

Racist Incident
reporting in
Scotland's
Schools



Acknowledgements

The Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights offers sincere thanks to:

All Local Authority staff involved in responding to the Freedom of Information request which provided the main source of data for this briefing

The authors of the briefing, Carol Young and Nadja Conrad, for the care and effort invested in collating, analysing and interpreting the wide range of information received

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Section One - Introduction

Racism in schools has been the subject of countless guides, toolkits, strategies and policies across Britain since the late 1990s. From overt racist bullying to 'unwitting' or 'accidental' racism, research has consistently shown how exposure to prejudice harms the wellbeing of minority ethnic pupils.¹ Racism hits home in a different way to general experiences of bullying. Racism is experienced not just as a personal attack on a young person, but as something deeper which undermines and degrades their family, their community and their culture.²

Ideally, racist incident recording in schools should provide a barometer for individual schools to gauge the extent to which aspects of racism are manifested within school premises. In turn, this should inform schools and local Education Authorities' efforts to monitor how well they perform in their legal duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment.³ Even more broadly, when gathered and published at national level, the rise and fall in racist incidents recorded could help to monitor social change in attitudes and behaviours amongst young people.

In reality, a number of challenges stand between this ideal scenario and the practical application of racist incident recording. Recording processes have been developed in the vast majority of British schools, yet perceptions of the process are often fraught with tension, misinterpretation and stigma.

Much of this negativity stems from two key problems. Firstly, a lack of understanding of the nature of racism and its impact in schools beyond direct cases of bullying; and secondly, the disjointed nature of recording processes and practices within schools.

This briefing provides a broad examination of racist incident recording in Scottish schools; why and how it is undertaken, what evidence it provides and how it could best contribute to tackling racism in the future.

The primary sources of information used in this analysis are a series of racist incident statistics and policies gained through Freedom of Information Requests made to all 32 Scottish Local Authorities by CRER in spring 2012. More information on research methods is available at Appendix 1 (p.40).

¹ See, for example, Arshad et al (2005) *Minority Ethnic Pupils' Experiences of School in Scotland*. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive

² Tippett et al (2011) *Prevention and Response to Identity Based Bullying among Local Authorities in England, Scotland and Wales*. London: EHRC

³ The first element of the General Public Sector Equality Duty in the Equality Act 2010, which applies to a range of public authorities such as education bodies (including schools).



Section Two - Background

The Macpherson Report

Racist incident recording in schools is one of the many public sector legacies of the Macpherson Inquiry, Sir William Macpherson's examination of the investigation into the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence in 1993. The report of the Inquiry (often referred to as the Macpherson Report) in 1999 is most often noted for its focus on Police Service reform; however its recommendations spanned the public sector. On education, Macpherson's conclusion was that:

"Racism, institutional or otherwise, is not the prerogative of the Police Service. It is clear that other agencies including for example those dealing with housing and education also suffer from the disease. If racism is to be eradicated there must be specific and co-ordinated action both within the agencies themselves and by society at large, particularly through the educational system, from pre-primary school upwards and onwards.

We have already referred... to the racism observed amongst children of primary and even pre-school age, and to the high proportion of racist incidents attributable to young people. It must be a major concern of Government that our educational system should address these issues.

There is evidence that there are difficulties in getting some schools individually or locally to acknowledge and tackle racism even where local education authorities have sought to persuade them to do so. The lack of powers available to local education authorities and the fear of negative publicity by schools clearly combine to make anti-racist policies, even where they exist, ineffective. Consequently in order to seek to eradicate racism in the longer term, within society as a whole, the Government should consider how best to empower local education authorities to create, monitor and enforce anti-racist policies through codes of practice and by amendment of the National Curriculum, to provide education which deals with racism awareness and valuing cultural diversity in the multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society in which we live."⁴

Specific recommendations for schools were made by Macpherson, namely:

- Amendment of the National Curriculum to reflect the needs of a diverse society
- Creation and implementation of strategies in schools to prevent and address racism, including:

⁴ Macpherson, W. (1999) The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. London: TSO



- Recording of all racist incidents;
- Reporting of incidents to the pupils' parents/guardians, school Governors and LEAs;
- Annual publication of numbers of racist incidents per school;
- Annual publication of pupil exclusions by ethnicity per school
- Implementation of race equality strategies to be reviewed during OFSTED inspections⁵

Stephen's mother, Doreen Lawrence, welcomed the Inquiry's emphasis on education. She believed that Stephen's killers may have developed different attitudes to race if the educational system had helped them to understand the contribution of Black and minority ethnic people to British society.⁶

Progress so far

In the years since the publication of the Macpherson Report, there is little doubt that schools have recognised the need to tackle racism and have developed various degrees of procedure and strategy with this aim. Aspects of Macpherson's recommendations influenced the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, which formally reinforced the importance of action on racism in schools with its duties to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups. Arguably, the focus on equality within a school setting has also been enhanced through the equality related requirements of education-specific legislation such as the Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000 and Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004.

However, the impact of the resulting new strategies and procedures has been limited in many cases. More than a decade on from the Macpherson Inquiry, research undertaken in English schools by Show Racism the Red Card found significant evidence of racist attitudes amongst teachers themselves as well as pupils. Teachers had rarely experienced any form of training or guidance on race equality and as a result, lacked capacity and confidence to deal with racist incidents⁷. This would undoubtedly contribute to the ineffectiveness of racist incident reporting processes.

⁵ Macpherson, W. (1999) The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. London: TSO; note that elements of these recommendations focus on the education system in England and Wales, which differs from the Scottish system

⁶ Ghouri, N (1999) Schools Told To Report Racist Pupils: Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. TES Newspaper, published 26th February 1999

⁷ Soyei, S. (2011) The Barriers to Challenging Racism and Promoting Race Equality in England's Schools. Tyne & Wear: Show Racism the Red Card.



Research by the BBC in 90 British Local Authorities showed 87,915 racist incidents between 2007 and 2011⁸. The resulting article explored the Coalition Government's 2010 policy change which removed official pressure to record racist incidents in schools. In a retrograde move, schools in England and Wales are now advised to monitor bullying (including racist incidents) but are free to decide for themselves how to record it, if at all, and are not required to report it to the Local Authority⁹. The situation is less clear in Scotland, where the education system is devolved to the Scottish Parliament but race equality is reserved to Westminster. In the past, Scottish Local Authority education departments have tended to develop race equality policies for use in schools based largely on guidance at UK Government level but also taking into account the specific Scottish educational context.

The Coalition Government's reduction in emphasis on racist incident recording is a stark contrast to the position of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, Britain's equality watchdog, whose 2011 research report into identity based bullying recommended that a duty to record and report incidents should be introduced as part of a whole school approach to tackling it, supported by practical guidance.¹⁰

The lack of a comprehensive review of the implementation of Macpherson's recommendations on education makes it difficult to assess the impact of developments in racist incident recording in schools. The policing recommendations, on the other hand, have undergone analysis by various bodies including official 'ten years on' reviews by both the Equality and Human Rights Commission¹¹ and the Government's Home Affairs Committee¹².

Although the Macpherson report and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 were ground breaking in many ways, the ripple effects through Public Sector Equality Duties to varying sources of guidance and practice in public sector organisations saw the potential for change diluted. Research by the Equality and Human Rights Commission in 2011 raised the difficulties faced by schools in tackling racism when very little evidence is available on the nature and extent of racist bullying or the best means of tackling it¹³.

⁸ Talwar, D. (2012) More than 87,000 Racist Incidents Recorded in Schools. BBC Asian Network.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Tippett et al (2011) Prevention and Response to Identity Based Bullying among Local Authorities in England, Scotland and Wales. London: EHRC

¹¹ Bennetto, J. (2009) Police and Racism: What has been achieved 10 years after the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report? London: EHRC

¹² Home Affairs Committee (2009) The Macpherson Report: Ten years on. London: TSO

¹³ Tippett et al (2011) Prevention and Response to Identity Based Bullying among Local Authorities in England, Scotland and Wales. London: EHRC



Through the 2000s, official guidance consistently advised that racist incident recording should take place in schools but varied as to how this should be done, sometimes giving the impression that recording was mandatory and at other times downplaying this¹⁴. Confusion about how racism is defined, legal obligations and best practice approaches ensued. In 2005, Home Office research highlighted this confusion in relation to racist incident recording in the Police Force:

“...Officers commonly thought that incidents were only racist if minority ethnic victims were being targeted exclusively, if the racist motivation for the incident was explicit (for instance by being accompanied by racist verbal abuse), and if there was no other motivating factor.”¹⁵

This contrasts poorly with Recommendation 12 of the Macpherson report; that the definition of a racist incident should be: "Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person." This definition places emphasis on the impact of behaviour, accounting for the often subtle and pernicious ways in which racism is manifested.

Definitions and purposes

The continuing importance of indirect and institutional discrimination is a crucial issue often missed in critiques of racist incident reporting in schools. Adrian Hart, a prominent critic of the process, has written extensively on the need to avoid ‘criminalising’ children through racist incident reporting¹⁶. Hart has published on the subject in media including the online magazine *Spiked*¹⁷ and the *Daily Mail*¹⁸. The arguments put forward by Hart and other commentators are symptomatic of widespread misunderstanding in schools and in wider society about the basis for, and purpose of, racist incident recording.

This has arguably occurred because the basis and purpose have never been properly set out in a widely used form of guidance. Without a strict definition and a clear source of guidance, over time, common practice develops based on the instinct of authority figures as to ‘how this should be dealt with.’ Research

¹⁴ See Insted Consultancy (2011) Recording and Reporting Racist Incidents in Schools – An update on requirements and good practice, summer 2011 for an overview of the varying guidance produced at GB level

¹⁵ Foster, J., Newburn, T. and Souhami, A. (2005) Home Office Research Study 294: Assessing the Impact of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. London: Home Office Research

¹⁶ See, for example, Hart, A. (2011) Leave Those Kids Alone: How Official Hate Speech Regulation Interferes in School Life. Manifesto Club.

¹⁷ Hart, A. (2012) Exploding the Myth of Racist Kids, *Spiked Online* Monday 28th May

¹⁸ Hart, A. (2009) Could your child be branded a racist next? It beggars belief that thousands of primary school children are being reported by the authorities, *Mail Online* 5th November 2009



shows that some schools adopt a passive approach, whilst others opt for routine punitive measures regardless of circumstance or intent¹⁹. As a result, situations such as the attempted prosecution of a ten-year-old for using the word ‘Paki’ occur²⁰. This has a patently damaging effect, not only on the children, parents and schools involved but also more widely in discrediting racist incident reporting and creating further confusion about how it should be used.

By using the Macpherson Report definition of ‘racist incident’ in reporting procedures, schools can ensure that all incidents which have been perceived as racist are taken into account. Over time, this can help to build up a picture of the shifting usage of racially charged language, racist attacks and other manifestations of racism. However, building and interpreting this picture requires an understanding of what racism is and why it still matters.

The dictionary definition of racism²¹ is of little use in practice, identifying it as “The belief that all members of each race possess characteristics, abilities, or qualities specific to that race, especially so as to distinguish it as inferior or superior to another race or races.” It might therefore be inferred, however wrongly, that someone who instigates a racist incident must subscribe to the type of prejudice described in this inadequate, outdated definition.

The majority of anti-racist practitioners work from a perspective that defines racism as a combination of prejudice and power. This can include the historical mix of prejudice and power that leads to social and political structures designed to suit people in the ethnic majority at the expense of other groups. Racist language which singles out people from Black and ethnic minority backgrounds is part of these social structures, and where it is used by children who do not understand these structures, the impact can be felt deeply regardless of the intention. Critiques of racist incident recording generally fail to appreciate this.

Contrary to the assertions of Hart and others, teachers are not being asked to brand a child a racist every time a word is spoken which could cause racial offence. The child’s intention is important, of course, for reasons of classroom discipline; but regardless of intention, the potential impact of the incident is clearly racist. Language has been used which separates or disparages a child on the grounds of race. It is the incident itself which is recorded as racist, not the child or children involved.

¹⁹ Soyei, S. (2011) *The Barriers to Challenging Racism and Promoting Race Equality in England’s Schools*. Tyne & Wear: Show Racism the Red Card.

²⁰ Brettingham, M. (2008) Can a 4 Year Old Be Racist? TES Newspaper, published 24th October 2008.

²¹ Oxford Dictionaries (2012) Online Dictionary. Oxford: Oxford University Press.



Nevertheless, working to educate children whose behaviour could be construed as racist is still important. Incidents are often excused as stemming from ignorance or innocence, but if left unchallenged these behaviours can contribute to the 'learned misinformation' which embeds racist attitudes in later life²².

Recording and dealing with a racist incident in school is not a homogenous process. Where incidences are severe or repetitive, disciplinary action may be taken, but outside of this situation the focus is usually on helping children to understand why their behaviour is damaging and unacceptable. In many cases, the guidance provided to teachers shows this with some clarity; social change, not criminalisation, is the goal. The difficulty arises when teachers, parents and others have a limited understanding of racism, and so cannot provide the appropriate, supportive response.

In an interview with the Times Educational Supplement, Louis Kushnick (race equality activist and Professor Emeritus at Manchester University) put forward a strong argument for mandatory incident reporting as a tool for social change:

"Do we want a society characterised by stupidity, bigotry and ignorance? Or do we want our children to be at ease with the world? ...If we don't raise our children to be decent human beings, they'll bring into school what they're consuming elsewhere and no one will challenge it... If you don't have monitoring you have no way of identifying the scale of the problem. And if you leave it up to schools, there's no reward for flagging it up."²³

²² Anon. (2008) Dealing with Racist Incidents: Preventing Racism and Empowering Young People Conference Report. Leicester County Council, Leicester City Council and Mandeep Rupra Consulting.

²³ Brettingham, M. (2008) Can a 4 Year Old Be Racist? TES Newspaper, published 24th October 2008.



Section Three - Local Authority Policies

The Freedom of Information request made by CRER to all Scottish Local Authorities in spring 2012 asked Education Departments to provide a copy of the policy or policies relating to racist incident reporting used by schools in their Local Authority area over the period 2001 to March 2012.

