



# CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE REFERRAL FRAMEWORK

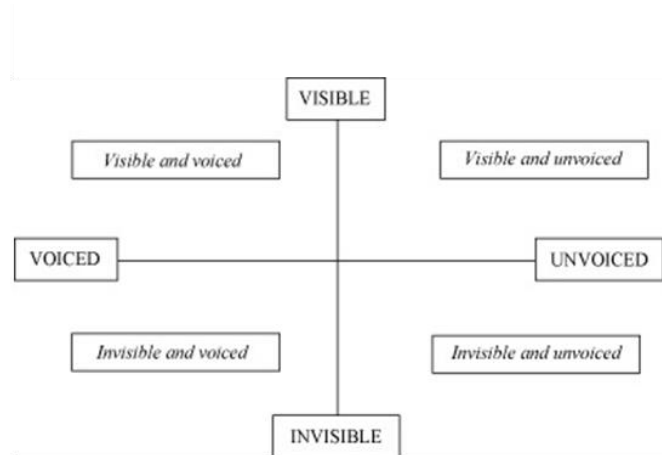
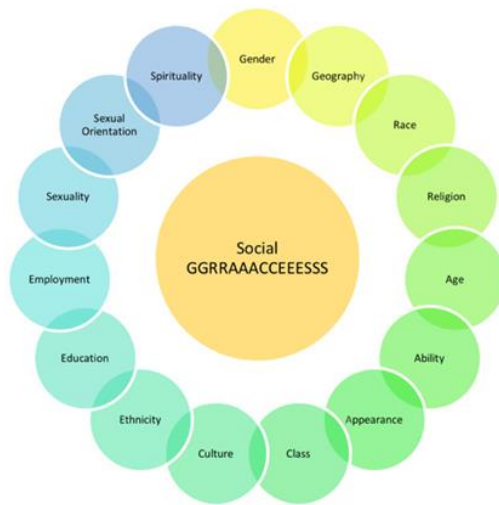
A Framework designed to help SENCOs consider how race, ethnicity and culture may be influencing their referral processes in real time. It aims to help SENCOs take steps to create more equitable referral processes in the future.

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## Social Graces Activity for Self-Reflection

Social Graces (SG) is a tool for thinking about similarities and difference, each named SG contributes to and shapes a person's social and personal identity and their lived experiences in society. Each SG may carry with it privileges or oppression so it can be helpful to think about which aspects of our identities afford us privilege and power and how these can affect our understanding of and approaches to children and families. Some aspects of our SG are visible (i.e. race) and others invisible (i.e. class). Some may be voiced (named and discussed) and others unvoiced (hidden). SG are often thought about alongside the concept of intersectionality. Intersectionality, originally used to explain the unique experience of oppression that African American women, explains that multiple areas of difference can lead to layers of oppression that create a unique experience that can not be understood through just looking at one aspect of a person's identity (Crenshaw, 1998).

### 1. Reflecting on ourselves.



Totsuka (2014)

- What aspects of social graces grab you the most and why?
- Focus on the two you identify with the most and two that you identify with the least.
- For example, which ones mean more to you or are more important to you, which influence you or your life most? Which are less familiar and are less influential to you?
- Consider what is familiar and what you may over-identify with and compare that to what is less familiar and potentially where your blind spots may be.

By becoming more self-aware in this way we can reduce the risks of bias/ use of cultural stereotypes in our thinking and help to increase our cultural sensitivity/ responsiveness.

Having considered our own blind spots and familiarities expand out and consider your school as an organisation, or your academy trust if you belong to one.

### 2. Consider your school context.

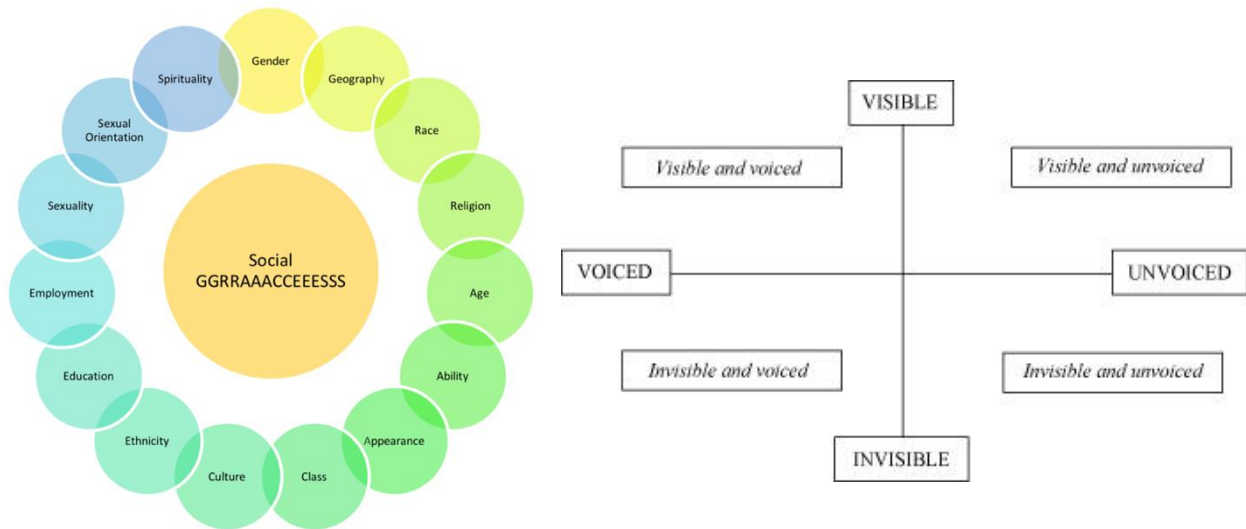
- What does the staff body look like?
- Are they likely to share any of your blind spots or familiarities?
- Where does race, ethnicity, and culture factor in this?

Think about what are the dominant groups in the staff body and the role of the dominant culture in your school context, how does this shape your school's ethos, values, relationships with different families and communities?

What might this mean for families from minority communities in your school context?

## Culturally responsive referral framework

Having completed the SG activity for yourself now consider the young person you wish to refer. Place each of the graces on the left into the diagram on the right for the young person you are referring. E.G. Religion, if known because the young person or family has told you they are Christian, this would go in invisible and voiced.



With consideration of the social graces alongside your own blind spots and familiarities reflect on the following questions:

### **Have you provided a flexible approach to allow parental engagement and to enable parents to make informed decisions about the referral?**

How much contact have you had with this family? What adjustments have you made (if needed) to facilitate this? How can you be sure they have understood the information you have provided them with?

### **What is your relationship with this family like and in what way could race, ethnicity and/or culture be influencing this?**

If you are working with a family who are of a different race, ethnicity or culture to you how might this impact the relationship you have with them? How might they view you? How might you view them differently to a family from another race, ethnicity or culture?

### **What have you learnt about yourself through this process?**

Have you noticed that you tend to not speak about particular social graces with families (this tends to be in our unvoiced quadrants)?

### **What next steps will you take in promoting racial equity and greater cultural sensitivity in your practice?**

What will you change when working with families in the future? How will you try to voice some of the unvoiced or see some of the invisible where appropriate? How informed are you about the priorities or concerns of your different families? How do you plan to strengthen your relationships with all your different communities? What learning do you want to share with the wider school body?

## **References**

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## Appendix

