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BLACK CHILDREN'S LIVES MATTER: NAGALRO CAMPAIGN TO REINSTATE THE REPEALED PROVISIONS OF S1(5) ADOPTION AND CHILDREN ACT 2002

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Responding to the *Black Lives Matter* movement, Nagalro has launched its own campaign, with a narrower focus, *Black Children's Lives Matter*. This has a dedicated page on the Nagalroⁱ website and is intended to promote a recognition that all children do not enjoy an equal start in life and this is often as a result of racism and poverty.

Institutional racism affects black people in all walks of life, none more profound than within the care system. We know that blackⁱⁱ children are more likely to be removed from their parents through care proceedings than other children and that they will generally wait much longer for adoptive placements than a comparable white child. As a response to this, for children in England (but not Wales), s1(5) of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 was repealed by the Children and Families Act 2014, to remove the requirement that adoption agencies should 'give due consideration to the child's religious persuasion, racial origin and cultural and linguistic background'. From the Explanatory Notes to the 2014 Act and the debates which took place in Parliament when the Bill was before the House of Commons, it is very clear that these provisions were only to apply to black children being placed with white adopters and not to white children being placed with black adopters and we consider this action was, therefore, discriminatory.

Nagalro believes that this reform was, and remains, the wrong solution. It is a discriminatory solution because it meets a shortage of black adopters by placing black children with white adopters, whilst white children are, in our experience, only in exceptional circumstances placed with black adoptive parents. The removal of s1(5) from the Adoption and Children Act 2002 is in danger of creating a policy of 'colour-blind' adoption; it also avoided tackling deeper problems by focusing on the perceived wishes of the adult adopters instead of the wishes, feelings and needs of the children who were to be adopted. The concern for children being placed with families who do not reflect their heritage and

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ⁱ <https://www.nagalro.com/bclm/default.aspx>

ⁱⁱ 'Black' is a political definition to refer to a population who are liable to be subjected to racism based on their skin colour