Overview & Scrutiny

Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission

All Members of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission are requested to attend the meeting of the Commission to be held as follows

Monday 8 February 2021

7.00 pm

Until further notice, all Council meetings will be held remotely

Contact:
Martin Bradford - martin.bradford@hackney.gov.uk
☎ 020 8356 3315
✉ martin.bradford@hackney.gov.uk

Tim Shields
Chief Executive, London Borough of Hackney

Members: Cllr Sophie Conway (Chair), Cllr Margaret Gordon (Vice-Chair), Cllr Humaira Garasia, Cllr Katie Hanson, Cllr James Peters, Cllr Sade Etti, Cllr Clare Joseph, Cllr Sharon Patrick, Cllr Clare Potter and Cllr Ajay Chauhan

Co-optees: Shuja Shaikh, Shabnum Hassan, Jo Macleod, Ernell Watson, Justine McDonald, Michael Lobenstein and Richard Brown

Agenda

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Hackney

Access and Information

Getting to the Town Hall

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Further Information about the Commission

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Public Involvement and Recording

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Rights of Press and Public to Report on Meetings

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Overview & Scrutiny

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission
London Borough of Hackney

All Members of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission are requested to attend the meeting of the Commission to be held as follows.

Monday 8th February 2021 at 7.00pm

This meeting is being held virtually. To view the meeting live (or replay) please use the following link:

https://youtu.be/28d84cSe2o0

Contact: *Martin Bradford, Overview & Scrutiny Officer*
            0208 356 3315
            martin.bradford@hackney.gov.uk

Tim Shields
Chief Executive, London Borough of Hackney

Council Members:	Cllr Sophie Conway (Chair)	Cllr Margaret Gordon (Vice Chair)	
	Cllr Ajay Chauhan	Cllr Sade Etti	Cllr Humaira Garasia
	Cllr Katie Hanson	Cllr Clare Joseph	Cllr Sharon Patrick
	Cllr James Peters	Cllr Clare Potter	

Co-opted Members:	Richard Brown, Justine McDonald, Shabnum Hassan, Jo Macleod, Ernell Watson, Shuja Shaikh, Michael Lobenstein

Agenda

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

1.	**Apologies for Absence (19.00)**
2.	**Urgent Items / Order of Business (19.00)**
3.	**Declarations of Interest (19.00)**
4.	**The Education Attainment Gap (19.05)** The Commission maintains oversight of the academic attainment of children across Hackney and receives updates on pupil achievement each year. Given ongoing disparities in educational achievement among different cohorts of young people, the Commission agreed to dedicate a

future meeting to further scrutinise the local attainment gap (in particular as this affects Black Caribbean and other black or minority ethnic communities).

This session will provide an opportunity to review local approaches to closing the education attainment gap, and identify those policies or practices which may further inform efforts to address local inequalities in education outcomes.

Session Outline

7.05 National overview / evidence
Mary Reader, Senior Researcher, Education Policy Institute (10m)
Prof Feyisa Demie, School of Education, Durham University (10m)

7.25 Local Policy
Annie Gammon, Director of Education, LB Hackney (10m)
Stephen Hall, Assistant Director of Learning, Achievement, LB Hackney

7.35.Comparative analysis and assessment
James Page, Chief Executive of Haringey Education Partnership (5min)
Other LA - to be confirmed (5min)

7.45 Local Practice
Anna Feltham, Headteacher Clapton Girls Academy (5min)
Nicole Reid, Executive Headteacher at the New Wave Federation (5min)
Lisa Clarke, Headteacher Comet Children's Centre & Nursery (5min)

8.00-8.50 Question & Answer Discussion

The presentations will be followed by a Q and A session led by the Chair.

A range of possible lines of enquiry are provided below to inform discussions (if not covered within the presentations).

1. What happens to the attainment gap for Black Caribbean and other minority ethnic children as they move from early years to primary and on to secondary educational settings?

2. What does the evidence tell us about the attainment gap for Black Carribean children in relation to other minority ethnic groups?

3. To what extent is poverty and broader social disadvantage a denominator of the attainment gap as experienced for Black Caribbean and other minority ethnic groups?

4. What are the barriers or challenges to overcoming the attainment gap among Black Caribbean and other minority ethnic groups?

5. Is the attainment gap an issue for all schools, including those that are good and outstanding?

6. What evidence is there of successful strategies to close the attainment gap for children of Black Caribbean and other minority ethnic groups? Do effective strategies need to be culturally specific?

7. What does the evidence tell us about the settings for the most successful strategies? Is it best to focus on particular settings (e.g. early years) or at particular junctures in a child's education (e.g. transition)?

8. What role can the local authority play in supporting local educational settings to address the education attainment gap?

9. Are all effective strategies to close the attainment gap school based? Are there other ways in which school based interventions can be supported by the local authority or other agencies?

10. What priorities should inform the local authority approach to addressing the education attainment gap?

20.50 Summary
To summarise key evidence and priorities for action or follow up from the session.

Background
In addition to reports provided by contributors (here) additional background reports are provided below.

Education in England Annual Report 2020 Education Policy Institute

The Attainment Gap Education Endowment Foundation 2018

Building a better future: tackling the attainment gap in GCSE Maths & EnglishE Teach First 2020

Child Poverty & Education Outcomes by Ethnicity ONS 2020

5.	**Work Programme (21.00)** To note and agree to the work programme for the remainder of 2020/21.
6.	**Minutes (21.10)** To note any actions and agree to the minutes of the meeting held on 12th January 2021.
7.	**Any other business (21.20)** The date of the next meeting is Tuesday May 11th 2021.

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Education in England: Annual Report 2020

Jo Hutchinson, Mary Reader and Avinash Akhal

August 2020

EDUCATION POLICY INSTITUTE

Fair Education Alliance

UNBOUND

About the authors

Mary Reader is Senior Researcher for Social Mobility and Vulnerable Learners at the Education Policy Institute. Alongside her role at EPI she is a Research Officer at the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE) at the London School of Economics, having previously worked in Parliament for an MP and at the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR). Mary graduated from the LSE with a Master of Public Administration (MPA) in Public and Social Policy in 2019 and the University of Oxford with a BA in Philosophy, Politics and Economics in 2016.