A total of thirty sets of Local Authority policy documents (hereafter referred to as 'policy sets') were received and analysed during the course of this research. The response from Orkney Council was submitted too late for analysis, as was the response from Highland Council which responded to the request only after intervention by the Office of the Information Commissioner. The policy sets submitted by councils varied widely, from a generic equality scheme to full suites including a race equality scheme, anti-bullying strategy and guidelines on dealing with racist incidents. Twenty Authorities submitted documents designed specifically for an education setting; documents from another five areas had a mix of education and general public sector; and the final five were generic documentation for the public sector.

Each policy set received was assessed by a researcher using a standard enquiry process. The researcher examined:

- Date of commencement
- Type of policy/policies – for example race equality specific or generic anti-bullying policy
- Whether policies were specifically for schools or for public bodies generally
- Information given on prevention of racist incidents
- Detail of actions to be taken in the event of a racist incident
- Information given on how the policy should be carried into practice
- Duties held by post holders in relation to implementation and enforcement
- Detail of monitoring processes
- What the Local Authority requires to be monitored (for example basic number of incidents, perception of the incident by those involved, information about the target or perpetrator, action taken etc.)
- Date of review
- Information given on assessment
- Details provided on staff equality training requirements
- Remedies for breaches of the policy

Using the information gathered, the researcher assigned each Local Authority a rating for their policy set based on its relevance, quality and clarity in comparison with the criteria above (more detail is given in the table of ratings overleaf). The assigned ratings were Excellent, Good, Above Average or Basic.



These ratings do not relate to practice, only policy, which raises further difficulties in what is already a subjective interpretation (see p.19 and p.33 for further discussion).

The ratings assigned to Councils were as follows:

<p>Excellent Extremely clear and detailed, innovative or otherwise outstanding, meeting all or most of the criteria well</p>	<p>Angus Dundee Edinburgh Inverclyde</p>
<p>Good Clear and detailed enough to enable effective recording, meeting most of the criteria well</p>	<p>East Dunbartonshire Falkirk Glasgow Renfrewshire West Dunbartonshire West Lothian</p>
<p>Above average Adequate information / approach, meeting some of the criteria well</p>	<p>Clackmannanshire Dumfries & Galloway East Ayrshire North Ayrshire Stirling</p>
<p>Basic Meeting some of the criteria but raising concerns in one or more of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bureaucratic process without sufficient guidance • Not sufficiently school focussed • Notably out-of-date in approach, or • Insufficient information supplied 	<p>Aberdeen Aberdeenshire Argyll & Bute East Lothian East Renfrewshire Eilean Siar Fife Midlothian Moray North Lanarkshire Perth & Kinross Scottish Borders Shetland Island South Ayrshire South Lanarkshire</p>
<p>Not Assessed</p>	<p>Orkney Islands Council Highland Council</p>

Differences between and within individual policy sets were extreme, and so the ratings given here are based on an overall assessment. Many of the policy sets within the middle ratings (Basic to Above Average) excelled in some areas



but were notably inadequate in others. One major area of concern was around the dates for implementation or review. The majority (19 out of 30) had been implemented before the introduction of the Equality Act 2010, some as long ago as 2003, and 15 had no provisions for review. Only 7 policy sets were fully up to date and only 6 had clear review timescales of three years or less for all documents submitted.

The following sections provide an overview of general trends within the policy sets.

Prevention

With regard to prevention of racist incidents, the content of the policy sets varied widely, making comparison difficult. Four Local Authorities had no content on prevention at all.

The remainder were split between very basic statements (for example ‘the race equality policy should be publicised to all staff and parents’, or ‘race equality / anti-bullying training will be provided’) and more detailed approaches that set out methods of prevention.

The best of these approaches combined positive teaching strategies designed to reflect cultural diversity and remove stereotyping with participative approaches to policy making and restorative action in cases of harassment.

Stirling Council

Stirling Council’s policy has a significant focus on promotion of positive relationships and positive behaviour, and the importance of a consistent approach on this across schools.

Actions identified on prevention for the Education Services department include:

- Partnership work with a range of stakeholders ‘to ensure our educational establishments are safe places for everyone’
- Provision of staff development opportunities, resources and information on dealing with hurtful and bullying behaviour, for example diversity training, cyber-bullying training, restorative approaches, child protection etc.
- Promotion of restorative strategies including circles, peer mediation and proactive buddying
- Working with educational establishments to develop effective practice
- Reviewing current approaches with stakeholder involvement to inform future development

Action

A large range of variations in policy were also found in terms of action to be taken in the case of a racist incident occurring. Seven Local Authorities submitted policy sets which made no mention of action to be taken. Two policy sets stated that incidents should be recorded or reported, but with no further detail. Three concentrated on recording/reporting and stated that action would be taken without going into specific detail on what that might be, and a further three did not mention recording but did outline some form of action to be taken. Half of the responses (fifteen in total) covered both recording processes and specific actions or a range of potential actions to be taken.

The best of these tended to concentrate on a restorative approach, supporting the target of the incident, involving the perpetrator and parents/guardians and instigating punishment where appropriate.

Some suggested using incidents of 'casual racism' in the classroom to educate the class more widely. This approach, however commendable in its intentions, can sometimes make the situation worse by creating discomfort for BME pupils and can lead to incidents being dealt with poorly as discussion will be guided by the teacher's perceptions of the incident, potentially without appropriate background knowledge or input from those affected.

Dundee Council

Dundee Council's policy contains much detail regarding action to be taken on racist incidents. Procedures include:

- Recording the incident
- Supporting the person targeted
- Preventative measures to ensure that similar incidents do not occur
- Disciplinary procedures where appropriate
- Review of each incident after an agreed period of time
- Involving staff, the parents of those involved and where appropriate outside agencies and/or the School Community Support Service

Importantly, the policy makes it clear that racist behaviour or attitudes must be tackled whether or not black or minority ethnic people are present. A range of expectations on how bullying will be dealt with both proactively and reactively in a 'whole community approach' are included.

Monitoring processes

Further detail on incident monitoring processes was provided by most of the Local Authorities. Seventeen provided information about both the process (for example a guideline or descriptive paragraph) and the method of recording (e.g. database or monitoring form). A further nine provided a form or mentioned that a form is used but gave no further details. Two did not mention a process or a form, and in two further cases some mention of monitoring was made but the details were unclear.

Whilst the majority of the more detailed processes stated that racist incident monitoring information would be reviewed to inform future policy on a regular basis (for example annually), no evidence was available in the majority of cases to confirm that this is happening. Where provided, the level of detail recorded through monitoring forms varied widely. Some of these gathered basic detail on the incident and those involved, whilst others went on to explore the type of incident (physical assault, name calling, racial stereotyping etc.) and the action taken.

East Dunbartonshire Council

East Dunbartonshire Council records racist incident monitoring information in a uniquely detailed way. As well as recording basic details, their comprehensive monitoring form examines:

- Actions to support victim/perpetrator
- Dates of letters sent to the parents/carers of the alleged victim(s)/perpetrator(s)
- Dates of discussions with parents/carers and summary of all discussions
- Whether it was possible to substantiate that the incident occurred and that it was a racist incident (if judged not to be, reasons must be described)
- Any follow-up work to be undertaken (e.g. whole school, whole class, group work, etc.)
- Timescale for any further reviews (one week, one month, six months)
- Confirmation that the school, parents and victim(s) of the incident are all satisfied that the incident is closed

As part of a holistic approach and with appropriate support and capacity building for staff, this level of detail in recording should provide extra information on how the system works in practice for review purposes and to inform future policy.

Several of the monitoring systems centred on hate crime terminology or were part of a wider hate crime monitoring system at Local Authority level. This raises concerns that 'lower level' incidents may not be recorded properly, as comparatively few racist incidents would be severe enough to be considered hate crimes.

Some other monitoring systems separated incidents into 'intentional' and 'unintentional' categories. Some level of differentiation should prove useful in reviewing progress and may be felt to promote a more supportive approach for those pupils who have unwittingly become the subject of a racist incident report. However, making this distinction a tick-box process rather than part of the narrative of investigation is a double edged sword. Without adequate guidance and appropriate focus on the impact of the behaviour, this approach could easily result in a 'your word against mine' scenario between target and perpetrator, with the decision appearing as a form of 'taking sides'.

Assessment, evaluation and review

Some form of assessment, evaluation and review activity was mentioned by twenty two of the Local Authorities. Examples of the approaches taken included:

- Standalone policy reviews to be completed over a set timescale (for example annually or every three years)
- Quarterly reviews of the information gathered through monitoring
- Use of consultation exercises to assess policy effectiveness
- Equality Impact Assessment processes
- Standardised quality assurance processes

The remaining eight Local Authorities' policy sets gave no information in this area.

Staff training

Racist incident recording processes are unlikely to operate well if staff lack the capacity and skill to recognise and deal with the issues presented. Training activities should therefore be a key part of any effective approach. Ten Local Authorities gave details of specific training provision, some of which was race equality specific or related to anti-bullying. In some cases, training related specifically to activities required of staff in the policy (using 'circle time' to deal with bullying behaviour, for example). A further twelve Local Authorities stated some general commitment to appropriate training, whilst eight made no mention of training at all.



West Lothian Council

Although many of the policies stated that training would be provided and some outlined what types of training would be available, few gave much detail on the skill set teachers would be expected to develop. West Lothian Council's policy offers an annual training programme designed to support staff (whether management, teaching, professional or support) to 'develop their awareness and skills in matters of relating to racial equality... and equal opportunities'. They provide a list of skills considered necessary:

- Assessment and monitoring
- Human relations management
- Leadership
- Communication skills (especially with young people and parents or service user with English as an additional language)
- Understanding how to deal with racist incidents
- Curriculum management
- Implementation of learning strategies for greater cultural engagement and greater moral responsibility
- Developing criteria for resources

Enforcement

Although many policy sets referenced action to be taken against those responsible for racist incidents, bullying or harassment, few referred to any penalties for staff who fail to carry out their duties under the policy or otherwise breach it. Only seven of the thirty Local Authority policy sets mentioned this.

Almost all of those which did mention policy breach issues simply stated that breaches would be dealt with in accordance with disciplinary procedures. Usefully, Inverclyde Council's policy makes it clear that repeated nil returns on racist incident monitoring are 'not credible' and will be investigated appropriately.

Policies and racist incident levels

Comparison of racist incident levels with policy rating shows that, looking at the number of incidents per 100 pupils and 100 BME pupils in each area²⁴,

²⁴ Issues and caveats around the use of the per 100 BME pupils measure are explored at p.19, see also p.23



there are few correlations between the strength of the policies and the number of recorded incidents. This is perhaps unsurprising given the complex range of policy and practice involved. Generally speaking, those areas recording higher numbers of incidents were rated in the middle categories whilst many in the Basic category showed low incident numbers and the picture in the Excellent category tended to be somewhere in the middle. Further detail on racist incident levels is given from p.20 onward.

The policy ratings given here further demonstrate the need for a more cohesive approach, showing considerable diversity in current approaches across Scotland. Importantly, the weight given to racist incident reporting and race equality more generally does not seem to be significantly impacted by the relative number of BME pupils in Local Authority areas. There was no particular correlation between the percentage of BME pupils in an area and the quality of its policy. Inverclyde, with only 3.3% BME population in its schools, gained an Excellent rating; meanwhile Aberdeen (17.2%) and East Renfrewshire (15.7%) were rated as Basic despite the relatively high BME population (see Appendix 2, p.41).

Moray Council

Recording practice in Moray was of particular concern to the researchers. Moray initially provided a datasheet detailing the total number of recorded incidents for 1999 – 2003 (total number categorised as racist: 0). A further enquiry was made for information from 2003 to present date. A written response with no attached datasheet then detailed that from 2003-2008, Moray again recorded 0 racist incidents. For August 2009 to March 2009 two racist incidents were recorded but the Local Authority had no information as to whether these were at secondary or primary school level. For April 2009 to date, a further two racist incidents were recorded – no information could be given regarding the specific year or at which school level they occurred. It can be concluded that Moray Council are not effectively recording or analysing racist incidents. As information has not been gathered on practice within individual schools in the Moray area, it is possible that schools are not being properly advised to submit records to the Local Authority or that those records are not being collated when they do reach Moray Council. Whilst not amongst the most diverse areas in Scotland, other Council areas with similar numbers of BME pupils have recorded significantly more racist incidents, making it extremely unlikely that the numbers recorded are valid. In 2010/11, for example, Moray recorded no racist incidents and had a BME school population of 625, whilst South Ayrshire with 623 BME pupils recorded 25 incidents and East Ayrshire with 601 recorded 11. As in several other cases where low levels of racist incidents were recorded, Moray Council's submitted policies were rated as basic.

Policy vs. practice

As noted, the practical application of these policies is likely to vary widely. Examples of this were demonstrated by qualitative research undertaken in English schools by Show Racism the Red Card. This study found considerable inconsistency in how recording was undertaken by teachers. Although 93% of teachers who completed the research questionnaire stated that if they witnessed a racist incident they would feel able to report it, responses from the interviews revealed that this did not fully reflect the action they would take. For example, one teacher stated that incidents were always reported immediately, but later said that she often warned the pupils involved informally and did not report the incident. Other teachers interviewed did not understand the procedures or how to follow them²⁵.

Research undertaken for the Scottish Government into education for asylum seeking and refugee pupils raised similar issues. Although schools had substantial policies and procedures on racism and many were viewed as taking a 'stern stance' on the issue, underreporting was common and action taken often ineffective.²⁶

Because of the complexity of factors involved, interpretation of the impact of policy on levels of racist incidents can currently only be successfully undertaken by individual schools. To enable analysis even at Local Authority level, evidence of consistent practice within the guidelines would be needed. At Scotland wide level, this evidenced practice would need to be informed by good quality, standardised guidelines.

²⁵ Soyei, S. (2011) The Barriers to Challenging Racism and Promoting Race Equality in England's Schools. Tyne & Wear: Show Racism the Red Card.

²⁶ Candappa, M. et al (2007) Education and Schooling for Asylum-seeking and Refugee Students in Scotland: an exploratory study. Edinburgh: Scottish Government.



Section Four – Analysing Racist Incident Data

The data presented in the following sections was gathered through Freedom of Information requests to all 32 Scottish Local Authorities, made in spring 2012 (see Appendix 1, p.40). It was recorded by schools and collated at Local Authority level. No data is provided for Highland Council due to late provision of data, or for Orkney or Dumfries and Galloway, where information has not been collected centrally (both Local Authorities plan to begin doing so).

Analysis of the provided information was problematic because of the wide variance in available data and size of Local Authority area.

