



Global Afrikan Congress uk (GACuk)

The Human Rights Situation of Children of African Descent

GACuk is the UK Chapter of Global Afrikan Congress (GAC), an international network of organisations formed after the work by Afrikans at the UN World Conference Against Racism 2001 who successfully encouraged nation states to recognise our enslavement as a crime against humanity. Our key objective is to achieve Reparations for these crimes which still continue today, including neo-colonialism, genocide and racism.

GAC organises from the grassroots offering local, regional and international community solidarity, co-operation and empowerment. It offers organisations and Afrikans across the world the opportunity to work together in a unified fashion to demand Reparations. We aim to mobilise the human, economic, political, spiritual and cultural resources of Afrika and the Afrikan Diaspora in the interest and to the benefit of Afrika and her people.

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The term 'Afrikan' in this document refers to the indigenous people of Afrika and their descendants throughout the Diaspora in all corners of the world. We spell Afrika with a 'k' based on the following insights:

- it is a Pan-Afrikan spelling which relates both to the Afrikan continent and the Diaspora;
- it reflects the spelling of 'Afrika' in Afrikan languages and
- it includes the concept of 'ka', the vital energy which both sustains and creates life, as expressed in ancient Kemetic (Egyptian) teachings

Global Arikan Congress uk (GACuk) submission on 'The Human Rights Situation of Children of African Descent'

Unfortunately we are dealing with a uk government eager to find any reason for the poor situation of Afrikan people other than racism. They managed to create a Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities (CRED) to produce a report¹ which feeds into their narrative while ignoring their own Human Rights Select Committee telling them otherwise², including findings on issues for young Afrikan people.

The government has yet to submit the report the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) requested for April 2020 and has done no work on writing a National Action Plan on Racism with civil society organisation such as ourselves.

A major concern at the moment are reports coming to light about the treatment of Afrikan children in school and after school clubs. It is believed that adultification³ is a factor. Afrikan campaigns have won cases of discrimination against Afrikan hairstyles⁴ only to find far worse practices.

Child Q in December 2020 was 15 years old and menstruating when she was strip searched at school by 2 female Metropolitan Police officers. She had been accused of smelling of cannabis by a teacher as she sat a mock examination. She was removed from the exam room and the police called when teachers found nothing in her bag, blazer, scarf or shoes.

No appropriate adult⁵ was present when she was strip searched and made to expose her private parts. Neither the school nor the police told her parents what had happened. No drugs were found. 'The victim - referred to as Child Q - told the Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review: "On top of preparing for the most important exams of my life, I can't go a single day without wanting to scream, shout, cry or just give up."'⁶

'Child Q returned home after the event, and her mother took her to the family GP who referred her for psychological support. Child Q's mother told the review that it makes her sick that her child "had to take her sanitary towel off and put the same dirty towel back on because they would not allow her to use the restroom to clean herself". She told the review that she believed the incident was treated as a "criminal matter", her daughter was treated "as an adult", and the events happened because of the colour of her daughter's skin.'⁷

The officers were only removed from frontline duties in March 2022 after public protests.⁸ The teacher was allegedly sacked in March 2022⁹, again only after public protests.

'A safeguarding report on the incident concluded it was unjustified and racism was "likely" to have been a factor.'¹⁰ Hackney Council's mayor and deputy mayor have condemned the "humiliating, traumatising and utterly shocking treatment" by police officers. They have asked for a report in six to nine months on progress made regarding the review's eight findings and 14 recommendations.'¹¹

¹ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974507/20210331_-_CRED_Report_-_FINAL_-_Web_Accessible.pdf

² <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/feb/11/uk-government-accused-of-dragging-heels-in-response-to-racism-report>

³ <https://metro.co.uk/2022/03/16/child-q-how-adultification-means-black-children-are-assumed-guilty-16285230>

⁴ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/black-hair-discrimination-watchdog-equalities-b1941567.html>

⁵ <https://www.appropriateadult.org.uk>

⁶ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-60766891>

⁷ <https://www.mylondon.news/news/south-london-news/teacher-sacked-after-calling-police-23438837>

⁸ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-60858196>

⁹ <https://www.voice-online.co.uk/news/uk-news/2022/03/20/child-q-teacher-sacked-after-calling-police-on-black-schoolgirl>

¹⁰ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-60757031>

¹¹ <https://chscp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Child-Q-PUBLISHED-14-March-22.pdf>

It is believed that adultification¹² meant that Child Q was not treated as a potential victim of County Lines or other drug dealing. Some other police forces would have dealt with the situation differently, eg Sussex Police reports to their community scrutiny panels show that they would have treated Child Q as a victim of crime so no strip search would have taken place; a guardian would have been informed that there had been contact with the police and youth support agencies would have been engaged to try to divert a victim away from crime.