Jo Hutchinson is Director for Social Mobility and Vulnerable Learners at the Education Policy Institute. Jo's previous publications include 'School inspection in England: Is there room to improve?' and 'Divergent pathways: the disadvantage gap, accountability and the pupil premium'. Jo was a co-author of 'Closing the gap? Trends in educational attainment and disadvantage', 'Grammar schools and social mobility' and 'Educational Outcomes of Children with English as an Additional Language'. Prior to joining EPI, Jo spent ten years as a statistician at the Department for Education.

Avinash Akhal is a Researcher for Early Years at the Education Policy Institute. Avinash's previous publications include 'Education in England: Annual report 2019' and 'The early years workforce: A comparison with retail workers' and 'The impact of recent government policies on early years provision'. In 2018, he completed an International Citizen Service placement with Challenges Worldwide, working as a Business Support Associate in Rwanda. Before joining EPI, he graduated with a BA in Economics and International Development from the University of Sussex in 2017.

Acknowledgements

Sam Tuckett is a Senior Researcher for Post-16 and Skills at the Education Policy Institute.

Sid Bixer is on secondment at the Education Policy Institute from the Government Statistical Service.

Natalie Perera is Executive Director and Head of Research at the Education Policy Institute.

Jon Andrews is Director for School System and Performance, and Deputy Head of Research at the Education Policy Institute.

We are grateful to **Tom Clarke**, Head of Data Science at the Office of the Children's Commissioner, for running some of our looked after children and children in need code for the latest years of data.

This report has been produced in partnership with the Fair Education Alliance (FEA) and Unbound Philanthropy.

The Fair Education Alliance is a coalition of approximately 200 of the UK's leading organisations from business, education and the third sector. The aim of the Alliance is to create a fair and equitable education system, ending the persistent achievement gap between young people from the poorest communities and their wealthier peers through collaboration and by influencing policy.

Unbound Philanthropy is an independent private grantmaking foundation that invests in leaders and organizations in the US and UK working to build a vibrant, welcoming society and just immigration system.

About the Education Policy Institute

The Education Policy Institute is an independent, impartial and evidence-based research institute that promotes high quality education outcomes, regardless of social background. We achieve this through data-led analysis, innovative research and high-profile events.

Education can have a transformative effect on the life chances of young people, enabling them to fulfil their potential, have successful careers, and grasp opportunities. As well as having a positive impact on the individual, good quality education and child wellbeing also promotes economic productivity and a cohesive society.

Through our research, we provide insight, commentary, and a constructive critique of education policy in England – shedding light on what is working and where further progress needs to be made. Our research and analysis spans a young person's journey from the early years through to entry to the labour market.

Our core research areas include:

- Benchmarking English Education
- School Performance, Admissions, and Capacity
- Early Years Development
- Social Mobility and Vulnerable Learners
- Accountability, Assessment, and Inspection
- Curriculum and Qualifications
- Teacher Supply and Quality
- Education Funding
- Higher Education, Further Education, and Skills

Our experienced and dedicated team works closely with academics, think tanks, and other research foundations and charities to shape the policy agenda.

Contents

Foreword: Education Policy Institute

High attaining pupils in England generally perform very well by international norms – reaching 'world class' standards. Our big challenge in English education consists in the long tail of low performance, which is highly correlated with poverty, special education needs, some aspects of ethnicity, and other characteristics of vulnerability.

At the Education Policy Institute, our work is heavily focused on helping policy-makers and practitioners to use research evidence to identify effective strategies for closing these gaps. As part of our mission, we regularly publish an Annual Report, which seeks to measure the learning gaps, for different pupil groups, for different phases of education, and in different parts of the country. This helps us to understand what progress is, or is not, being made, and where the greatest challenges appear to be. It may also help us to identify some of the drivers of changes in the gaps, so that corrective actions can be taken.

One achievement of EPI researchers is to present these learning gaps in a rigorous but easy to comprehend way – in terms of the months of learning that different groups of vulnerable children are behind the average of the rest of the pupil population. We also seek, over time, to refine our analysis, so that we can achieve a better understanding of learning gaps and their drivers.

This year we provide more detailed information about the persistence of poverty, and how this may be affecting changes in the disadvantaged learning gap, as well as how it can explain differences across the country in the size of these gaps.

This report also includes, for the first time, our estimates of the learning gaps for Looked After Children and children with Child Protection Plans.

We will continue to develop our analysis in future years to help secure a deeper understanding of what is behind these learning gaps, and to consider how these may most effectively be closed.

The latest data which are contained in this report are for 2019. Since then, the COVID epidemic has had a profound impact on English education, and everything we have so far learned about education during the schools' lockdown suggests that the response to the health crisis will have had a particularly adverse impact on poor and vulnerable children. The gaps we report here may therefore already be much wider this year.

In any case, this year's report is a wakeup call for all those who want to see educational outcomes and opportunities improved for our poorer and more vulnerable children. We report that after a long period in which some progress has been made in closing most gaps, this progress has now stalled. Indeed, even before COVID struck, there were signs that the disadvantaged learning gaps were about to widen. That is why this year's Annual Report and its associated analysis is so important.

As ever, we welcome comments on the contents of this report.

Rt. Hon. David Laws, Executive Chairman, Education Policy Institute

Foreword: The Fair Education Alliance

Each year we report on how the country is fairing in terms of tackling inequality in the English education system. This year the message is clear: **the gap will never close without systemic change.**

EPI's research gives us an in-depth analysis of the persistence of poverty over a child's school life, the geographic variations of the attainment gap, and how factors like special education needs and ethnicity intersect with disadvantage. This data provides a nuanced understanding of the inequalities present in the education system, and the progress, or lack thereof, in closing these gaps.