To account for differences in the relative numbers of pupils in schools across Scotland, the figures used here in comparing ‘levels’ of racist incident are the equivalent number of racist incidents per 100 pupils and per 100 Black and minority ethnic pupils (all pupils who did not identify with one of the White British identity categories in the Scottish Government Pupil Census²⁷). The use of equivalent figures per 100 BME pupils ‘levels out’ the appearance of difference due to size of BME population in the schools, and it enables easier analysis of any potential correlation between the level of racist incidents and the ratio of majority to minority ethnic pupils. However, use of this measure is not intended to suggest that the number of BME pupils in an area is linked to the prevalence of racist incidents; analysis on p.23 specifically refutes this.

Varying definitions of ‘Black and minority ethnic’ exist, however to enable comparison with Pupil Census data this research uses the common definition of all self-selected identities which are not white British.

This raises a note of caution regarding analysis. Collated racist incident data does not account for the identities of targets of racist incidents, meaning that the standard definition is imperfect for the purposes of this study. Any person of any ethnic identity can be the target of a racist incident; indeed, racist incidents can occur without the presence of a minority ethnic pupil.

Furthermore, anti-English harassment in Scotland’s schools mean that white English / white British targets of racist incidents will be included in the racist incident figures but not in the Pupil Census statistics used for analysis.

Most importantly, the varying quality of reporting procedures and how these may be interpreted in practice across Scotland’s 32 Local Authority areas make direct comparisons extremely challenging. The data given in this report must therefore be interpreted with caution. A discussion of factors which may affect high or low levels of racist incident reporting is presented at p.23.

²⁷ Scottish Government Pupil Census, 2010/11



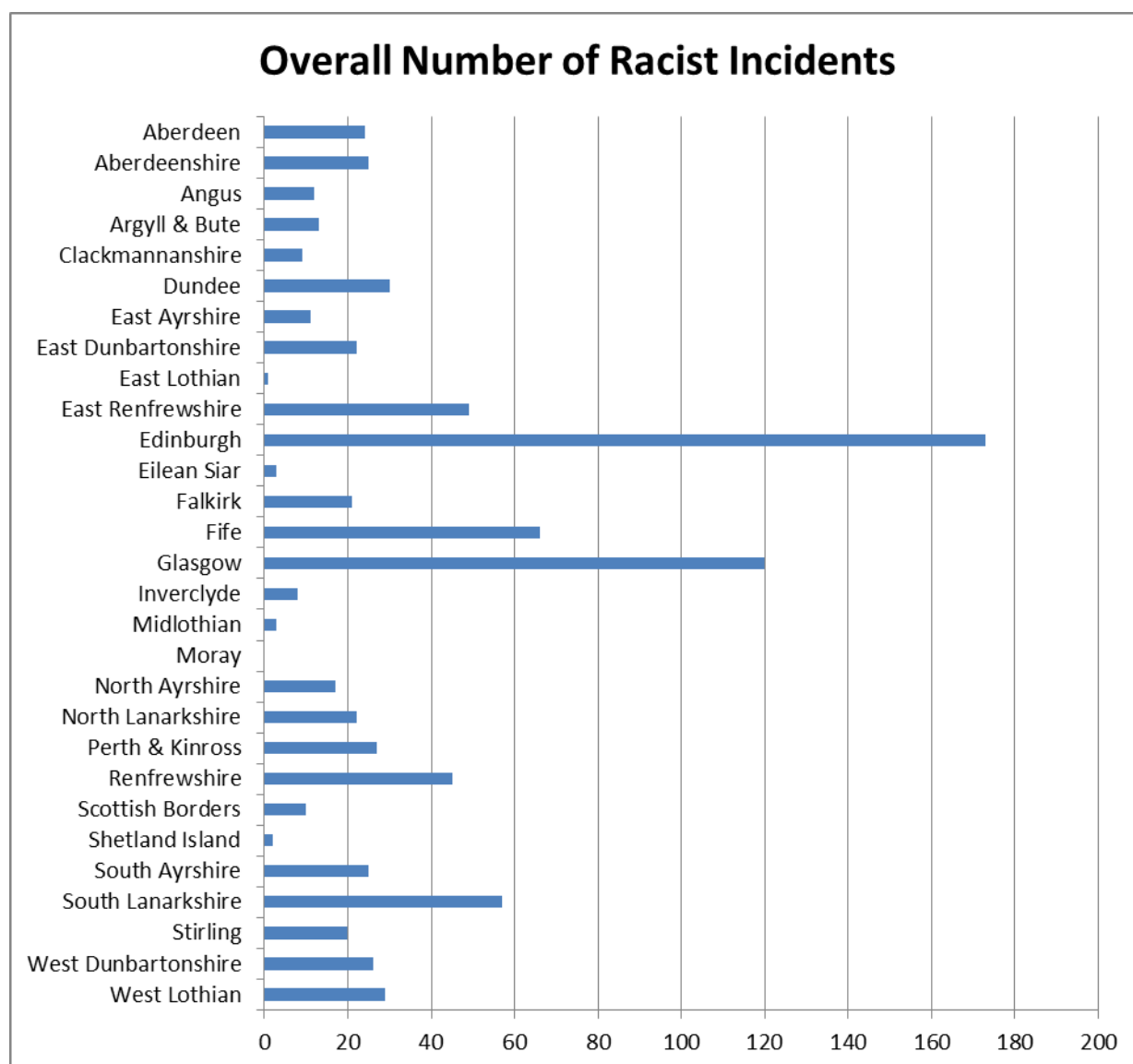
Section Five - Incidents reported in 2010/11

This section examines racist incident reporting data for the year 2010/11 received through Freedom of Information requests.

Incident levels

Information is given on the overall number of incidents at Table 1, the number of incidents per 100 pupils in total at Table 2, and the number of incidents per 100 BME pupils at Table 3. Analysis concentrates on the information given at Table 3, which minimises the skewing effect of school population size and demographics. Full tables detailing incident numbers can be found at Appendix 2 (p.41).

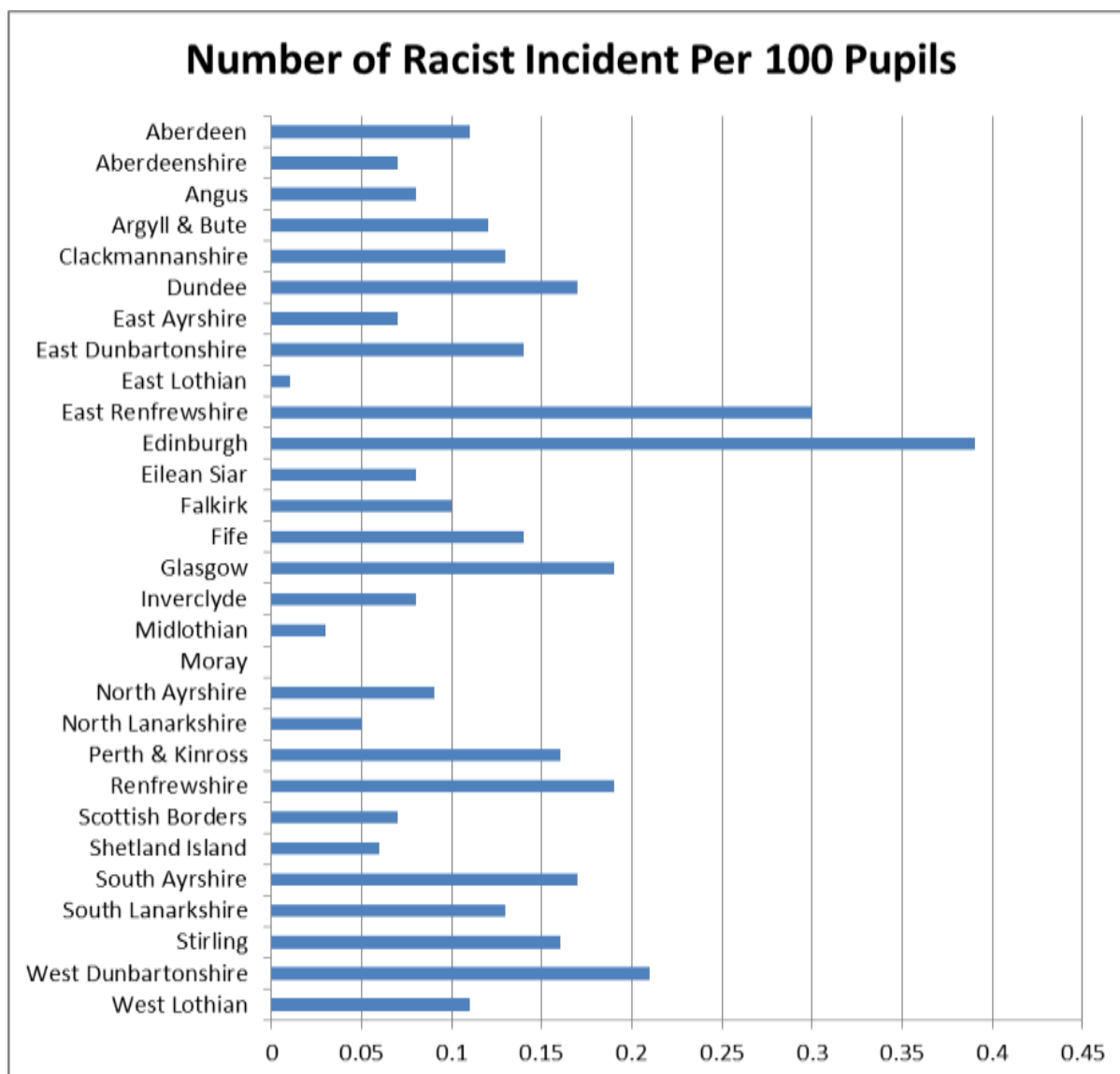
Table 1: Overall number of racist incidents by Local Authority, 2010/11



Data for 2010/11 from FOI datasets and Scottish Government Pupil Census

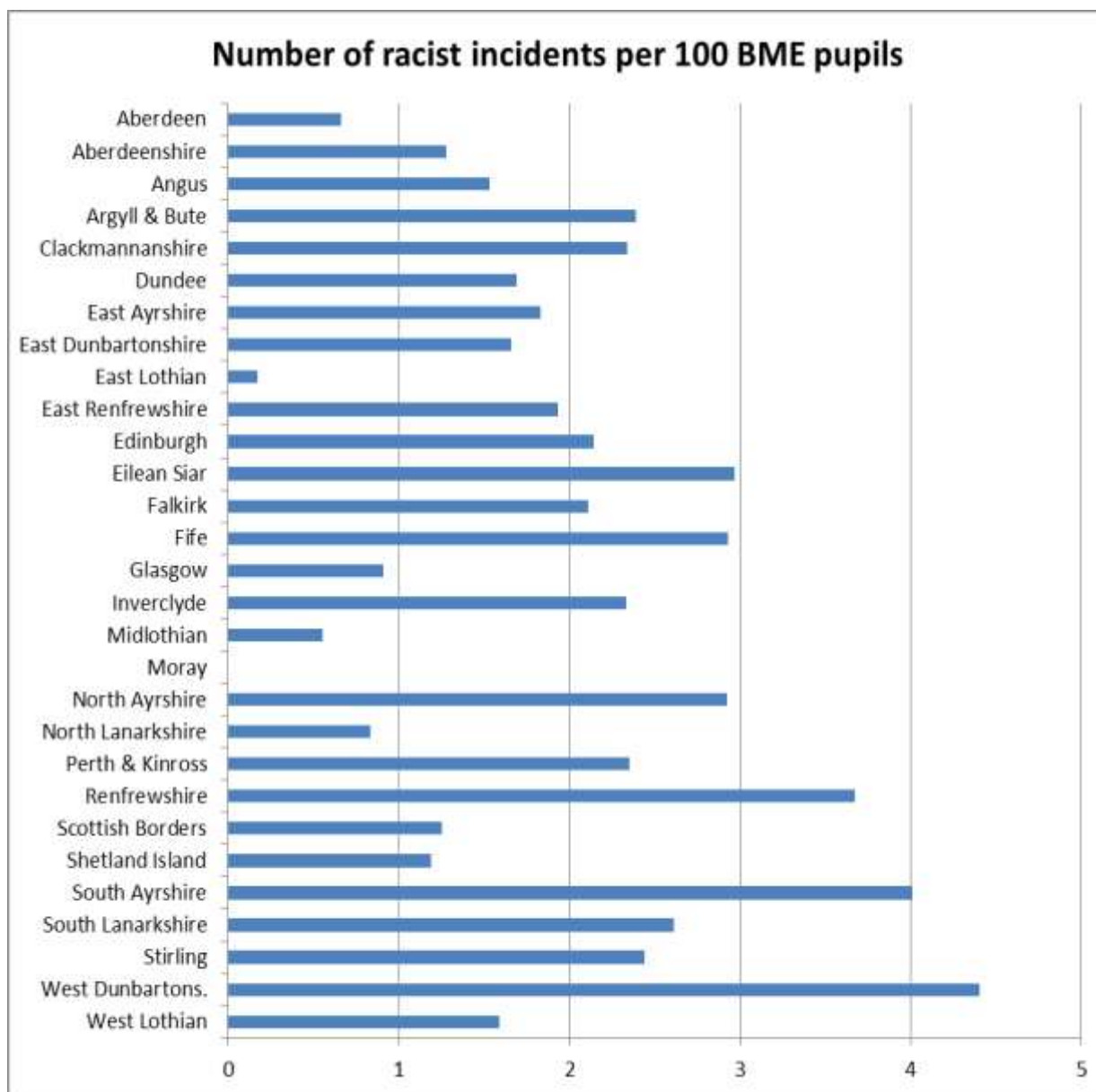


Table 2: Number of racist incidents per 100 pupils by Local Authority, 2010/11



Tables 1 and 2 present data for general information purposes, which is less useful for comparison due to the aforementioned variation in area size and demographics. Considering the overall number of incidents per school in Scotland, the total racist incident numbers for secondary schools suggest an estimated 1.52 incidents per school for 2011/12. Even for schools which experience relatively few racist incidents, this would appear remarkably low and appears to support the argument that many schools are not correctly recording incidents.