'Of the 5,279 children searched in the past three years, 3,939 (75%) were from ethnically diverse backgrounds. A total of 16 of them were aged between 10 and 12 years old.'¹³ Also worrying is that cases like that of Child Q do not appear in this Metropolitan Police data as she was not arrested. The National Education Union (NEU) says they no longer want police in schools. "I know a place where 11 in 12 toilets tested positive for cocaine. It's a place where there is a 24-hour police presence. It's called the Houses of Parliament. Why are [the Met] strip-searching children and not strip-searching MPs?" asked Daniel Kebede, NEU president.¹⁴

In November 2020 a mother picked her 8 year old son and 5 year old daughter up from an afterschool club. The daughter has Special Education Needs. Her daughter had faeces on her leg but had no tights or underwear on. Workers had made her son clean his sister up when she soiled herself¹⁵. The community does not understand how an adult who behaved in this manner was able to keep their job. It is not clear why the school did not have spare clothes in case children needed them or why they could not use clothes in lost property.

In the last week a 16 year old Afrikan Muslim girl was arrested in south London for an alleged burglary on her way home from school and had to be taken to hospital for injuries left by the hand cuffs. "14 police vans and cars, including an armed response unit, arrived on the scene in Stockwell after the child was cuffed and 'bundled' into a vacant shop when PC Bamber spotted a group of school children messing with the shop shutter."¹⁶

Olympic sprinters **Bianca Williams and Ricardo dos Santos** were stopped and searched in July 2020 with their 3 month old child in their car. The incident received wide public attention because a video of the incident was posted by their trainer, former Olympic medal winner Linford Christie.¹⁷ Ms Williams objected to being dragged out of the car in front of the child but officers did not moderate their behaviour. Six police officers are now facing disciplinary procedures¹⁸.

In June 2020 thirteen year old '**Huugo Boateng** was taking part in a charity bike ride with his father along the River Lea in north London when he says he was grabbed from his bike by a plainclothes police officer, threatened with a stun gun and fell face first into thorny bushes.'¹⁹

In **March 2018** an investigation had been launched by the Independent Office for Police Conduct on posts on WhatsApp and Facebook groups. "A number of racist messages including references to African children, Somali people and Auschwitz that are too offensive to publish were also uncovered."²⁰ Fourteen officers serving out of a number of police stations were investigated

¹² <https://metro.co.uk/2022/03/16/child-q-how-adultification-means-black-children-are-assumed-guilty-16285230>

¹³ <https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/three-quarters-of-all-children-strip-searched-by-met-come-from-ethnically-divers>

¹⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2022/apr/11/teachers-say-they-no-longer-want-police-based-in-schools-after-child-q-outrage>

¹⁵ <https://www.voice-online.co.uk/news/uk-news/2022/05/05/demands-for-a-public-inquiry-into-adultification>

¹⁶ <https://www.voice-online.co.uk/news/uk-news/2022/05/16/mp-demands-answers-over-stockwell-schoolgirl-arrest>

¹⁷ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-57679756>

¹⁸ <https://www.voice-online.co.uk/news/uk-news/2022/04/28/five-police-officers-face-discipline-after-the-stop-and-search-of-athlete-bianca-williams>

¹⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/jun/28/black-teenager-on-family-cycle-ride-injured-during-aggressive-police-arrest>

²⁰ <https://metro.co.uk/2022/02/01/met-police-officers-shared-messages-like-i-would-happily-rape-you-16027064>

resulting in resignation, dismissal or “internal measures to improve their performance”. However, “(nine) are still serving with the force, while another is working as a contractor in a staff role.”

“Children from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds are almost three times more likely to have a Taser electronic weapon used on them by police than their white counterparts.”²¹ Unfortunately the paper did not provide disaggregated data.

“Growing numbers of the Black community are voicing their concerns on social media over what appears to be a “distressing” trend of Black children going missing.”²² We have not been able to find the report of the survey.