The data available for this report is from 2019, pre-dating the Covid-19 pandemic. The data shows that the country was already facing significant challenges - the gap had widened across early years, primary school and secondary school, and specific groups were increasingly left behind, including:

- **Persistently disadvantaged children** (on free school meals >80% of their school life) were on average 22 months behind their more advantaged peers and this has not improved since 2011;
- **Looked after children** were 29 months behind other children; and
- Gaps in attainment widened significantly over the past decade between **Black Caribbean children/children from other black backgrounds** and children from other ethnicities.

It is likely that these problems have only been compounded by the adverse impact of Covid-19 on children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Yet, with crisis comes opportunity. The situation has drawn back the curtain and society are more aware of the deep and growing inequalities. The situation highlights the urgency and need for cross-sector approaches that tackle the root causes of inequality.

The Fair Education Alliance believes that we can only create an equitable system if we work together for the long-term. Our coalition of nearly 200 member organisations know that change will not come from any one actor progressing alone, but from collective action involving teachers, government, parents, charities, businesses, and young people.

Our members have developed a shared vision and are working together to create a fair, inclusive system which:

- **gives all young people a rounded education** so that they develop skills, are looked after emotionally and physically, and can achieve academically no matter their personal circumstances;
- **engages parents and communities** of all backgrounds so that education does not stop at the school gates;
- **supports, incentivises and rewards teachers and leaders** to enable all children to thrive, including by working in more disadvantaged areas; and
- **gives young people the knowledge, skills and awareness to succeed in life after school**, whether that be in further education, higher education or employment.

We must commit to making fundamental changes in the education system rather than incremental attempts to make an unfair system a little bit less unfair. Progress in closing the gap has been stalling over the last five years and it is now widening. It is important that we act on the data in front of us and significantly change the education system and in turn, make a fairer society.

Samantha Butters and Gina Cicerone, Co-CEOs, The Fair Education Alliance

Summary of findings

In this section we present our headline findings on educational attainment and inequalities in state schools in England from 2011 to 2019. More detail on our methodology is included in the Technical Appendix.

1. In 2019, average attainment at secondary school was slightly higher than in 2018, while it remained unchanged in the early years and primary school

To assess trends in overall attainment, we measure assessment scores at age 5, at the end of primary school and at the end of secondary school.

The early years

To measure educational progress in the early years, we use the total point score achieved by pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP), a teacher-led assessment at the end of Reception across a range of social, behavioural and cognitive developmental goals.

In 2019, the average EYFSP total point score was 34.6 (on a scale from 17 to 51). This has not changed since last year.

Primary school

For primary school level, we measure attainment using the average scaled score in reading and maths at key stage 2.

In 2019, the average scaled score was 103.2. This has not changed since last year.

Since the introduction of the scaled score key stage 2 tests in 2016, average attainment has improved by 1.9 scaled score points. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths has also increased from 57 per cent in 2016 to 68 per cent in 2019.[1]

Secondary school

To assess overall attainment at secondary level we measure pupils' average GCSE grade across all GCSE subjects. We use the 9 to 1 grading system, which was introduced in 2017 for English and maths and in 2018 for many other subjects.[2]

In 2019, the average GCSE grade was 4.5. This represents a very slight increase of 0.7 per cent (or 0.03 of a grade) from the previous year.

2. The disadvantage gap has stopped closing over the last five years and there are several indications that it has begun to widen

We measure the disadvantage gap by comparing the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and their peers. We define a pupil as disadvantaged if they have been eligible for free school meals at any

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[1] We do not use this 'threshold' measure as our headline measure because it may reflect strategic behaviour by schools to get pupils 'over the line' rather than substantive improvements in educational attainment.

[2] For GCSEs which had not converted to the new scale by 2018, we rescale the existing grades – our methodology is set out in more detail in the accompanying Technical Appendix to this summary.

point in the last six years, and non-disadvantaged if they have not, using the same definition as the Department for Education.[3]

Using data on pupils' exam results across all key stages, we order pupils by their exam results and assign them a rank. We calculate the average rank of the disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupil groups, and then subtract the latter from the former (this is the rank mean difference). Finally, we convert this into months of developmental progress, enabling us to reach a measure of how far behind poorer pupils are from their peers.

We cover the period from 2011 to 2019, with the exception of early years in which we omit results for 2011 and 2012 as they are based on the old EYFSP and therefore not comparable with later years.

As Figure 2.1 shows, the disadvantage gap has reduced at both primary and secondary level over this period as a whole, by 1.4 months (12.8 per cent) at primary and 1.6 months (8 per cent) at secondary.[4] Our measure of early years attainment since 2013 suggests that very little progress has been made in closing the gap.

In last year's Annual Report, we identified an increase in the size of the gap in 2018 at secondary and a slight increase at early years, for the first time in the time series. We hypothesised that 2018 could prove to be a turning point at which progress in closing the gap is reversed and begins to unravel.

Figure 2.1: Trends in the size of the disadvantage gap (months) since 2011[5]

	Early years	Primary school	Secondary school	
	EYFSP total point score	KS2 scaled score in reading and maths	GCSE average grade	GCSE English and maths (average grade)
2011	-	10.6	20.4	19.7
2012	-	10.1	20.0	18.9
2013	4.7	10.0	19.6	18.6
2014	4.7	10.0	19.6	18.2
2015	4.6	9.7	19.4	18.1
2016	4.5	9.6	19.3	18.1
2017	4.5	9.5	18.4	17.9
2018	4.6	9.2	18.4	18.1
2019	4.6	9.3	18.4	18.1
2018-2019 change (%)	+0.1 (+1.4%)	+ 0.1 (+0.8%)	-0.0 (-0.2%)	+0.0 (+0.0%)
2011-2019 change (%)	n/a	-1.4 (-12.8%)	-2.0 (-9.8%)	-1.6 (-8.0%)

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[3] The DfE allocates the deprivation component of the pupil premium on this basis.
[4] This is using our headline measure of key stage 4 attainment, the average grade in English and maths GCSEs, which unlike the average across all GCSEs is not influenced by changes in subject entry (e.g. due to the introduction of Progress 8 in 2016) that may bias the distribution of exam results over time, and are likely to account for the sharp reduction in the gap for all GCSEs in 2017.
[5] Totals may not appear to sum from their constituent parts in tables due to rounding errors.

