUWT and educational institutions.

References

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Contact Us

Visit our website for more information www.samee.org.uk
or email: sameegroup@hotmail.com

 www.facebook.com/samee.glasgow

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 SAMEE Group

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