

Race Equality Week 2026

2–8 February 2026



Theme: #ChangeNeedsAllOfUs

What is Race Equality Week UK?

Race Equality Week UK is a national annual campaign that supports organisations to **reflect, learn and act** on racial inequality. It exists to move beyond statements of intent and focus on **structural, cultural and behavioural change**.

Race Equality Week is not only for organisations with visible diversity. It is **essential** for organisations where:

- staff teams are largely homogeneous
- leadership lacks ethnic diversity
- services are delivered to ethnically diverse communities
- online provision assumes everyone experiences systems the same way

Why Race Equality Week is still needed

Despite legislation and policies, race inequality continues to show up in:

- health outcomes
- educational attainment
- housing access
- policing and criminal justice
- recruitment, progression and pay

A common organisational response is “*we treat everyone the same*”. This approach **ignores lived experience, misses systemic barriers, and often reinforces inequality**.

Equality is not sameness. Fairness requires difference to be understood.



Equality and Diversity UK

www.equalityanddiversity.co.uk

The 2026 theme: #ChangeNeedsAllOfUs

This year's theme makes one thing clear:

Race equality is not the responsibility of ethnically diverse people alone.

Change requires:

- leadership accountability
- confident managers
- informed governors and trustees
- inclusive service design
- sustained action beyond awareness weeks

Who this week is for

- NHS trusts, ICBs and health providers
- Police forces and oversight bodies
- Schools, colleges, universities and governors
- Housing providers and councils
- Charities, voluntary and community organisations
- Online training providers and employers



Suggestions for your Race Equality Week Toolkit

Toolkit sections

1. Understanding Race Equality

- Key terms explained
- Why colour-blind approaches fail
- Structural vs individual racism

2. Why This Matters Even If You Lack Diversity

- Risk of unchallenged assumptions
- Impact on decision-making
- Preparing for future workforce change

3. Sector-Specific Risks & Opportunities

- NHS | Police | Education | Housing | Workplace

4. 20 Ready-to-Deliver Activities (see READY-TO-GO RACE EQUALITY WEEK ACTIVITIES)

5. Manager & Leader Conversation Guides

- What to say
- What not to say
- How to respond to discomfort or resistance

6. READY-TO-GO SOLUTIONS YOU CAN ROLL OUT IMMEDIATELY

7. Post-Week Action Planner

- 3-, 6- and 12-month actions
- Owners and accountability



LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE BRIEFING (BOARD / SMT / GOVERNORS)

Key messages

- Race equality is a **risk and quality issue**, not a side topic
- “Neutral” systems often produce unequal outcomes
- Lack of diversity does not equal lack of responsibility

Strategic questions leaders must ask

- Where is race invisible in our strategy?
- Who is missing from decision-making?
- How do we know our services are equitable?
- What happens after Race Equality Weekends?

Governance actions

- Assign named race equality leads
- Require ethnicity-based data analysis
- Link race equality to performance and assurance frameworks



20 READY-TO-GO RACE EQUALITY WEEK ACTIVITIES

Awareness & Understanding

1. Race Equality 101 (online/in-person)
2. “I Don’t See Colour” – myth-busting session
3. Understanding structural racism in the UK
4. Microaggressions at work and in services
5. UK history and its impact on today’s inequalities

Leadership & Governance

6. Board or Governor race equality briefing
7. Leadership reflection workshop
8. Policy audit through a race lens
9. Using ethnicity data responsibly
10. Accountability mapping exercise

Service Design & Delivery

11. Inclusive service design review
12. Cultural competence in frontline roles
13. Case study analysis of unequal outcomes
14. Language, imagery and communications audit
15. Online inclusion check (Zoom/Teams)

Action & Sustainability

16. Race Equality Action Plan co-creation
17. Manager confidence toolkit launch
18. Supplier and partner expectations review
19. Staff commitment pledges linked to roles
20. Post-week impact review session



SECTOR-SPECIFIC GUIDANCE

NHS & Health

- Link race equality to patient safety and outcomes
- Embed learning into clinical governance
- Address workforce experience and progression

Police & Criminal Justice

- Focus on trust, decision-making and disproportionality
- Use Race Equality Week to strengthen accountability

Education & Governors

- Go beyond assemblies
- Embed race into curriculum, behaviour and safeguarding
- Support governors to challenge confidently

Housing & Councils

- Review allocation, enforcement and engagement
- Connect race equality to community cohesion

Managers & Workplaces

- Address recruitment, progression and informal power
- Equip managers to act, not avoid



MANAGER CONVERSATION GUIDES

Instead of...

- “We don’t have those issues here”
- “I treat everyone the same”
- “We don’t see race”

Say...

- “Our systems may impact people differently”
- “Let’s look at outcomes, not intent”
- “What might we be missing?”

READY-TO-GO SOLUTIONS YOU CAN ROLL OUT IMMEDIATELY

- Facilitated Race Equality Week programme
- Sector-specific workshops
- Recorded sessions for online access
- Manager toolkits and briefing packs
- Action planning templates
- Impact and evaluation framework



POST-WEEK ACTION FRAMEWORK

3 months

- Review policies and data
- Manager confidence refreshers

6 months

- Progress check against action plan
- Staff and service user feedback

12 months

- Impact evaluation
- Board-level review
- Updated strategy and priorities

Final message

Race Equality Week 2026 is not about perfection.

It is about **honesty, accountability and sustained change**.

If organisations return to “*business as usual*” after the week, the opportunity is lost.

If they anchor learning into **strategy, leadership and systems**, change becomes possible.

#ChangeNeedsAllOfUs

Please feel free to contact us if you need help or advice

info@equalityanddiversity.co.uk