Our results from 2019 support this hypothesis (see Figure 2.1). At secondary and early years, the gap increased in 2018 and has since stabilised at these higher levels. In 2019 we also find that the gap has increased at primary level for the first time since at least 2007 (see Figure 2.2).[6] This is a concerning indication that inequalities have stopped reducing and have started to widen.

Figure 2.2: Trends in the disadvantage gap in months at primary school
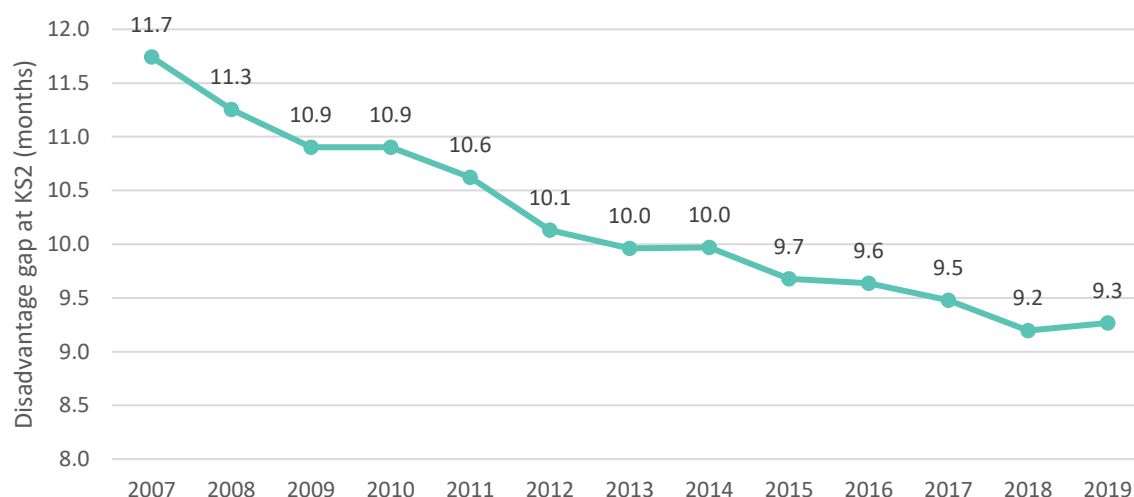
In last year's Annual Report, we modelled that if the trend over the last five years were to continue, it would take over 500 years for the disadvantage gap to be eliminated at secondary level in English and maths. This year the data suggests an even more extreme conclusion: the gap is not closing. Over the last five years, our headline measure of the gap at secondary level has not changed. If this were to continue, the gap would never close.

Figure 2.3: Five-year trends in the GCSE English and maths disadvantage gap

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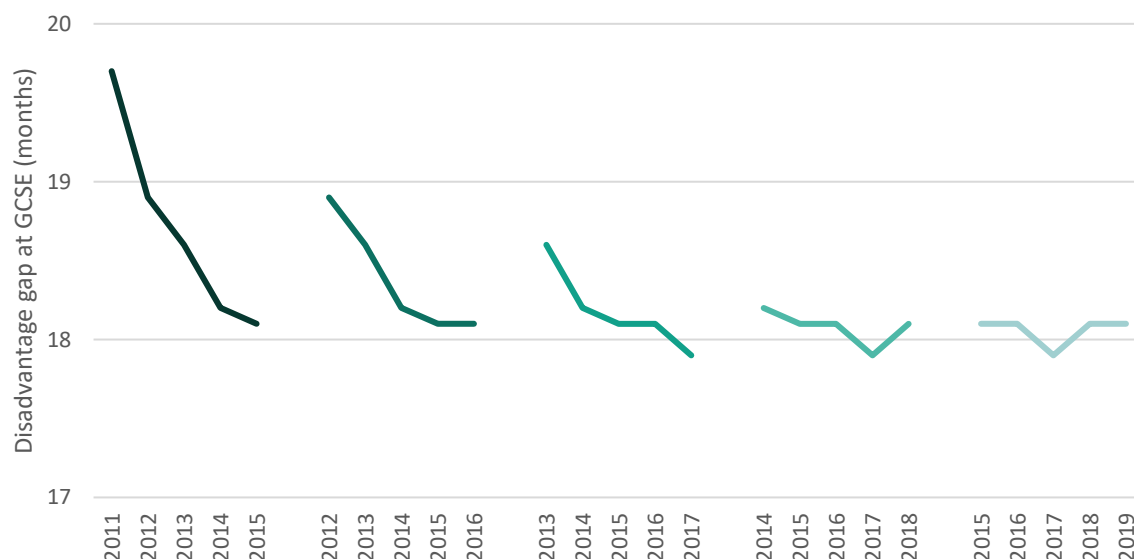
[6] While we have a consistent time series going back to 2007 for primary level, we are not able to consistently measure the gap at secondary level prior to 2011.

Disadvantage gap by GCSE subject

This year we also provide a breakdown of the disadvantage gap by GCSE subject. As Figure 2.4 shows, the size of the disadvantage gap varies significantly by subject, ranging from 20.1 months in Music to -7.5 months in Biblical Hebrew.

However, there are also differences in the relative likelihood of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils taking certain subjects. Figure 2.4 therefore also shows the relative participation gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students alongside the disadvantage gap. This is the percentage point difference between the entry of non-disadvantaged and disadvantaged pupils within a given subject, divided by the percentage entry of non-disadvantaged pupils.

