

KANDACE'S WINDRUSH MISSION

Children's author Kandace Chimbiri aims to change children's perception of the Windrush Generation scandal with her book

By Rosemary Larvea

ALTHOUGH CONSIDERED an important event in modern British history, there have been, surprisingly, very few books written about the Windrush Generation which are targeted at young readers of primary school age.

Now, one writer aims to change that.

Children's author, Kandace Chimbiri's new book, *The Story of the Windrush*, combines historical facts with voices from the Windrush Generation. The book tells the inspiring story of the Windrush pioneers in an age appropriate and positive way and is told through the life of Sam King, the first black mayor of Southwark, who came to Britain on HMT Empire Windrush 70 years ago.

Explaining her reasons for writing the book, Chimbiri claims that most black history

books aimed at children are focused on African American history. In Britain, children are reading about Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr and the bus boycott in the USA, as opposed to the bus boycott in Bristol or other aspects of black British history.

The book is aimed at explaining a key chapter of black British history to readers aged between seven to 11 years old.

COVERAGE

Chimbiri added that when the Windrush scandal unfolded earlier this year, for some children, it meant that their first knowledge of the Windrush Generation was a negative one gained through media coverage of the scandal.

"Some of the young people don't know about the experiences of their parents and grandparents coming to this country," she said.

"Many African Caribbean parents and grandparents find it hard to talk about their experiences with the younger generation. *The Story of the Windrush* can help because

"It shows that their history is important"

Books for Keeps, the UK's leading reviewer of children's books. More than a dozen UK schools are using the self-published book, either to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum in English and History, as guided reading, or to stimulate discussions.

UNDERSTANDING

Among them is Wittingham Primary Academy, Walthamstow, east London.

Assistant headteacher, Christian Albert, said: "I have enjoyed reading the book, loved sharing it with my children and excited about introducing it to my year 6 pupils in school.

"Chapter one includes very important language that can assist children in their understanding or any misunderstandings they may have had about the people who travelled on the Windrush."

Chimbiri said: "It's important for children to see that their



EXPLAINING HISTORY:
Author Kandace Chimbiri and her book, right

heritage is valuable enough to be in a hardback book.

"It shows that their history is important. This reinforces that the community is important and worthwhile. Children need to feel worthwhile both as individuals and as part of a wider community to fully develop themselves."