Table 3: Number of racist incidents per 100 BME pupils by Local Authority, 2010/11



Data for 2010/11 from FOI datasets and Scottish Government Pupil Census

Table 3 (above) shows the highest level of incidents in West Dunbartonshire, South Ayrshire and Renfrewshire. The lowest incident levels were recorded in Moray and East Lothian. These figures only represent the incidents which have been recorded, and based on an assessment of the policies in these Local Authority areas, it is likely that in many cases these low levels are more indicative of poor recording than lack of incidents. As noted in the previous case study (p.17), recording processes in Moray raised concerns, whilst West Dunbartonshire has the highest level of incidents yet its policy set was rated as Good by researchers.



A wide range of factors may underlie currently reported levels of racist incidents in these Local Authority areas.

In areas with lower levels of recorded racist incident, issues may include:

- Few incidents actually occurring
- Lack of knowledge about or confidence in the process leading to incidents not being reported
- Incidents being reported but not interpreted as racist
- Incidents being interpreted as racist, but not recorded
- Recorded incidents in individual schools not being passed on to Local Authorities
- Recorded incidents not being properly collated at Local Authority level

In areas with higher levels of recorded racist incident, issues may include:

- More incidents occurring
- Better knowledge about or confidence in the process leading to higher levels of reporting
- More incidents being correctly interpreted as racist
- Incidents being routinely recorded
- Better systems for collation of school data at Local Authority level

In this context, the fact that those Authorities with Excellent rated policies (see p.11) tend to record medium levels of racist incidents could theoretically be due to a combination of adequate recording practices ensuring that a realistic number of incidents are recorded, whilst effective prevention work stops the number of incidents from becoming high.

The use of equivalent racist incident figures per 100 BME pupils levels out any potential for the appearance of differences due to size of BME population in the schools (see p.19 for further exploration of this measure). However, analysis reveals that the rate of racist incidents does not appear to be strongly affected by the ratio of majority to minority ethnic pupils. All four highest incident areas had less than 5% BME population, but nevertheless, areas in the middle of the incident statistics had both high and low levels of BME population. Glasgow has the highest proportion of BME pupils (20.8%) and recorded a relatively low level of racist incidents (full details available in Appendix 2, from p.41).

Difference in reported incidents from Primary to Secondary level*

Analysis comparing Primary and Secondary school data showed a mixed picture. Again, information is given on the overall number of incidents at Table 4, the number of incidents per 100 pupils in total at Table 5, and the number of incidents per 100 BME pupils at Table 6. Analysis concentrates on the information given at Table 6, which minimises the skewing effect of school population size and demographics. Full tables detailing incident numbers can be found at Appendix 2 (p.41).

Table 4: Overall number of racist incidents in Scottish Local Authority Primary and Secondary schools, 2010/11

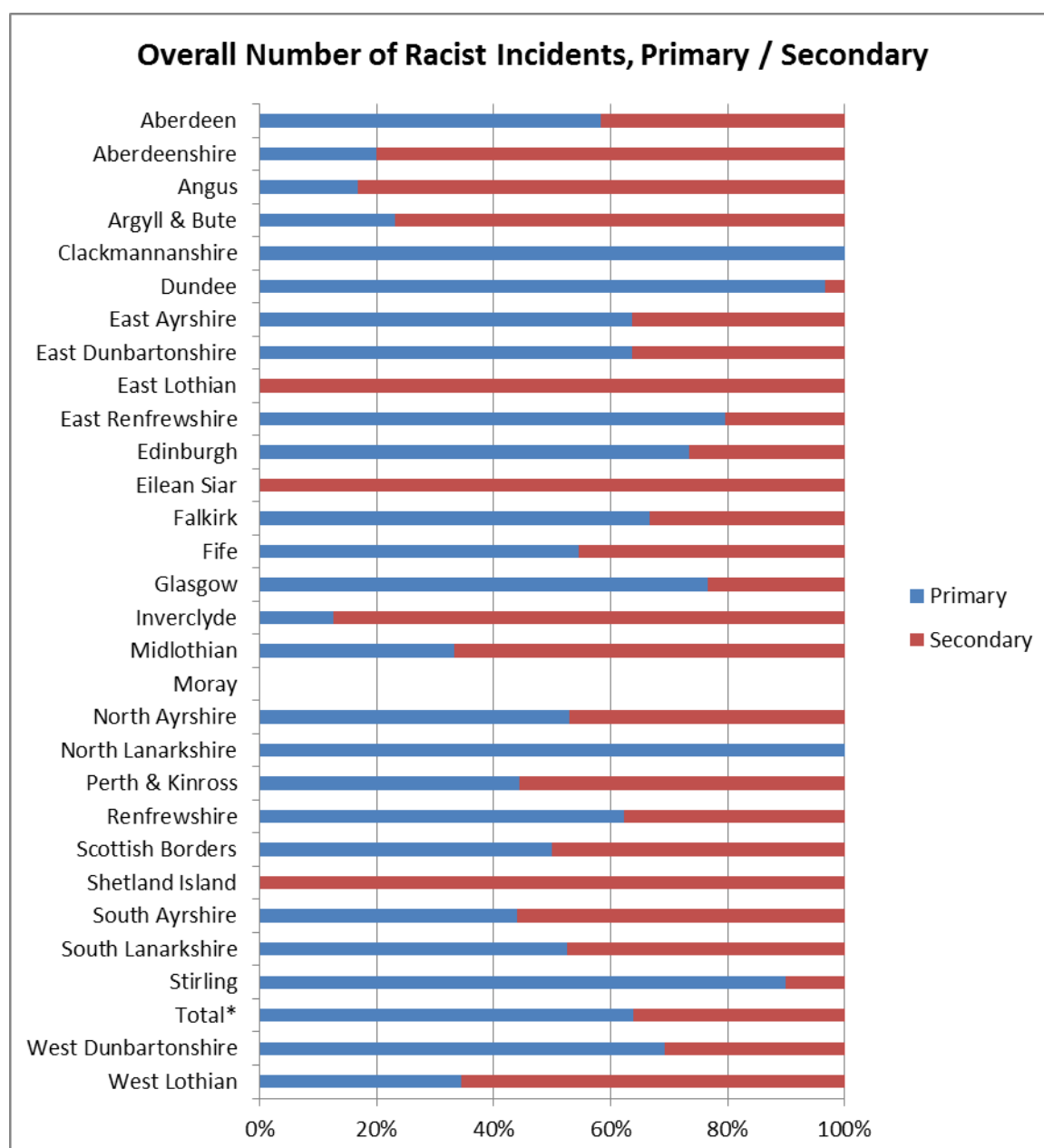
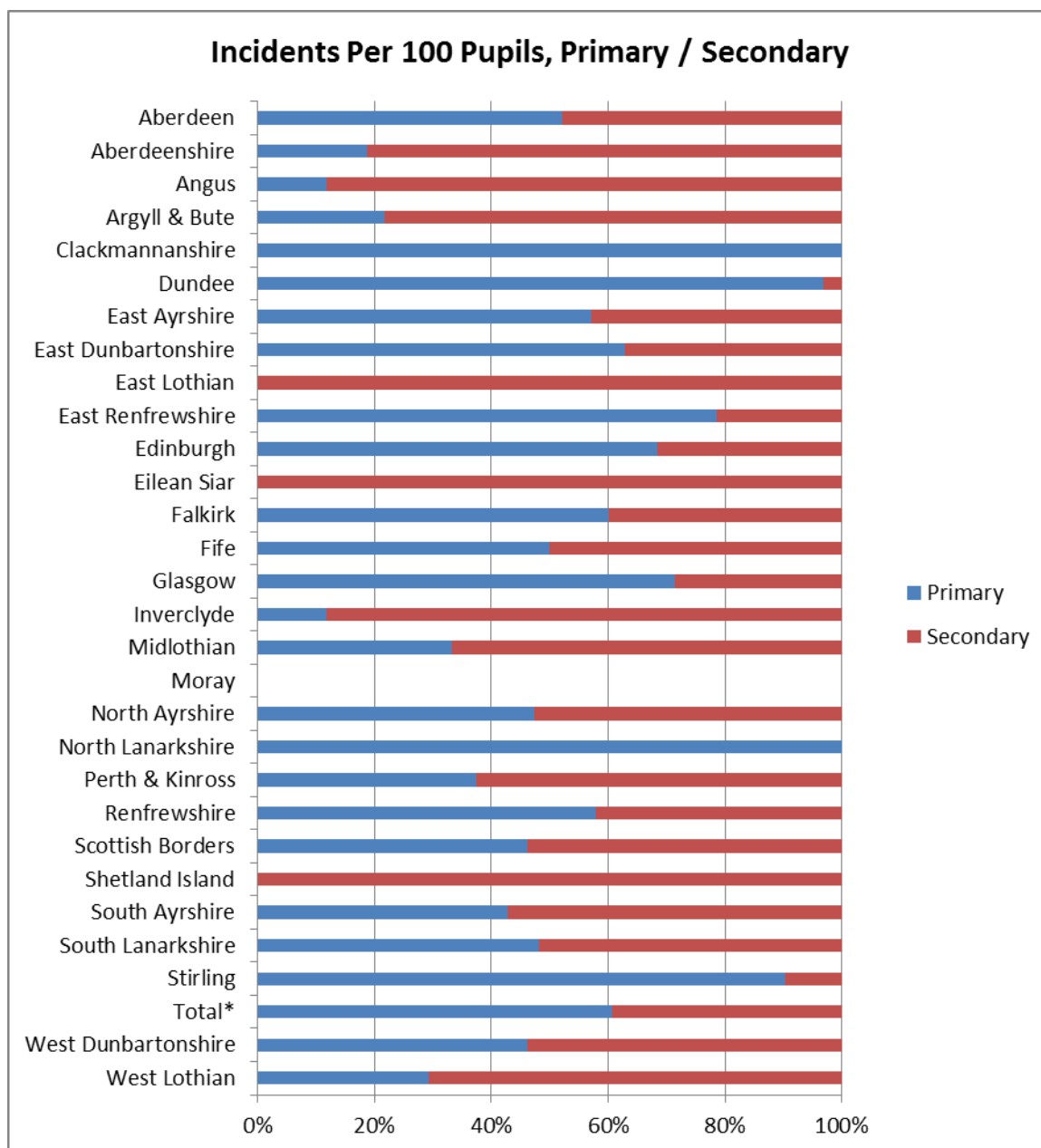


Table 5: Racist incidents per 100 pupils in Scottish Local Authority Primary and Secondary schools, 2010/11

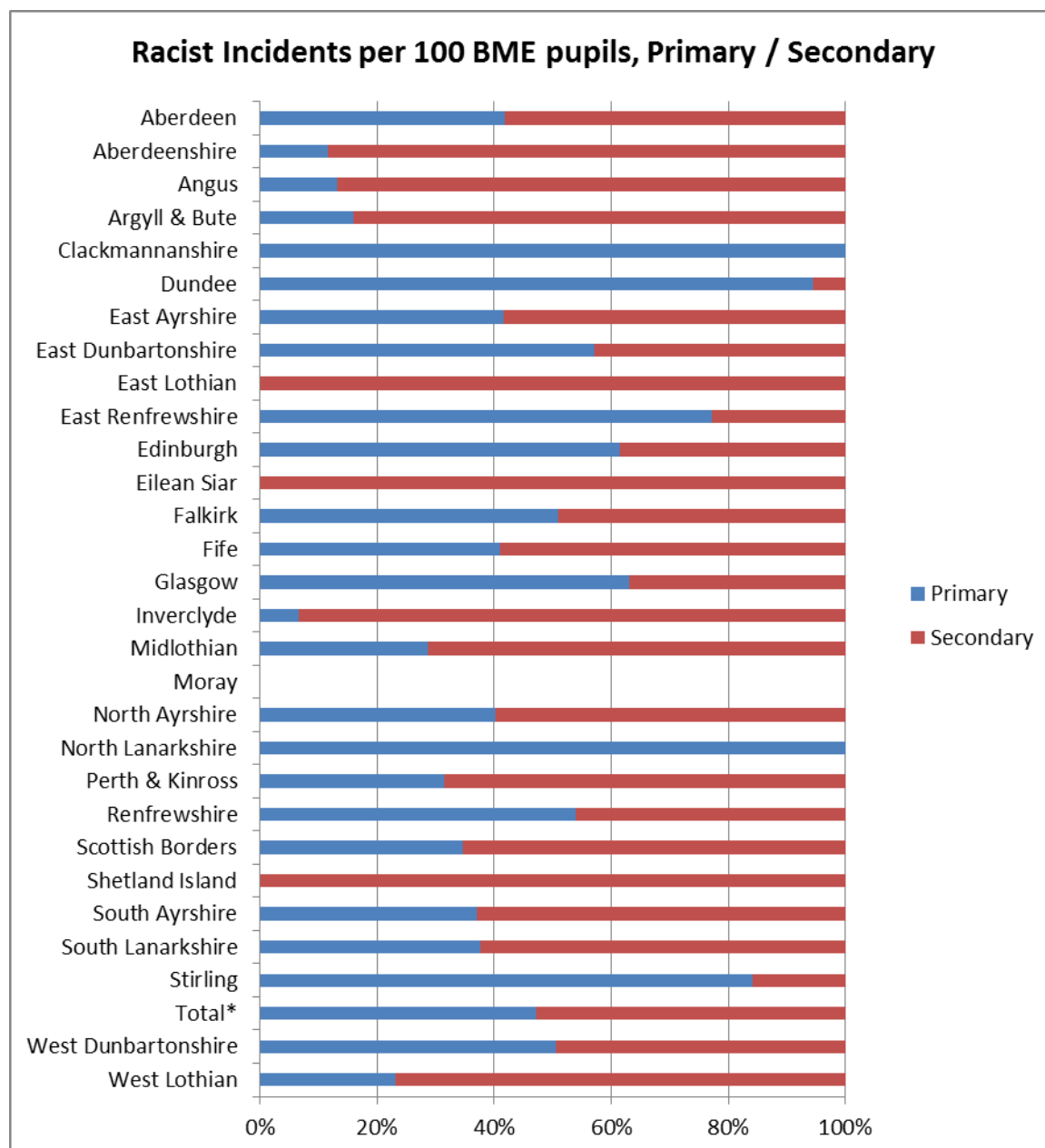


As shown in Table 6 (p.26), a noticeable difference can be seen in the number of incidents per 100 BME pupils in each area between primary and secondary school level. Just over 50% of the overall total took place in secondary schools, contrary to previous findings by the BBC²⁸ which relied on basic incident level data and therefore reported more incidents at primary level. This is likely to have been affected by demographic trends (i.e. larger numbers of BME pupils of Primary School age) increasing the risk of racist incidents being targeted at

²⁸ Talwar, D. (2012) More than 87,000 Racist Incidents Recorded in Schools. BBC Asian Network.