In most non-compulsory subjects, disadvantaged pupils are less likely to take the subject – this is most stark for Biblical Hebrew, Gujarati, Classical Greek, and Latin. However, in Art and Design, Combined Science, Portuguese, Urdu, Turkish, Bengali, Arabic and Persian, disadvantaged pupils are more likely to take the subject than non-disadvantaged pupils.

Figure 2.4: The disadvantage gap by subject at secondary school in 2019

	GCSE disadvantage gap (months)	Relative participation gap (%)	Total number of students
Music	20.1	38.3%	30,676
Physical Education	17.7	46.5%	81,583
Geography	17.7	21.6%	234,297
Maths	17.5	0.0%	541,140
Food Technology	16.8	6.8%	42,889
Statistics	16.4	12.3%	12,517
English	16.2	0.0%	541,140
Drama	15.9	15.8%	51,412
History	15.8	12.0%	251,187
Japanese	14.7	54.2%	352
Biological Sciences	14.5	49.6%	147,675
English Literature	14.4	5.3%	520,482
Latin	14.0	72.8%	3,595
Art and Design	14.0	-4.0%	155,923
Business Studies	13.8	28.5%	83,029
Combined Science	13.7	-15.1%	373,015
Physics	13.5	51.5%	145,830
Media, Film and Television Studies	12.7	9.0%	34,114
German	12.5	58.7%	38,951
Chemistry	12.4	51.4%	146,109
Chinese	11.6	31.4%	1,453
French	11.5	33.9%	115,847
Religious Studies	11.3	15.8%	210,034
Bengali	10.3	-204.5%	412
Spanish	10.3	30.5%	91,545
Polish	9.5	60.7%	3,018

Languages (all)	9.5	33.9%	252,802
Classical Greek	8.9	83.1%	114
Portuguese	8.4	-15.0%	2,159
Panjabi	7.7	16.2%	496
Modern Hebrew	7.0	66.2%	130
Urdu	6.4	-55.5%	2,553
Modern Greek	5.6	53.8%	205
Turkish	5.5	-133.5%	1,705
Italian	2.1	43.0%	3,258
Russian	0.1	51.6%	846
Gujarati	-1.1	84.1%	403
Arabic	-2.3	-228.1%	1,772
Persian	-4.8	-246.2%	359
Biblical Hebrew	-7.5	89.3%	235

Figure 2.5 charts the relationship between the disadvantage gap and relative participation gap. While no clear correlation emerges, there are some interesting patterns of note.

Figure 2.5: Disadvantage gap and relative participation gap by subject at secondary school in 2019[7]
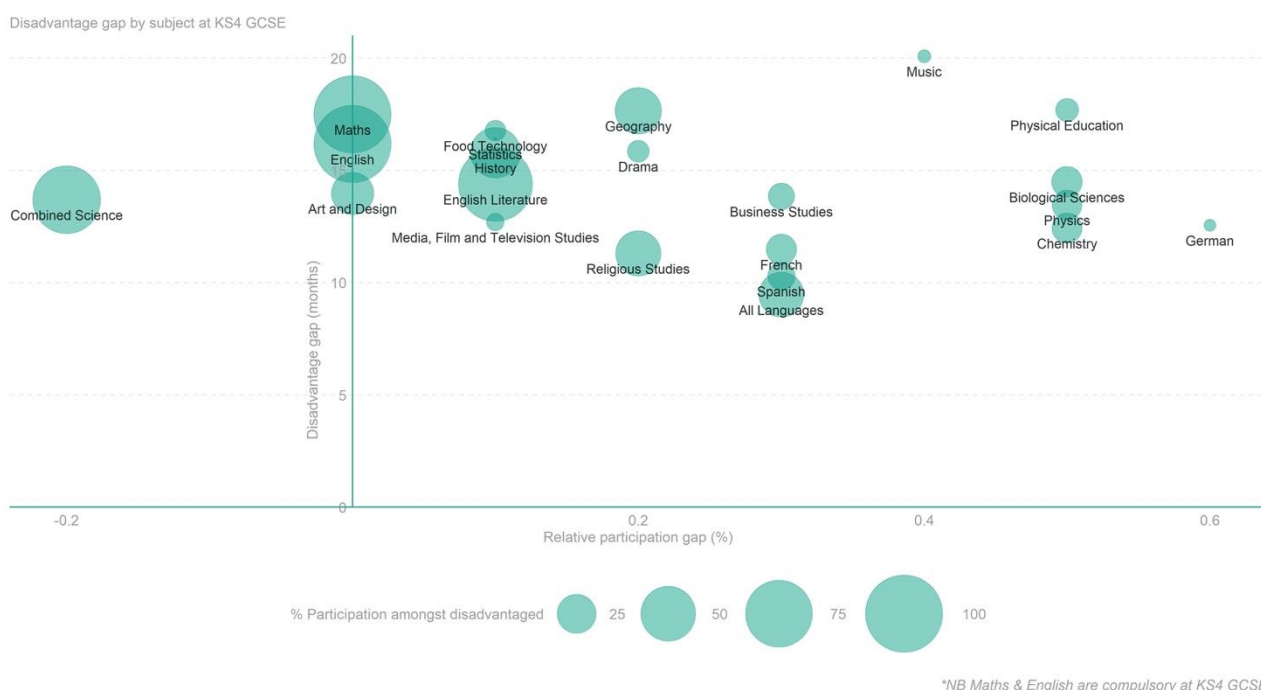
The most inegalitarian subjects are Music and Physical Education, which have both high disadvantage gaps and high participation gaps. Disadvantaged pupils are 38 per cent less likely than non-disadvantaged pupils to take Music at GCSE and, when they do, they score the equivalent of 20 months behind their wealthier peers. This may be driven by parental investments in sport and music outside of school, such as private music and swimming lessons, that are less accessible for

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[7] Only subjects with a sample size greater than 5000 have been included in this figure. 'All languages' refers to the highest scoring language subject taken by pupils.

disadvantaged pupils. Disparities in schools' ability to provide equipment and facilities (such as playing fields and musical instruments) may also play a role.

