

# Betty Campbell

Betty Campbell was a teacher and community leader who became the first black headteacher in Wales. She worked to make schools welcoming places where children could learn about different cultures and feel proud of their backgrounds.

Betty was born in Butetown, Cardiff, in 1934. She grew up in the area known as Tiger Bay, where families from many parts of the world lived. Her father came from Jamaica, and her mother had Welsh and Barbadian roots. After her father died during the Second World War, her family struggled with money.



As a child, Betty loved reading and did well at school. She won a scholarship to attend secondary school and dreamed of becoming a teacher. However, a headmistress discouraged her, suggesting that a black girl would face difficulties too great to overcome. Betty was upset, but she remained determined to succeed.

In 1960, Betty entered Cardiff Teacher Training College while also raising a family. She qualified in 1963 and later returned to teach at Mount Stuart Primary School, which she had attended as a child. In the 1970s, she became its headteacher.

Betty wanted every pupil to feel valued. She included black history in lessons, teaching children about slavery, the struggle for equal rights and the achievements of black people. She also taught about apartheid, a system in South Africa that separated people by race and denied black people equal rights. Her school became known for teaching children about different cultures.

Her work reached beyond the classroom. Betty served as a local councillor, helping represent her community, and helped launch Black History Month Wales in 2007. In 2003, she received an MBE, an honour recognising her contribution to education and community life.

Betty died in 2017. A statue of her was unveiled in Cardiff in 2021. Her achievements remind us that everyone deserves opportunities to learn, succeed and be heard.



## Betty Campbell

## Questions

1. What important first did Betty Campbell achieve in Wales?
2. Where and in which year was Betty born?
3. What was the area where Betty grew up also known as?
4. What did Betty enjoy doing as a child?
5. How did Betty respond when a headmistress discouraged her ambition?
6. In which year did Betty qualify as a teacher?
7. Why was Mount Stuart Primary School personally important to Betty?
8. Name two subjects Betty included when teaching black history.
9. What was apartheid?
10. Why did Betty receive an MBE in 2003?



## Betty Campbell

## Answers

1. She became the first black headteacher in Wales.
2. She was born in Butetown, Cardiff, in 1934.
3. The area was also known as Tiger Bay.
4. She enjoyed reading and did well at school.
5. She was upset but remained determined to become a teacher.
6. She qualified as a teacher in 1963.
7. She had attended the school herself as a child.
8. She taught about slavery and the struggle for equal rights.
9. It was a system that separated people by race and denied black people equal rights in South Africa.
10. She received it for her contribution to education and community life.



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|                |          |             |           |             |         |               |
|----------------|----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|---------|---------------|
| achievement    | ambition | apartheid   | community | councillor  | culture | determination |
| discrimination | equality | headteacher | heritage  | scholarship | statue  | tradition     |

1. The person responsible for leading and managing a school.
2. A strong wish to achieve something, such as becoming a teacher.
3. Continuing to work towards a goal, even when it is difficult.
4. An award that helps someone attend a school or college, often because of their ability.
5. A group of people who live in the same area or share something in common.
6. The customs, beliefs, languages and ways of life shared by a group of people.
7. The family background and history that help shape who someone is.

8. Unfair treatment of someone because of things such as their skin colour or background.
9. The idea that everyone should have the same rights and opportunities.
10. A former system in South Africa that separated people by race and denied black people equal rights.
11. A person elected to help make decisions for a local area and represent its people.
12. Something worthwhile that someone succeeds in doing through effort or skill.
13. A figure of a person or animal made from a material such as stone or metal.
14. A custom or activity passed down through families or communities over time.



# Betty Campbell

## Timeline Challenge

Betty Campbell was important because she became Wales's first Black headteacher. She worked hard to make education fairer and helped children learn about Black history and different cultures. She also stood up against racism and worked to improve her local community. Her achievements inspired many people across Wales.



**Can you put these key events from Betty's life into chronological order?**

|                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| After retiring from teaching, Betty becomes a local councillor for Butetown. She works to make life better for people in her community. | Betty Campbell is born in Butetown, Cardiff. She enjoys reading and works hard at school.           | A statue of Betty is unveiled in Cardiff to celebrate her achievements and the difference she made in Wales.              | Betty makes sure children learn about Black history, slavery and apartheid. She helps make school lessons more inclusive. |
| Betty joins Cardiff Teacher Training College and trains for the career she has dreamed about.                                           | Betty dies at the age of 82. She is remembered as an important teacher and campaigner for equality. | Betty wants to become a teacher. Some people tell her this will be difficult, but she is determined to achieve her dream. | Betty becomes headteacher of Mount Stuart Primary School in Cardiff and makes history as Wales's first Black headteacher. |

**Link each event with one of the dates below. Use the information to make a timeline.**

|      |       |      |       |             |       |      |      |
|------|-------|------|-------|-------------|-------|------|------|
| 1934 | 1950s | 1960 | 1970s | 1970s-1980s | 1990s | 2017 | 2021 |
|------|-------|------|-------|-------------|-------|------|------|