Primary pupils, but led critics to erroneously claim that the majority of incidents were 'innocent' name-calling by young primary school children.²⁹

Table 6: Proportion of racist incidents per 100 BME pupils in Scottish Local Authority Primary and Secondary schools, 2010/11



* Throughout this section, totals are not Scotland wide as they exclude pupils in the three Local Authority Areas for which no information on racist incidents was available at the time of analysis (Dumfries and Galloway, Highland and Orkney).

²⁹ Hart, A. (2012) Exploding the Myth of Racist Kids, Spiked Online Monday 28th May



The wide range in variation between primary and secondary school recording levels can, in some cases, be explained by generally low recording levels (for example in smaller areas such as Eilean Siar and Shetland, and particularly in the case of East Lothian, where only one incident was recorded; a rate of 0.17 racist incidents per 100 BME pupils).

In North Lanarkshire, the Council refused to release information at Secondary school level due to an interpretation of Data Protection legislation which avoids stating statistics lower than 5. This is often the case where data refers to individuals within a specific organisation and therefore makes them potentially identifiable; however as the overall Education Department figures relate to a large number of schools rather than one institution, no other Council chose to interpret the law in this way.

Research on Behaviour in Scottish schools

The 2012 edition of the Scottish Government's triennial Behaviour in Scottish Schools Report³⁰ has recently been published. This report, although based on a relatively small sample size, provides some indication of staff experience of racist incidents in Scottish Schools. Table 7 (below) details the percentage of staff stating that they had dealt with 'racist abuse towards other pupils' in the last full teaching week.

Table 7: Data from Behaviour in Scottish Schools research report, 2012

% dealing with one or more racist incidents in the last school week (2012)			
		In classroom	Around school
Primary	Teachers	2	3
	Head Teachers	5	3
	Support Staff	5	n/a
Secondary	Teachers	4	5
	Head Teachers	5	3
	Support Staff	10	n/a

The previous edition of this report, Behaviour in Scottish Schools 2009, differed in some ways from the 2012 publication, making the data less easy to compare

³⁰ Scottish Government (2012) Behaviour in Scottish Schools 2012; information taken from separately published associated reference tables



over time. In particular, it included statistical information about pupils' experiences of racist incidents which is not included in the 2012 edition. The contrast between their experiences in comparison to staff is demonstrated in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Data from Behaviour in Scottish Schools research report, 2009³¹

		% dealing with one or more racist incidents over the last school week (2009)	
		In classroom	Around school
Primary	Teachers	3.6	3.5
	Head Teachers	7.8	4.5
	Support Staff	7.2	n/a
	Pupils	n/a	26.0
Secondary	Teachers	5.7	6.8
	Head Teachers	10.6	5.7
	Support Staff	14.4	n/a
	Pupils	n/a	32.0

The data given at Tables 7 and 8 (p.27/28) are provided for information, and should be interpreted cautiously as the figures are not fully compatible. This is partly due to the level of detail; these aggregated percentages relate to staff or pupils having experienced anywhere between one incident in a week and several incidents per day. Pupils were most likely to report witnessing incidents several times per day ('in all lessons/breaks' or 'in most lessons/breaks'), whereas head teachers were most likely to report dealing with incidents only once per week. Compatibility is also affected by the way the questions were posed. Staff were asked about dealing with 'racist abuse', which can be interpreted in various ways, whereas pupils were asked about seeing 'pupils saying racist things to other pupils', which could either prove a more narrow interpretation (factoring out racist graffiti or gestures, for example) or a wider one if 'abuse' is taken to exclude jokes / 'banter'. In addition, pupils were asked about their experiences 'around the school' (reported for 2009 only), which would presumably include the classroom; support staff were only asked about experiences in class; whereas other staff were asked about both classroom and 'around the school' experiences.

The Scottish Government's own comparison over time (published in the 2012 report) shows that levels of racist abuse recorded were either static or reduced on all measures between 2009-2012, although the tables accessed did not provide statistical information on the level of reduction.

³¹ Scottish Government (2009) Behaviour in Scottish Schools 2009; information taken from separately published associated reference tables



Section Six - Trends over time

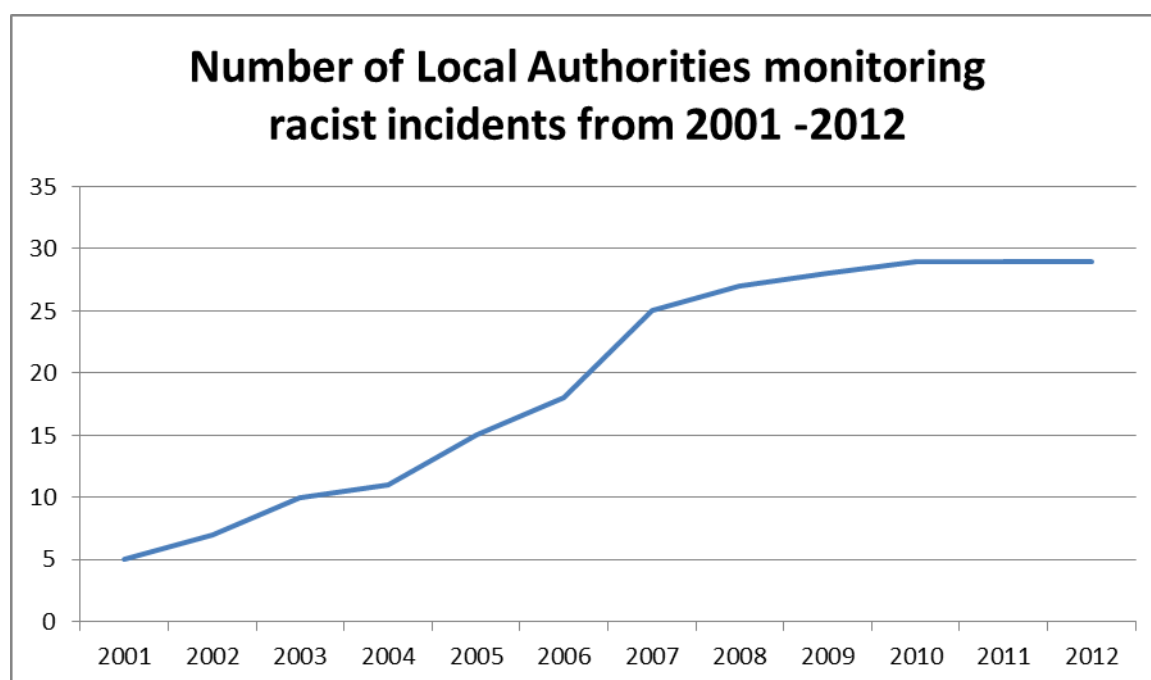
The Freedom of Information request made by CRER to all 32 Scottish Local Authorities in spring 2012 asked for full statistical details held on racist incidents in both primary and secondary schools over the period 2001 to the present date, including an annual breakdown. Information is presented here for 29 of the 32 Scottish Local Authorities. No data is provided for Highland Council, due to their late provision of data. No data is available for either Orkney or Dumfries and Galloway, where the Local Authorities have not collected information centrally (both state that they plan to begin doing so).

A number of Local Authorities provided data in calendar year terms rather than academic year. For ease of analysis, unless otherwise stated these were treated as though they referred to an academic year. This will affect accuracy in single-year figures in some cases, but will not affect the overall analysis of trends.

Incident recording

Figure 1 demonstrates the number of Local Authorities providing racist incident recording data since 2001. The earliest racist incident records come from North Ayrshire, Scottish Borders, East Dunbartonshire, Edinburgh and Falkirk, all of which have recorded incidents since at least 2001.

Figure 1: Number of Local Authorities providing racist incident data – change over time from 2001 - 2012



In some cases, Local Authorities stated that information had been collected prior to the first year of provided data but was not readily available; for example in Shetland, racist incident data had not been separated from general bullying incident data until 2010, and in South Ayrshire information had been collected but would be difficult to collate prior to 2008. In Dumfries and Galloway and Orkney, no information could be provided as it has not been collected centrally.

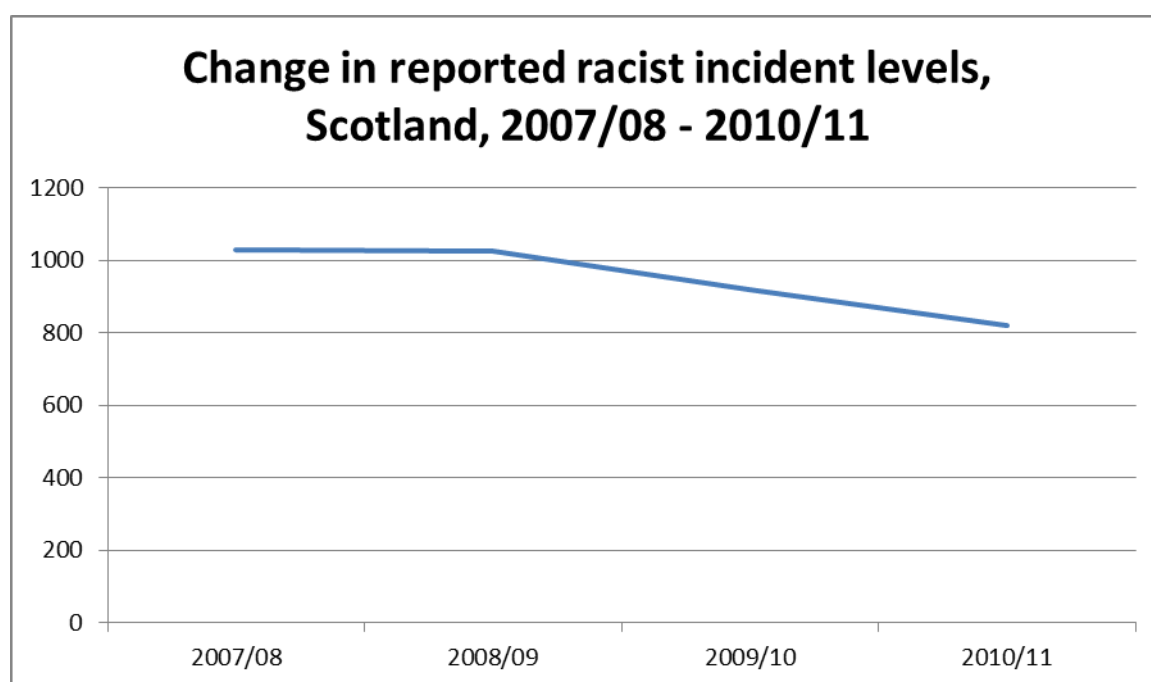
For the purposes of this study, the first year that data has been provided is treated as the first year of racist incident collecting in practice within the Local Authority area. Where collated data is not available, Local Authorities cannot measure progress over time or effectively put data to use in forward planning. Because of this, it is important to note that the trend in collection at Local Authority level will not reflect any good practice on racist incident recording which may be taking place in individual schools, or practice which may have taken place in the past but has been superceded by new systems.



Recorded incident levels

Because not all Local Authorities have collected information consistently over time, it is difficult to track changes over time in the prevalence of racist incident reports at Scottish level. This becomes easier from 2007 onwards, where a significant majority of Local Authorities had begun to collect monitoring data. The following table therefore uses data from the 25 Local Authority areas where data is available from 2007/08.

Figure 2: Reported racist incident levels in 25 Scottish Local Authorities – change over time from 2007/08 – 2010/11



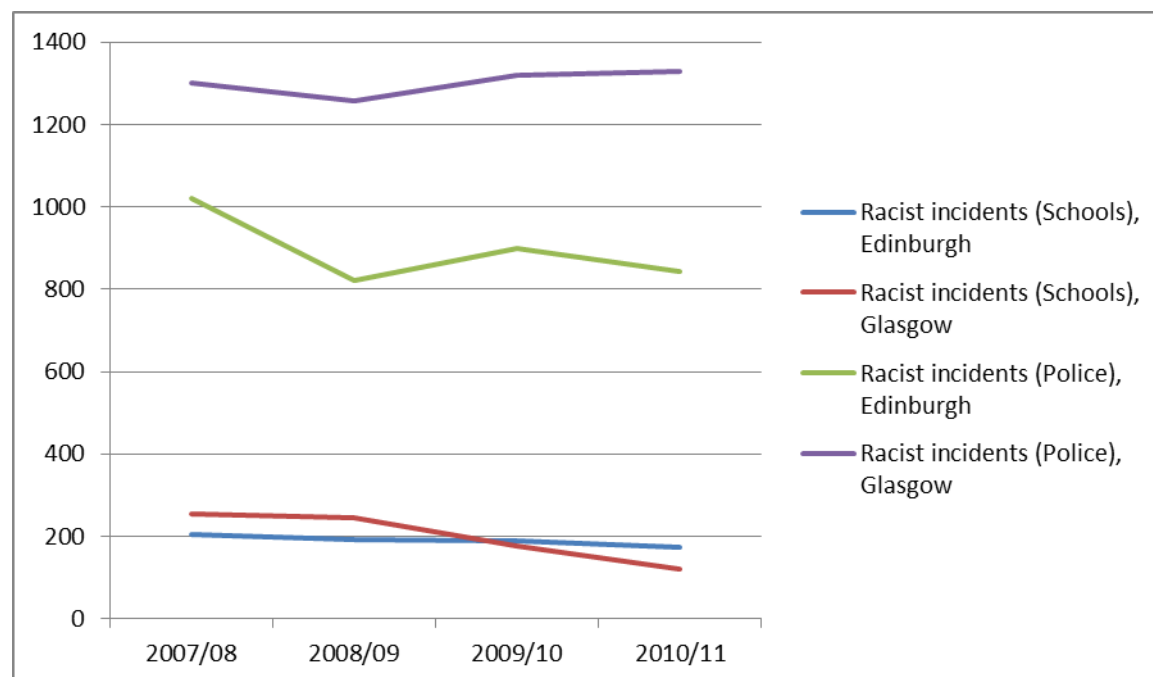
In the majority of areas, the number of racist incidents has either stayed the same or declined over the period 2007/08 – 2010/11. In this regard, incident figures per 100 pupils or per 100 BME pupils have not been reported as using the data available for 2010/11 would skew the results by ignoring demographic change. However, it is likely that if demographic change were accounted for, the apparent declines reported here would be greater as fewer incidents have occurred yet in the majority of areas the population of pupils from BME backgrounds will have increased.