The two effectively compulsory subjects at GCSE – English and maths – have relatively large disadvantage gaps compared to other subjects: 17.5 months in maths and 16.2 months in English.

Science subjects tend to have middling disadvantage gaps: 12.4 for Chemistry, 13.5 for Physics, 13.7 months for Combined Science and 14.5 for Biological Science. However, disadvantaged pupils are 15 per cent more likely to take Combined Science than their non-disadvantaged peers, and around 50 per cent less likely to take dual or triple sciences at GCSE. Given that dual/triple science subjects are taken by a relatively small proportion of the pupil population, it is perhaps surprising that their disadvantage gaps are not larger. However, this could be explained by selection of higher-attaining disadvantaged pupils into these subjects through 'ability' grouping at an early stage.

Language subjects tend to have smaller disadvantage gaps, though they are also taken by much smaller shares of the pupil population. In some language subjects – Gujarati, Arabic, Persian, and Biblical Hebrew – there is a negative disadvantage gap. This means that, on average, disadvantaged pupils do better than their non-disadvantaged peers in these community languages. This may be because disadvantaged pupils who take these subjects are bilingual or fluent in these languages and thereby score more highly than their peers despite being socio-economically disadvantaged.

Notably, in the humanities, Geography and Religious Studies have similar participation gaps, but Geography has a much larger disadvantage gap of 17.7 months compared to 11.3 months for Religious Studies. Meanwhile, History has a disadvantage gap of 15.3 months, and a relatively small participation gap of 12 per cent.

3. Since 2011, there has been less progress in closing the gap for persistently disadvantaged pupils. More recently, increases in persistent poverty among disadvantaged pupils have contributed to the halt in progress for the wider disadvantaged group

Using school census data, we are able to create a longitudinal picture of the length of time pupils are eligible for free school meals over the course of their school lives. This gives us an indication of the persistence of poverty and deprivation experienced by pupils. We define persistently disadvantaged pupils as those who are eligible for free school meals for 80 per cent or more of their school life.

Figure 3.1 shows that there has been barely any progress in closing the persistent disadvantage gap since 2011, particularly at secondary level. Over this period, the persistent disadvantage gap fell by just 0.4 months (3.4 per cent) at primary and 0.1 months (0.5 per cent) at secondary.

Figure 3.1: Trends in the size of the persistent disadvantage gap since 2011

	Primary school	Secondary school	
	KS2 scaled score in reading and maths	All GCSEs (average grade)	GCSE English and maths (average grade)
2011	12.5	23.5	22.8
2012	12.1	23.2	22.2
2013	12.1	23.4	22.4
2014	12.3	23.5	22.0
2015	12.2	23.7	22.6
2016	12.3	23.8	22.7
2017	12.3	23.0	22.8
2018	12.0	23.2	23.0
2019	12.1	22.9	22.7
2018-2019 change (%)	+ 0.1 (+1.0%)	- 0.2 (-1.1%)	- 0.3 (-1.2%)
2011-2019 change (%)	- 0.4 (-3.4%)	- 0.6 (-2.4%)	-0.1 (-0.5%)

Over the last three years, persistence of poverty has increased for disadvantaged pupils. As Figure 3.2 shows, from 2011 to 2015, disadvantaged pupils were disadvantaged for a decreasing proportion of their school lives each year, though the rate of change slowed over time. In 2016 it started increasing. Similarly, from 2011 to 2017 the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who were persistently disadvantaged decreased year on year, but in 2018 it started increasing for the first time in the time series.

Figure 3.2: Persistence of disadvantage among disadvantaged pupils at secondary school since 2011
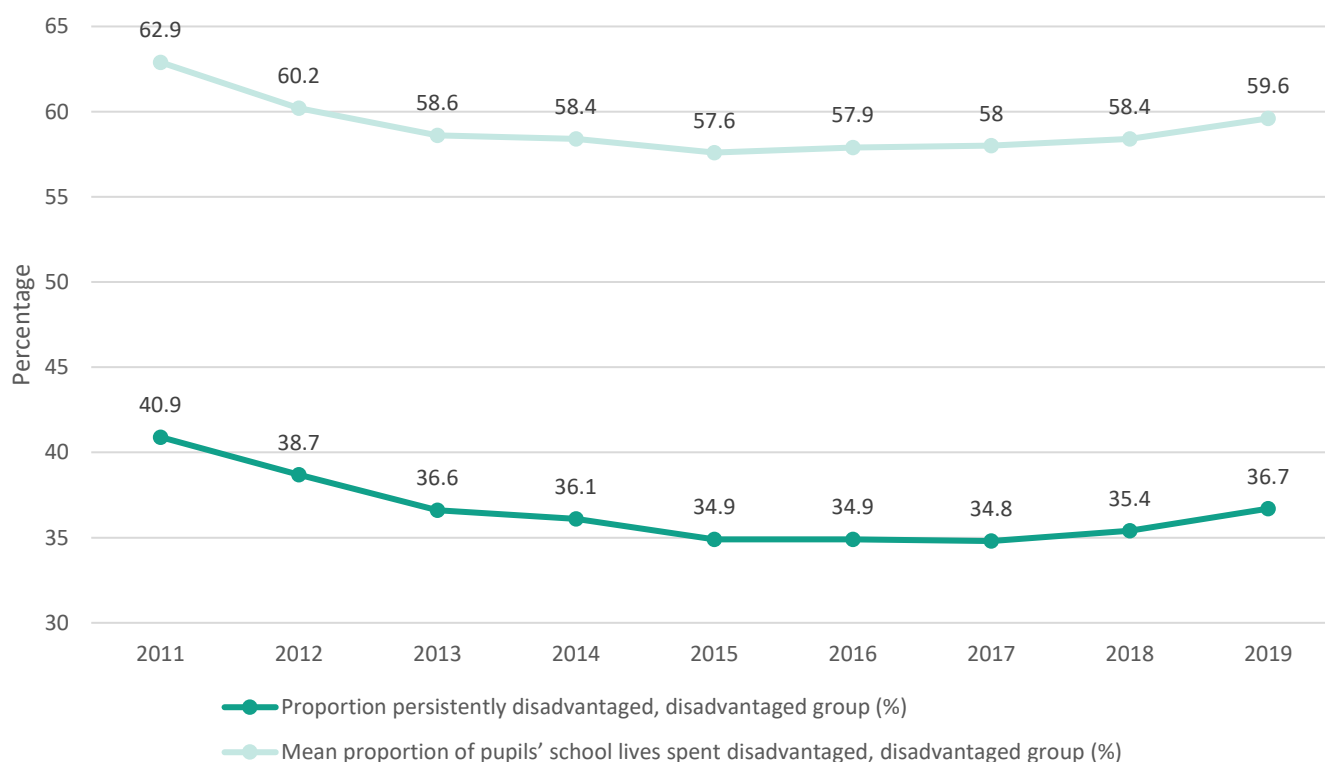
Figure 3.3 presents these changes in persistence of disadvantage in terms of yearly percentage change. It illustrates that these trends roughly align with the trend for the disadvantage gap: a slowing of progress before a widening of the gap in 2018.

