

Biased is as biased unconsciously does?

Posted on 5th June 2017, by Jim Fraser

Some of us hardy members of the parent council have been checking out the possibility of having some training on the subject of equality and diversity. It's a fascinating area, and one which challenges some of the most deeply-held perceptions (and self-perceptions) we can have, often without even being aware of them.

We hope to bring you news of that initiative quite soon, but in the meantime I thought I'd share for your delectation a BBC radio programme (and associated article) which explore the subject, and some of the issues surrounding it (see the links below).

I was particularly struck by the following passage from the article:

"How early in our lives do we absorb these cultural stereotypes? Sarah Jane Leslie conducted one study with children. Boys and girls were told about a person who was really clever, and given no clue as to the person's gender. Then they were shown four pictures, two women and two men, and were asked which of these people was the clever person. Aged five, boys and girls were just as likely to pick out a man than a woman."



"Within a year the culture in which we swim appears to have had an effect. "Aged six," says Leslie, "girls are significantly less likely than boys to think that a member of their own gender can be that really, really smart person.""

It seems to me vital that we are all aware of such things in our lives, and how we might inadvertently be contributing to them. I don't think you need to be a father of girls to agree that anything which might limit the potential of half the country's population needs to be learned about, and avoided if at all possible.

The article is at - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-40124781>

The radio programme is on - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08slvk8>