‘Windrush’ lessons have not been learned and we are seeing young people becoming victims of the ‘hostile environment’. The UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance has been ignored²³. Forced repatriation flights continue, meaning that Afrikan children grow up in single parent households which research shows can affect education attainment, health²⁴ and vulnerability to crime. Children in Social Services care do not have their citizenship applied for so are at risk of deportation if they later receive a prison sentence of greater than 12 months²⁵. Diego Garcians are not allowed to return home but their descendants are at risk of deportation²⁶.

We welcome the Children and Young People’s Commissioner Scotland’s position that “local authorities must exercise such powers as they have to prevent breaches of a child’s human rights.”²⁷ This should mean that policies such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child stops the No Recourse to Public Funds Condition and reduced welfare benefits for asylum seekers effectively being used to starve immigrant families.²⁸ They receive £177.02 a month²⁹ rather than the Universal Credit payment of £265.31 for single people under 25 and £334.91 if over 25.³⁰ It is not clear if this position is echoed in the other uk administrations but we have not heard of the Convention being applied robustly any more than we have any other Convention.

“In the 1970s, books like Bernard Coard’s *How the West Indian Child is made Educationally Subnormal in the British School System* served almost as a how-to guide for black immigrant parents who needed to navigate a system that had either left their children behind, or disproportionately sent them to what was formerly known as “ESN” (educationally subnormal) schools.”³¹ Nowadays they exclude Afrikan children instead. In July 2021 the National Education Union (NEU) reported³² that

1. “More than one third of Black Caribbean pupils receive at least one exclusion between year 9 and year 11”;
2. “Black Caribbean pupils are permanently excluded from school at three times the rate of white British pupils” and

²¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/aug/16/bame-children-three-times-more-likely-to-have-taser-used-on-them-by-police>

²² <https://www.voice-online.co.uk/news/2021/06/12/missing-people-charity-gathering-evidence-on-missing-black-children>

²³ <https://www.ein.org.uk/news/un-special-rapporteur-racism-says-uk-must-urgently-abandon-hostile-environment-immigration>

²⁴ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-47057787>

²⁵ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-59812719>

²⁶ <https://inews.co.uk/news/uk/teenage-descendant-family-evicted-british-island-diego-garcia-faces-deportation-194172>

²⁷ <https://www.cypcs.org.uk/wpcypcs/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Legal-Brief-1-No-Recourse-to-Public-Funds.pdf>

²⁸ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-53904251>

²⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/asylum-support/what-youll-get>

³⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/what-youll-get>

³¹ <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/school-racism-black-students-exclusions-hair-kiss-teeth-a9280296.html>

³² <https://neu.org.uk/racism-and-exclusions>

3. “Low educational attainment and progress is closely associated with economic disadvantage and there is a disproportionate number of Black children living in poverty”.

The Timpson Review of School Exclusion 2019 “acknowledged that children from African-Caribbean... backgrounds are three-to-four times more likely to be excluded from school than other groups but concluded that the trends are complicated” meaning no action.

To try to end on a more positive note, we do now have 2 new All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) which will hopefully benefit Afrikan young people although APPGs “are informal cross-party groups that have no official status within Parliament. They are run by and for Members of the Commons and Lords, though many choose to involve individuals and organisations from outside Parliament in their administration and activities”. Both APPGs are the result of campaigning by Afrikan people in the uk and at UN level. Civil society is included in both of these APPGs.

The APPG on Black Maternal Health³³ as “the Dispatches documentary 'The Black Maternity Scandal', (showed that) Black women are four times more likely to die in pregnancy and childbirth. The APPG aims to raise awareness of the issue of racial disparities within maternal healthcare and offer solutions to end this.” In the uk Afrikan children “according to 2016 Office of National Statistics data, have a 121 per cent increased risk for stillbirth and are 50 per cent more likely to suffer neonatal death compared to white babies.”³⁴

The APPG for Afrikan Reparations³⁵ is to “bring together parliamentarians, campaigners, communities, and other stakeholders to examine issues of African Reparations and the repatriation of art and cultural artefacts, as well as exploring policy proposals on reparations and development, and how best to redress the legacies of African enslavement and colonialism.”

³³ <https://www.parallelparliament.co.uk/APPG/black-maternal-health>

³⁴ <https://archive.voice-online.co.uk/article/experienced-midwife-fights-tackle-health-inequalities>

³⁵ <https://www.parallelparliament.co.uk/APPG/afrikan-reparations>