The overall apparent fall in incidents reported for Scotland was 20.3%, a drop of 209 between 2007/08 (1029 incidents) to 2010/11 (802). Charts showing increase and decline for individual Local Authorities is provided at Appendix 3 (p.51), however comparisons cannot be drawn easily between them as the data varies too highly. For example, in East Lothian a drop of 80% represents a change from 5 cases in 2007/08 to 1 case in 2010/11, whereas in Glasgow a

53.1% drop represents 136 fewer cases over the same period (down from 256 to 120).

The main exceptions to standstill or decline in recording are Fife, West Dunbartonshire and Dundee, which all saw a relatively significant increase in recording of racist incidents.

Figure 3: Racist incidents recorded by Schools and Police in Edinburgh and Glasgow, 2007/8 – 2010/11



Source: Scottish Government (2012) Racist Incidents Recorded by Police in Scotland 2010/11.

The historically similar levels of racist incidents recorded in schools in Edinburgh and Glasgow, with Edinburgh showing higher levels in the year 2010/11, appear anomalous as these areas have substantially different demographic profiles. It could be expected that Glasgow would show significantly more racist incidents in Schools than Edinburgh. As shown in Figure 3, this concept seems to be supported by comparison with racist incidents recorded by Police, where Glasgow does show a substantially higher level of incidents. The type of racist incident recorded by Police differs in that a) these incidents are not restricted to the school age population, and b) only cases/allegations of a potentially criminal nature are liable to be reported. Nevertheless, the stark difference in recording levels demonstrated here suggests that there may be an important variation in practice within schools in these areas, whether in terms of racist incident prevention or recording.

Interpreting the data

This report examines racist incident recording at overall Local Authority level, however in line with the recommendations of Macpherson, analysis within individual schools is needed to provide clarity on the impact of practice on the ground. Without access to information on practice in individual schools and areas, the reasons for any increase or decrease in incident reporting over time cannot be known.

A range of 'push-pull' factors are likely to impact race equality and the experience of BME pupils in the majority of individual areas and schools. An increase in racist incidents in any Local Authority area may not indicate an increase in racism – on the contrary, it may indicate better use of recording procedures by teachers or increasing comfort in reporting racist incidents by pupils. Likewise, a drop in racist incidents may indicate rising indifference or a slip backwards from previous good practice. This explanation would echo the finding that areas with 'basic' rated race equality policies and reporting guidelines often demonstrate a lower level of racist incident recording.

Demographic and other changes outside the remit of this study may also play a part. For example, areas with large recent migrant populations might see an upturn in racist sentiments being expressed publicly; but equally, schools in that area might take early action to tackle racism and foster good relations between pupils to minimise the risk of an upturn in racist incidents. From a less positive perspective, a school which invests considerably in anti-racist teaching strategies might find that problems with racial stereotyping or harassment still occur from time to time due to external influences on pupil's behaviour and attitudes.

These unknown factors make the data less useful for external analysis, but it maintains its value in individual schools, where it should be possible to take into account changes in practice. If better quality guidance is rolled out in future and implemented properly, with time to embed, external analysis at local and national level should prove more fruitful. At local level, good collation of information on racist incidents may allow Local Authorities to work with schools to identify specific local drivers and solutions. Schools may find a permanent and complete elimination of racist incidents impossible. However the aim is not to reduce the numbers to zero, but to use the information gathered to track progress and inform on-going work against racism.



Progress on racist incident recording practice

In many areas of Britain, schools are moving towards reporting and monitoring all types of prejudice-related incident, sometimes accompanied by consultation and discussion with pupils to explore issues around prejudice-related behaviour³². This integrated approach (which was recommended by the Equality and Human Rights Commission in its 2011 report on identity based bullying³³) could provide better opportunities to identify and deal with negative behaviours and attitudes in the classroom to the benefit of all pupils. There is also increasing enthusiasm for monitoring the impact and severity of incidents, which helps to make reporting more meaningful and easier to act on at a strategic level.³⁴ Several of the Local Authority policies rated as Excellent (see p.11) used this type of approach.

Whilst racist incidents can arguably be best dealt with as part of holistic respect and anti-bullying initiatives in schools, this approach can only succeed if the staff responsible for implementation have a good understanding of racism and its impact in wider society. Almost any personal characteristic can be used as a basis for bullying, race included. However, bullies who go on to become murder and assault perpetrators are not known to be regularly motivated by height, weight or hair colour. Scottish Police Forces recorded 6,169 racist incidents over 2010-11, including 74 crimes of violence and indecency and 848 minor assaults,³⁵ showing that racism is still a significant motivator for violent attacks. The nature of prejudice differs according to the personal characteristic it is aimed at, and anti-bullying strategies must recognise and tackle this appropriately in regard to race.

Evidence suggests that specific guidance on racist bullying is still rare in Scottish schools, although more prevalent than guidance on other forms of prejudice related bullying.³⁶ The work of Scotland's anti-bullying initiative *Respectme* appears to have influenced those schools which do provide specific guidance.³⁷

³² Insted Consultancy (2011) Recording and Reporting Racist Incidents in Schools – An update on requirements and good practice, summer 2011

³³ Tippett et al (2011) Prevention and Response to Identity Based Bullying among Local Authorities in England, Scotland and Wales. London: EHRC

³⁴ Insted Consultancy (2011) Recording and Reporting Racist Incidents in Schools – An update on requirements and good practice, summer 2011

³⁵ Scottish Government (2012) Statistical Bulletin: Crime and Justice Series: Racist Incidents Recorded by the Police in Scotland 2010-11 – Tables. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

³⁶ Tippett et al (2011) Prevention and Response to Identity Based Bullying among Local Authorities in England, Scotland and Wales. London: EHRC

³⁷ Tippett et al (2011) Prevention and Response to Identity Based Bullying among Local Authorities in England, Scotland and Wales. London: EHRC



Pupils' own understanding of how racism and bullying interlink is especially important in light of research findings which show that minority ethnic young people often see racist abuse separately from bullying, leading to under-reporting and the appearance in statistics that majority and minority ethnic children experience similar levels of bullying³⁸ (which could be misinterpreted as evidence that racism in schools is no more of a problem than any other type of bullying). Worryingly, recent CRER research with a small sample of young South Asian Muslim men in Glasgow suggested that racist incidents at school are accepted by many as a predictable part of school life³⁹. Empowering all young people to recognise and challenge racist attitudes is vital, because restorative action will be less effective if there is no widespread understanding of racism and its impacts.⁴⁰

Although this study found evidence of good practice in individual areas, a co-ordinated approach is needed if the beneficial impacts of good practice are to create social change more widely. In Scotland, the Equality and Human Rights Commission's 2011 research into identity based bullying found barriers to engagement with Local Authority Education Departments because so few of these had a staff member with direct responsibility for anti-bullying work.⁴¹ This is likely to prove to be a barrier to any future co-ordinated effort to roll out best practice on racist incident recording in Scottish schools.

The Scottish Government's latest anti-bullying strategy,⁴² published in 2010, makes no direct mention of racist incident recording. It asserts that disaggregated monitoring of bullying incidents should be carried out by schools without stating specifically how statistics should be disaggregated, and separately mentions that monitoring can be used to identify 'aspects of prejudice or discrimination underlying bullying'. It states a commitment to 'highlight bullying based on prejudice and perceived differences, and ensure our policies and practices are effective in dealing with these issues'.

However, the differences between identity based and other forms of bullying are not explored in the strategy. No mention is made of racist or other discriminatory incidents which may not be considered as bullying behaviour.

³⁸ Tippett et al (2011) Prevention and Response to Identity Based Bullying among Local Authorities in England, Scotland and Wales. London: EHRC

³⁹ Hampton, K. (2012) Perceptions, Experiences and Aspirations of Young Muslim Males in Glasgow (working title). Glasgow: Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights

⁴⁰ Anon. (2008) Dealing with Racist Incidents: Preventing Racism and Empowering Young People Conference Report. Leicester County Council, Leicester City Council and Mandeep Rupra Consulting.

⁴¹ Tippett et al (2011) Prevention and Response to Identity Based Bullying among Local Authorities in England, Scotland and Wales. London: EHRC

⁴² Scottish Government (2010) A National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People. Edinburgh: Scottish Government



The closest it comes to addressing this is in stating that the impact an incident has had on a child or young person is more important than whether it is classified as bullying. If a complaint is to be made about a school's handling of an incident, the strategy advises that it will be investigated by the relevant Local Authority's Quality Improvement Officers – the same Quality Improvement Officers whom the Equality and Human Rights Commission found reluctant to engage in their work on identity based bullying⁴³.

The positive approaches to dealing with bullying set out in the strategy are in line with best practice on challenging racism in schools; including development of an inclusive culture, education and awareness of rights, restorative approaches and personal support for pupils and parents. However, as discussed previously in this briefing (p.7-8), without an understanding of the nature of racism and power dynamics, teachers may be unable to meet these laudable aims in a way that fully supports Black and minority ethnic pupils.

⁴³ Tippett et al (2011) Prevention and Response to Identity Based Bullying among Local Authorities in England, Scotland and Wales. London: EHRC



Section Seven - Conclusion and Recommendations

The nature of current racist incident recording practice in Scotland makes it impossible to draw conclusions or make recommendations relating to the level of racist incidents, or in relation to what incident recording indicates about the prevalence of racism in Scottish schools. Instead, the initial focus must be on the process and practice of racist incident recording itself.

Bureaucratic approaches to recording racist incidents have damaged confidence in the concept, collecting information without using it to challenge racism.⁴⁴ The continuing lack of progress demonstrated by recording statistics is seen as proof that the system does not work, when in some cases the truth is that there is no system beyond the ticking of boxes.

Practical recommendations for Local Authorities and Schools:

In the absence of specific national guidelines on monitoring and dealing with racist incidents, Local Authorities should review and update their current approaches to ensure that they:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the nature of racism and the purpose of racist incident recording in schools
- Reflect the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and Scottish Specific Public Sector Equality Duties (including Equality Impact Assessment)
- Reflect best practice on dealing with bullying incidents, as outlined in the Scottish Government's anti-bullying strategy
- Outline the support available for schools to aid implementation
- Contain provisions for incident monitoring which are clear and adequate for the purposes of evaluating progress and informing future work on race equality
- Acknowledge that incidents reflecting prejudice which would not be considered bullying should nevertheless be dealt with and recorded appropriately
- State that repeated nil returns are not credible and will not be accepted
- Focus on prevention through curricular and extra-curricular activity, school ethos and continuing professional development for staff
- Involve pupils, parents and other stakeholders from BME backgrounds in identifying solutions
- Contain clear review timescales which are acted on consistently

⁴⁴ See also Insted Consultancy (2011) Recording and Reporting Racist Incidents in Schools – An update on requirements and good practice, summer 2011



Individual schools should ensure that a whole-school approach is used in tackling racist incidents, ensuring that practices:

- Are informed by an understanding of racism as a structural and social concept which impacts the lives of Black and minority ethnic pupils beyond obvious instances of bullying
- Preserve the dignity, security and identity of pupils affected by racism
- Seek to resolve conflict through restorative justice, with appropriate support for all parties and punitive action where necessary
- Enable teachers to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to deal effectively with racist incidents
- Are applied consistently across the school and over time
- Develop on an ongoing basis through review processes and the rolling out of best practice

Strategic recommendations for Government and the EHRC:

- A comprehensive review of the impacts of the Macpherson Report's recommendations for education should be undertaken at Government or Equality and Human Rights Commission level, including a focus on racist incident recording (with an appropriate focus on the Scottish devolved context, if UK-wide)
- The Scottish Government should work with the Equality and Human Rights Commission and other stakeholders to create a common reporting system, accompanied by a set of guidelines for schools on dealing with and recording prejudice based incidents, as a companion to its 2010 anti-bullying strategy
- With appropriate reporting system and guidelines in place, the Scottish Government should commit to a future programme of annual collation and analysis of racist and other prejudice based incident data from schools at Scotland wide level, similar to the work done annually on racist incidents recorded by Police Forces⁴⁵

⁴⁵ See, for example, Scottish Government (2012) Racist Incidents Recorded by the Police in Scotland, 2010-11

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Appendix One – Research Methods

The primary method of information gathering for this policy briefing was a Freedom of Information Request to all 32 Scottish Local Authority Education Departments, made in March 2012.

The request is detailed in the following excerpts from standard letters sent to all 32 Local Authority areas. The initial request from March 2012 stated:

The Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER) is currently undertaking research into racist incident recording in schools. As part of this research, we would appreciate it if you could please provide us with the following information:

- i) Full statistical details held on racist incidents in both primary and secondary schools in your Local Authority area over the period 2001 to the present date, including an annual breakdown for that period
- ii) A copy of the policy or policies relating to racist incident reporting used by schools in your Local Authority area over the period 2001 to the present date

Please consider this as a formal request for information in line with the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

Where required, this initial letter was followed up with a further request made after expiry of the statutory period of 20 working days within which responses should be provided:

I write to advise you that we have not received a reply to our Freedom of Information request on racist incident reporting in schools, sent to your Education Department. As the permitted timeframe for response has elapsed, guidance from the Office of the Information Commissioner requires us to treat this as a refusal to respond. We are therefore formally requesting a review of your refusal to respond, as per the terms of the Freedom of Information Act (Scotland) 2002.

Please find below the original request for details of the information required. We would appreciate it if you could complete this request as quickly as possible, to assist us in finalising our research.

By the time of analysis in August 2012, some degree of response had been received from all but one Local Authority (Highland Council).