Figure 3.3: Yearly percentage change in the persistence of disadvantage experienced by disadvantaged pupils, and the disadvantage gap at secondary school since 2011

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
% persistently disadvantaged	-5.5%	-5.4%	-1.4%	-3.1%	-0.0%	-0.2%	+1.6%	+3.7%
Mean proportion of pupils' school lives spent disadvantaged (%)	-4.3%	-2.6%	-0.4%	-1.4%	+0.5%	+0.1%	+0.8%	+1.9%
Disadvantage gap at secondary level (English and maths GCSE)	-3.9%	-1.9%	-2.0%	-0.3%	-0.2%	-0.8%	+1.0%	+0.0%

Given this, and pre-existing evidence that persistence of disadvantage is a key determinant of the disadvantage gap, for this year's Annual Report we decided to investigate the contribution that persistent disadvantage makes to the disadvantage gap. [i]

To do this at national level, we calculate disadvantage gaps at secondary school for five distinct pupil groups: those who are disadvantaged and eligible for FSM for:

- 0-19 per cent of their school life (low persistence)
- 20-39 per cent of their school life (low-medium persistence)
- 40-59 per cent of their school life (medium persistence)
- 60-79 per cent of their school life (medium-high persistence)
- 80-100 per cent of their school life of their school life (high persistence, i.e. persistently disadvantaged). [8]

All of these pupil groups experience disadvantage, having been eligible for free school meals at some point in the last six years. However, the lower persistence groups have experienced disadvantage more fleetingly than those in the higher persistence groups; they may be eligible for FSM for one or two years, but they are not claiming FSM for the majority of their school life.

Figure 3.4 shows the size of these persistence groups over time. In 2019, 37 per cent of disadvantaged pupils experienced high persistence; 16 per cent experienced medium-high persistence; 21 per cent experienced medium persistence; 16 per cent experienced low-medium persistence and 10 per cent experienced low persistence.

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[8] At national level, we look at trends for separate groups of persistence as this enables an examination of non-linear time trends. Like Gorard et al. (2019), we also employ a regression approach and calculate the 'adjusted' disadvantage gap by year and by region (see Section 7), controlling for average persistence of disadvantage within the disadvantaged group. See Technical Appendix for more information.

Since 2015, the high persistence group has grown by 5 per cent, while the low persistence group shrunk by 18 per cent. This reflects the **rise in persistent poverty among disadvantaged pupils over the last few years**, as evidenced previously in Figures 3.2 and 3.3.

Figure 3.4: Levels of persistent disadvantage among disadvantaged pupils at secondary school since 2011

	Low persistence	Low-medium persistence	Medium persistence	Medium-high persistence	High persistence
2011	8.0%	14.9%	18.3%	17.9%	40.9%
2012	10.7%	15.9%	17.7%	17.0%	38.7%
2013	11.5%	16.6%	18.9%	16.4%	36.6%
2014	11.5%	16.7%	19.0%	16.7%	36.1%
2015	12.1%	16.8%	19.4%	16.8%	34.9%
2016	11.6%	16.6%	19.6%	17.2%	34.9%
2017	11.3%	16.6%	20.0%	17.2%	34.8%
2018	10.8%	16.6%	20.4%	16.7%	35.4%
2019	9.9%	16.4%	20.8%	16.2%	36.7%
2011-2015 change	+4.2 pp (+52.5%)	+1.9 pp (+12.6%)	+1.1 pp (+6.0%)	-1.1 pp (-6.3%)	-6.0 pp (-14.7%)
2015-2019 change	-2.3 pp (-18.6%)	-0.3 pp (-2.0%)	+1.4 pp (+7.3%)	-0.6 pp (-3.7%)	+1.8 pp (+5.2%)

Figure 3.5 shows the disadvantage gap for each of these persistence groups. There is a clear relationship between the degree of persistence and the size of the gap: the more persistent the disadvantage, the larger the gap. At 23 months, the gap for the high persistence group (those who have been disadvantaged for 80 per cent or more of their school life) is **over twice the size of the gap** for the low persistence group (those who have been disadvantaged for less than 20 per cent).