Appendix Two - Reference Tables

Number of racist incidents per 100 pupils in both primary and secondary schools, 2010/11

Local Authority	Pupil numbers			Racist incidents		
	Total	BME pupils (excl. 'white other')*	BME pupils (inc. 'white other')	Total	Per 100 pupils	Per 100 BME pupils (inc. 'white other')
Aberdeen	21,254	2034	3664	24	0.11	0.66
Aberdeenshire	34,000	711	1958	25	0.07	1.28
Angus	15,318	366	783	12	0.08	1.53
Argyll & Bute	11,270	214	544	13	0.12	2.39
Clackmannanshire	6,673	186	384	9	0.13	2.34
Dumfries & Gall.	Data not collected centrally					
Dundee	17,179	1287	1770	30	0.17	1.69
East Ayrshire	16,036	289	601	11	0.07	1.83
East Dunbartonshire	15,841	1033	1327	22	0.14	1.66
East Lothian	13,267	293	579	1	0.01	0.17
East Renfrewshire	16,194	2154	2539	49	0.30	1.93
Edinburgh	43,579	5246	8088	173	0.39	2.14
Eilean Siar	3,608	48	101	3	0.08	2.97
Falkirk	20,350	627	997	21	0.10	2.11
Fife	47,471	1292	2255	66	0.14	2.93
Glasgow	63,017	10580	13133	120	0.19	0.91
Highland	No data provided at time of analysis					



Inverclyde	10,308	175	344	8	0.08	2.33
Midlothian	11,546	307	547	3	0.03	0.55
Moray	12,156	232	625	0	0	0
North Ayrshire	18,458	279	582	17	0.09	2.92
North Lanarkshire	47,847	1574	2645	22	0.05	0.83
Orkney	Data not collected centrally					
Perth & Kinross	17,393	487	1151	27	0.16	2.35
Renfrewshire	23,353	787	1227	45	0.19	3.67
Scottish Borders	14,882	332	797	10	0.07	1.25
Shetland Island	3,303	84	168	2	0.06	1.19
South Ayrshire	14,364	284	623	25	0.17	4.01
South Lanarkshire	42,927	1396	2188	57	0.13	2.61
Stirling	12,432	488	819	20	0.16	2.44
West Dunbartonshire	12,267	272	591	26	0.21	4.40
West Lothian	25,513	984	1822	29	0.11	1.59
Total**	611,806	34,041	52,852	870	0.14	1.65

* Information provided for reference only. Varying definitions of 'Black and minority ethnic' exist, however for best fit this research uses the common definition of all identities which are not White British (represented in the table by 'BME including White Other'). Collated racist incident data does not account for the identities of targets of racist incidents, meaning that this standard definition remains imperfect for the purposes of this study – any person can be the target of a racist incident, and in Scotland, noted occurrences of anti-English discrimination in schools mean that White English and other White British targets of racist incidents will be included in the figures given here.

**Excluding pupils in the three Local Authority Areas for which no information on racist incidents was available at the time of analysis (Dumfries and Galloway, Highland and Orkney)



Number of pupils and racist incidents in various districts - primary school, 2010/11

Local Authority	Number of pupils (2010)			Number of incidents (2010/2011)		
	Total	BME pupils (excl. 'white other')	BME pupils (inc. 'white other')	Total	Per 100 pupils	Per 100 BME pupils (inc. 'white other')
Aberdeen	11,900	1,354	2,409	14*	0.12	0.58
Aberdeenshire	19,113	459	1,282	5*	0.03	0.39
Angus	8,441	187	449	2	0.02	0.45
Argyll & Bute	5,808	114	334	3	0.05	0.90
Clackmannanshire	3,804	118	240	9	0.24	3.75
Dumfries & Gall.	Data not collected centrally					
Dundee	9,440	819	1,049	29*	0.31	2.76
East Ayrshire	8,795	189	424	7*	0.08	1.65
East Dunbartonshire	8,185	555	749	14	0.17	1.87
East Lothian	7,494	188	368	0	0	0
East Renfrewshire	8,208	1,107	1,352	39	0.48	2.88
Edinburgh	24,618	3,306	5,067	127	0.52	2.51
Eilean Siar	1,870	28	55	0	0	0
Falkirk	11,352	391	629	14	0.12	2.23
Fife	26,444	791	1,425	36*	0.14	2.53
Highland	No data provided at time of analysis					
Glasgow	36,283	6,760	8,424	92*	0.25	1.09
Inverclyde	5,536	101	226	1	0.02	0.44
Midlothian	6,256	191	302	1	0.02	0.33



Moray	6,344	134	325	0	0	0
North Ayrshire	10,039	168	358	9*	0.09	2.51
North Lanarkshire	26,202	162	969	22	0.08	2.27
Orkney	Data not collected centrally					
Perth & Kinross	9,824	299	731	12	0.12	1.64
Renfrewshire	12,553	423	705	28	0.22	3.97
Scottish Borders	8,105	219	523	5	0.06	0.96
Shetland Island	1,805	64	119	0*	0	0
South Ayrshire	7,478	161	325	11	0.15	3.38
South Lanarkshire	23,450	815	1,403	30	0.13	2.14
Stirling	6,422	314	515	18*	0.28	3.50
West Dunbartonshire	6,575	156	397	18*	0.12	4.53
West Lothian	14,371	609	1,148	10	0.07	0.87
Total*	336,715	20,989	31,495	556	0.17	1.77

* Excluding pupils in the three Local Authority Areas for which no information on racist incidents was available at the time of analysis (Dumfries and Galloway, Highland and Orkney).



Number of pupils and racist incidents in various districts – secondary school, 2010/11

Local Authority	Number of pupils (2010)			Number of incidents (2010/2011)		
	Total	BME pupils (excl. 'white other')	BME pupils (inc. 'white other')	Total	Per 100 pupils	Per 100 BME pupils (inc. 'white other')
Aberdeen	9,354	664	1,233	10*	0.11	0.81
Aberdeenshire	14,887	250	665	20*	0.13	3.01
Angus	6,877	179	334	10	0.15	2.99
Argyll & Bute	5,462	100	210	10	0.18	4.76
Clackmannanshire	2,869	68	142	0	0	0
Dumfries & Gall.	Data not collected centrally					
Dundee	7,739	457	623	1*	0.01	0.16
East Ayrshire	7,241	98	173	4*	0.06	2.31
East Dunbartonshire	7,656	472	570	8	0.10	1.40
East Lothian	5,773	105	211	1	0.02	0.47
East Renfrewshire	7,986	1,037	1,172	10	0.13	0.85
Edinburgh	18,961	1,877	2,925	46	0.24	1.57
Eilean Siar	1,738	20	46	3	0.17	6.52
Falkirk	8,998	230	326	7	0.08	2.15
Fife	21,027	496	825	30*	0.14	3.64
Glasgow	26,734	3,543	4,365	28*	0.10	0.64
Highland	No data provided at time of analysis					
Inverclyde	4,772	74	113	7	0.15	6.19
Midlothian	5,290	114	243	2	0.04	0.82



Moray	5,812	98	300	0	0	0
North Ayrshire	8,419	109	215	8*	0.10	3.72
North Lanarkshire	21,645	589	970	0	0	0
Orkney	Data not collected centrally					
Perth & Kinross	7,569	186	418	15	0.20	3.59
Renfrewshire	10,800	353	502	17	0.16	3.39
Scottish Borders	6,777	113	274	5	0.07	1.82
Shetland Island	1,498	20	49	2*	0.13	4.08
South Ayrshire	6,886	121	244	14	0.20	5.74
South Lanarkshire	19,477	565	760	27	0.14	3.55
Stirling	6,010	172	302	2*	0.03	0.66
West Dunbartonshire	5,692	108	181	8*	0.14	4.42
West Lothian	11,142	366	655	19	0.17	2.90
Total*	275,091	12,584	15,839	314	0.11	1.98

* Excluding pupils in the three Local Authority Areas for which no information on racist incidents was available at the time of analysis (Dumfries and Galloway, Highland and Orkney).



Number of racist incidents and variation, 2007/08 – 2010/11

Local Authority Area	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08	Change	% change
Aberdeen	24	30	14	42	-22	-42.9
Aberdeenshire	25	17	23	33	-8	-24.2
Angus	12	3	7	11	+1	+9.0
Argyll & Bute	13	6	0	10	+3	+30.0
Clackmannanshire	9	21	12	7	+2	+28.6
Dumfries & Gall.	Data not collected centrally					
Dundee	30	23	10	5	+25	+500%
East Ayrshire	11	13	11	22	-11	-50.0
East Dunbartonshire	22	24	29	45	-23	-51.0
East Lothian	1	1	0	5	-4	-80.0
East Renfrewshire	49	47	35	41	+8	+19.5
Edinburgh	173	189	192	206	-33	-16.0
Falkirk	21	28	25	27	-6	-22.2
Fife	66	46	90	22	+44	+200.0
Glasgow	120	178	244	256	-136	-53.1
Highland	No data provided at time of analysis					
Inverclyde	8	5	8	9	-1	-11.1
Midlothian	3	0	0	4	-1	-25.0
Moray**	?	?	2	0	-	-
North Ayrshire	17	11	13	17	-	-
North Lanarkshire	22	52	35	28	-6	-21.4
Orkney	Data not collected centrally					
Perth & Kinross	27	20	24	20	+7	+35.0



Renfrewshire	45	41	67	80	-35	-43.7
Scottish Borders	10	4	4	7	+3	+42.8
South Lanarkshire	57	69	91	68	-11	-16.2
West Dunbartonshire	26	32	19	7	+31	+119.2
West Lothian	29	58	72	57	-28	-49.1
Total*	820	918	1026	1029	-209	-20.3

* Excluding pupils in the three Local Authority Areas for which no information on racist incidents was available (Dumfries and Galloway, Highland and Orkney).

** Two incidents recorded since 2009 could not be assigned a year and have been left out



Comparison of policy ratings to incident levels and percentage of pupils from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds

Local Authority Area	Incidents per 100 BME pupils	% of pupils from a BME background	Policy Rating
Aberdeenshire	1.28	5.8	Basic
East Renfrewshire	1.93	15.7	Basic
Moray	0	5.1	Basic
North Lanarkshire	0.83	5.5	Basic
Perth & Kinross	2.35	6.6	Basic
South Lanarkshire	2.61	5.1	Basic
Aberdeen	0.66	17.2	Basic
Argyll & Bute	2.39	4.8	Basic
East Lothian	0.17	4.4	Basic
Eilean Siar	2.97	2.8	Basic
Fife	2.93	4.7	Basic
Midlothian	0.55	4.7	Basic
Scottish Borders	1.25	5.3	Basic
Shetland Island	1.19	5.1	Basic
South Ayrshire	4.01	4.3	Basic
Average incidents	1.66		
Clackmannanshire	2.34	5.7	Above average
Dumfries & Galloway	-	4.0	Above average
East Ayrshire	1.83	3.7	Above average
North Ayrshire	2.92	3.1	Above average
Stirling	2.44	6.6	Above average
Average incidents	2.38		

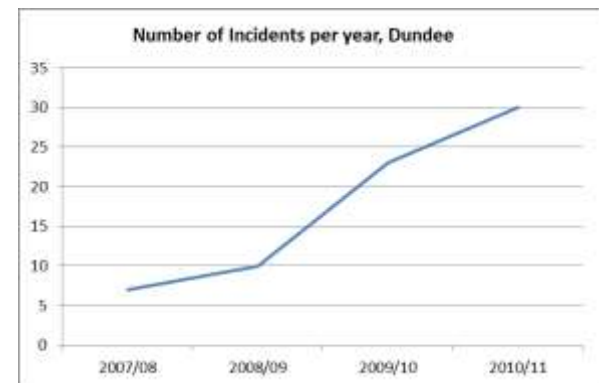
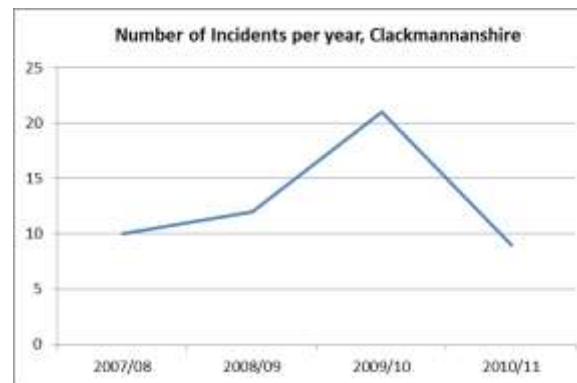
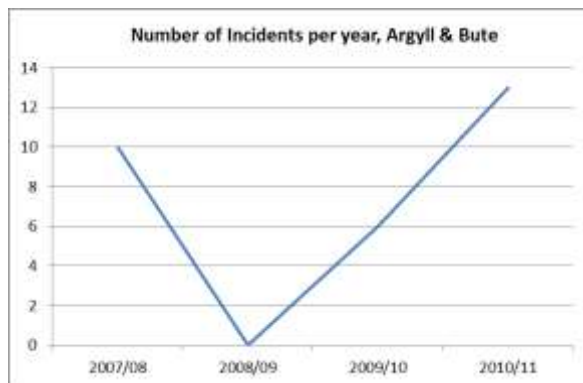
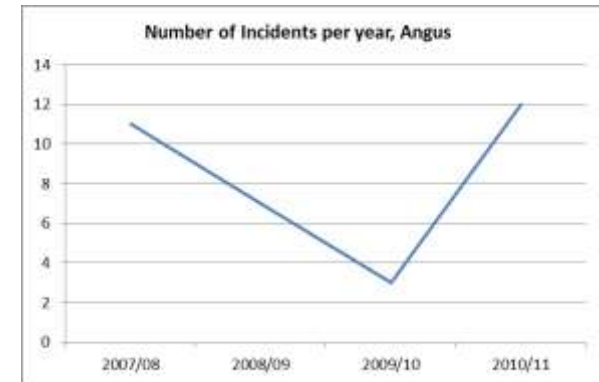
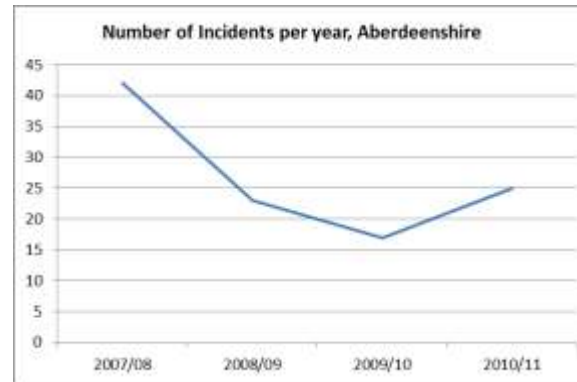
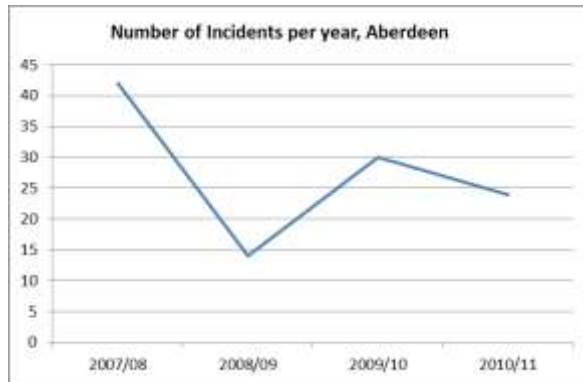


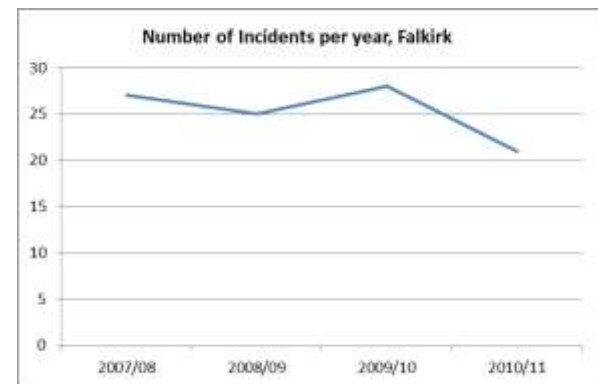
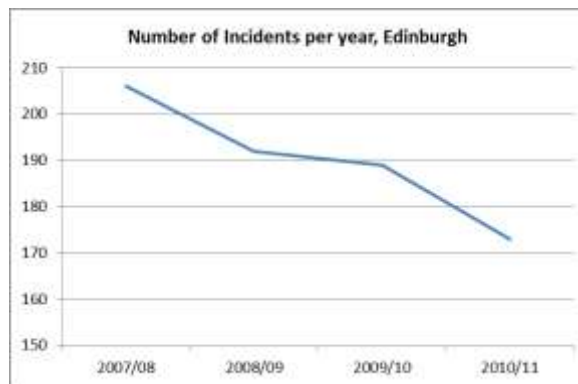
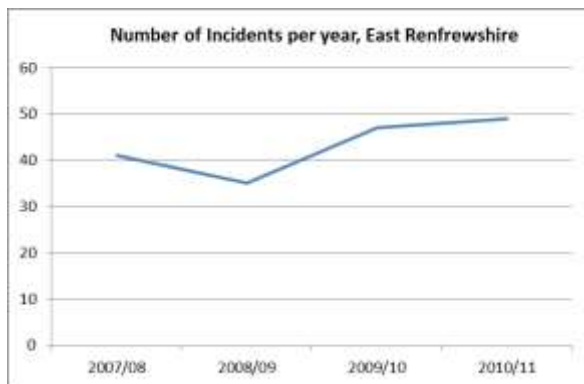
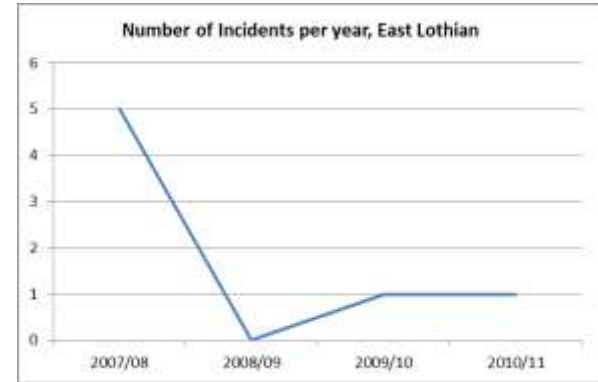
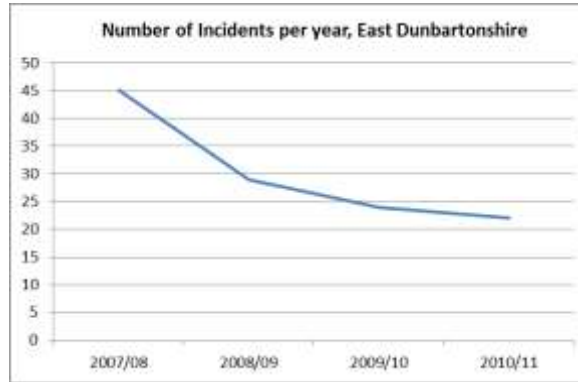
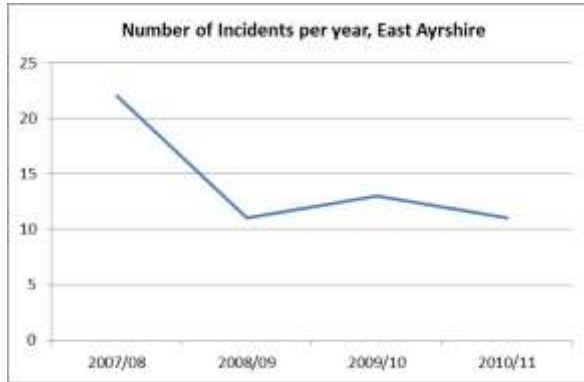
East Dunbartonshire	1.66	8.4	Good
Falkirk	2.11	4.9	Good
Glasgow	0.91	20.8	Good
Renfrewshire	3.67	5.2	Good
West Dunbartonshire	4.40	4.8	Good
West Lothian	1.59	7.1	Good
Average incidents	2.39		
Angus	1.53	5.1	Excellent
Dundee	1.69	10.3	Excellent
Edinburgh	2.14	18.6	Excellent
Inverclyde	2.33	3.3	Excellent
Average incidents	1.92		

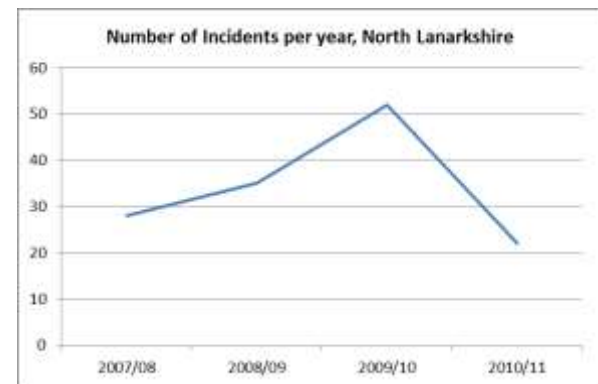
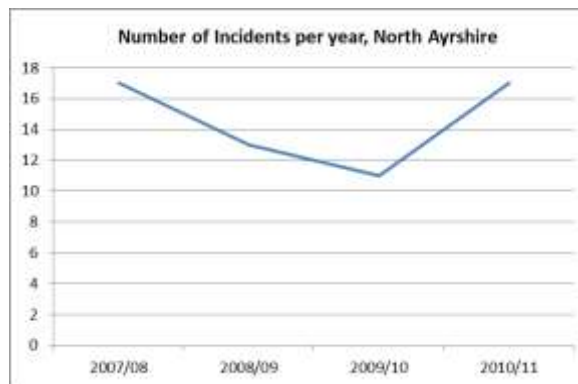
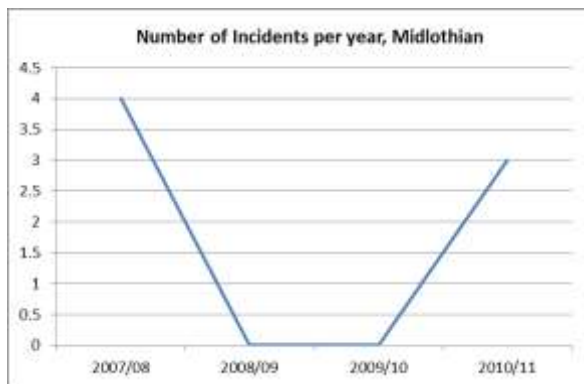
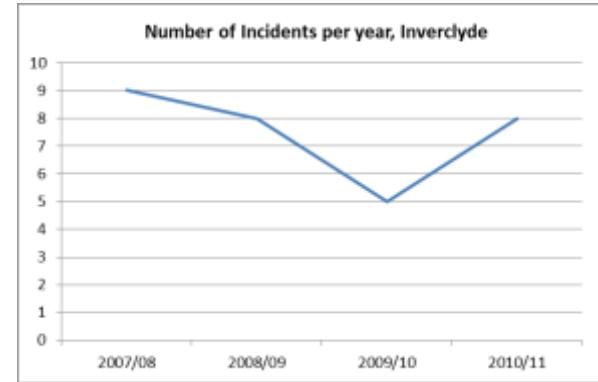
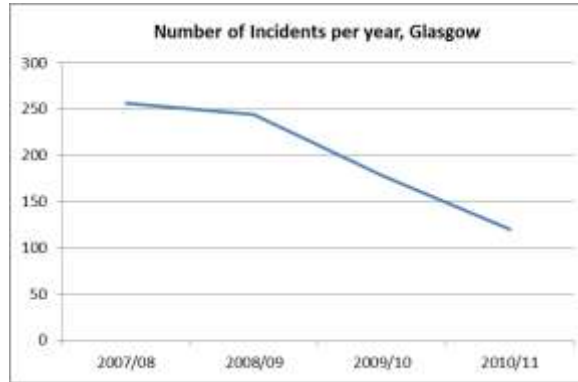
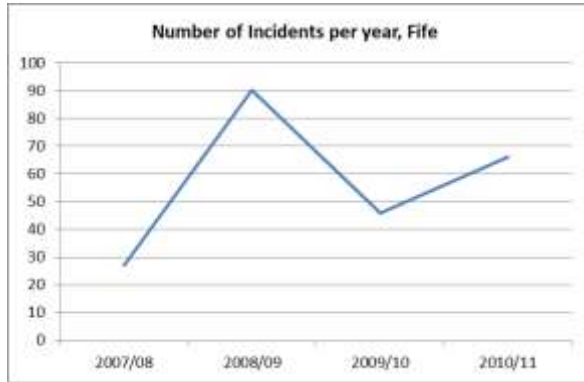
Not including Highland or Orkney - information provided too late for analysis.

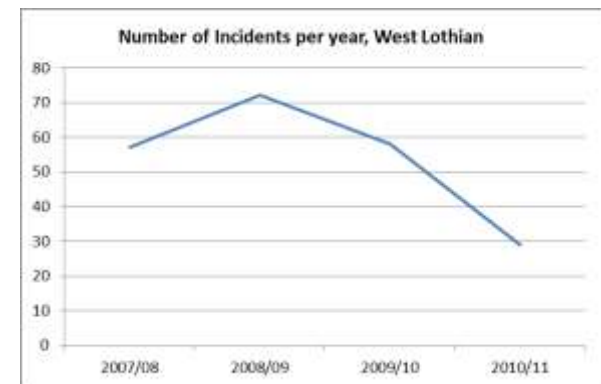
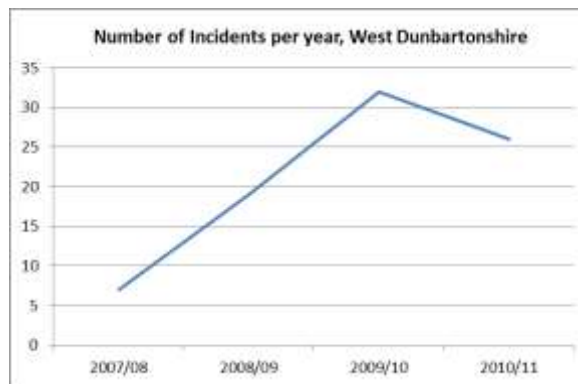
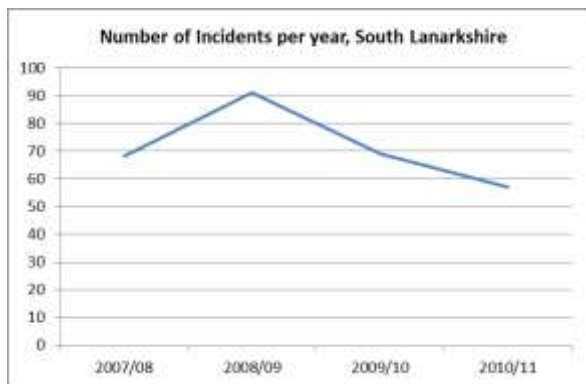
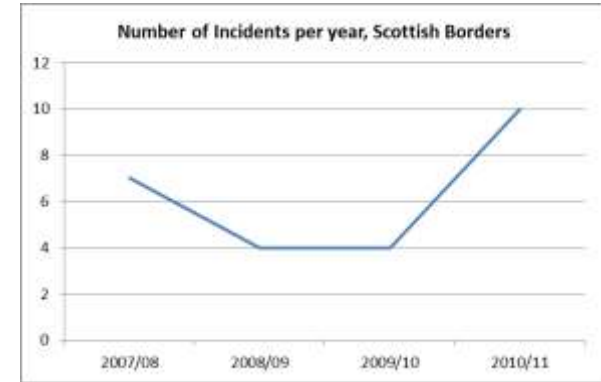
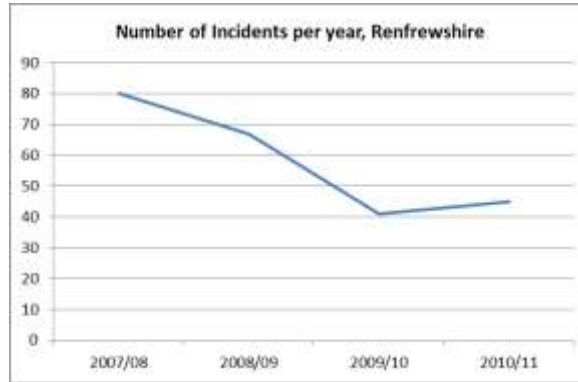
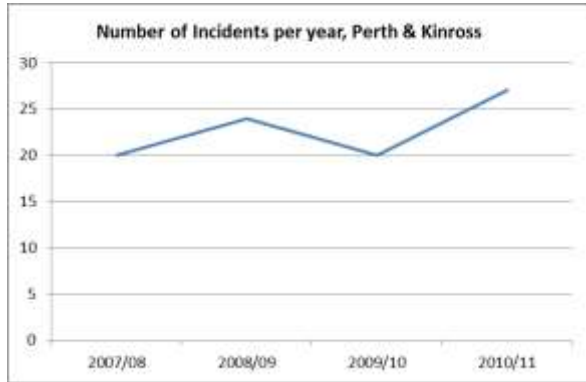


Appendix Three – Local Authority Charts









No chart provided for: Moray, due to lack of clarity on dates; Highland, no data provided at time of analysis; Dumfries and Galloway / Orkney, data not collected centrally.