Figure 3.5: Disadvantage gap at secondary school by persistence of disadvantage since 2011 (GCSE English and maths)

	Low persistence	Low-medium persistence	Medium persistence	Medium-high persistence	High persistence
2011	12.7	15.4	17.9	21.0	22.8
2012	12.2	15.5	17.5	20.3	22.2
2013	12.1	15.0	16.7	20.1	22.4
2014	11.7	14.7	16.9	19.3	22.0
2015	11.6	14.5	16.7	18.8	22.6
2016	11.6	14.2	16.3	18.9	22.7
2017	11.1	13.8	16.2	18.7	22.8
2018	11.2	14.1	16.0	18.9	23.0
2019	11.3	13.9	16.0	18.8	22.7
2011-2019 change	-1.4 (-11.3%)	-1.4 (-9.4%)	-2.0 (-10.9%)	-2.2 (-10.3%)	-0.1 (-0.5%)

As Figure 3.6 illustrates graphically, there are also differences in terms of how much the gap has closed. While the low persistence group have seen a reduction in the gap of 1.4 months (11.3 per cent) since 2011, the high persistence group have seen a reduction of just 0.1 months (0.5 per cent):

since 2014, the gap for this persistently disadvantaged group has grown in every year except the last.

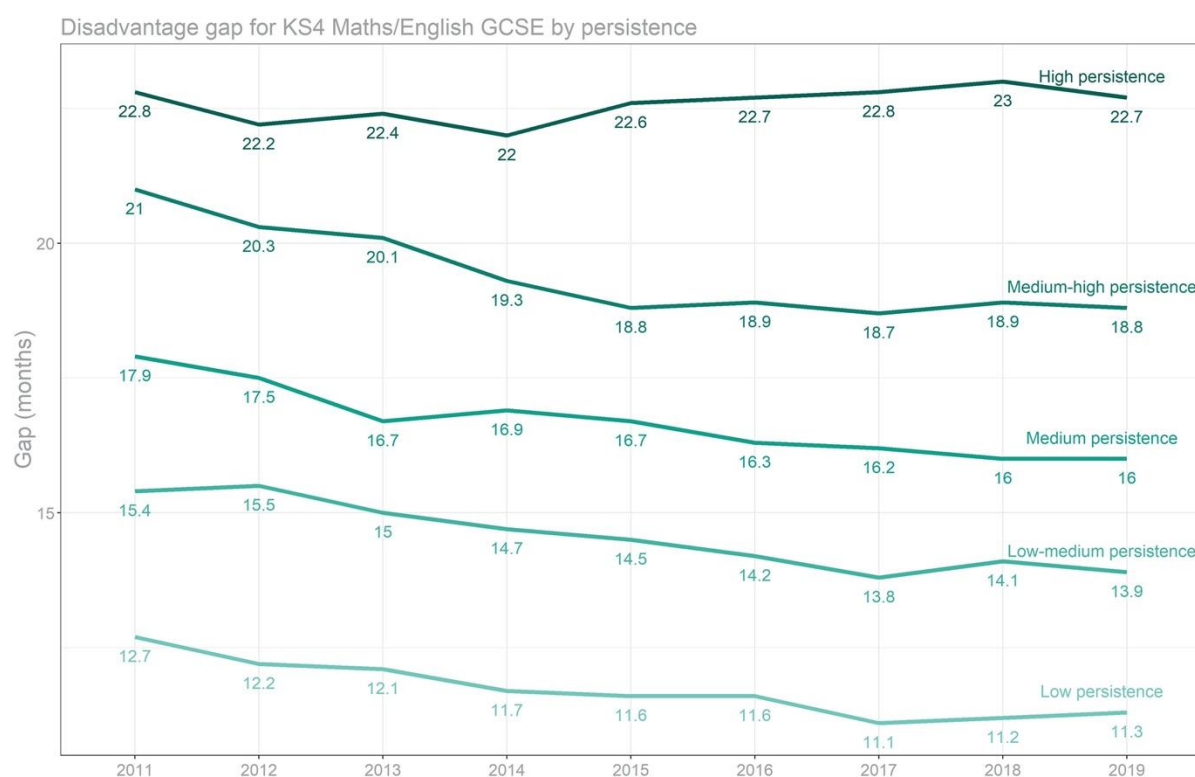**Figure 3.6: Disadvantage gap at secondary school by persistence of disadvantage since 2011 (GCSE English and maths)**

The fact that the high persistence (persistently disadvantaged) group has occupied a growing share of the disadvantaged group since 2017 (see Figure 3.4) suggests that the slowing of progress in closing the gap is being driven in part by a compositional rise in persistent poverty among disadvantaged pupils.

However, in addition to the worsening of the gap for the most persistently disadvantaged since 2014, the gap also worsened since 2017 for three of the other five disadvantaged groups (including the least persistent two), so it is not just a compositional shift towards higher persistence or poorer outcomes for this group that explain the worsening trend in the gap. Factors affecting disadvantaged pupils as a whole – including the rise in poverty depth over the two decades and the squeeze on per pupil school funding and other public services since 2010 – are likely to have contributed.[ii,iii]

4. The ethnicity gap for pupils from Black backgrounds and pupils arriving late in secondary school with English as an Additional Language (EAL) has widened significantly over the last decade

We now look at the gap by ethnic background, comparing the attainment of pupils from ethnic minorities with that of their white British peers.

There are notable variations in attainment by ethnic background. Pupils from Gypsy/Roma, Traveller of Irish Heritage, Black Caribbean, and White and Black Caribbean, Other Black Backgrounds, Pakistani, Any Other White Backgrounds, and Any Other Ethnic Backgrounds score lower on average

than their White British peers. **The gap is particularly large for Gypsy/Roma pupils, who are nearly three years behind by the end of secondary school, and Traveller of Irish Heritage pupils, who are two years behind**.

Meanwhile, there are other ethnic groups that do better on average than the White British ethnic group: in particular, **Chinese pupils are two years ahead and Indian pupils are 15 months ahead**. However, it should be noted that some of these ethnic groups represent very small proportions of the total pupil population and are therefore more skewed by individual outliers than larger ethnic groups. In 2019, Chinese pupils represented just 0.4 per cent of the GCSE cohort, while White British pupils represented 69 per cent.

Figure 4.1 shows that the ethnicity gap widens as children get older. It also shows a couple of cases in which the direction of the gap is reversed in the transition from primary to secondary school. For example, Bangladeshi students are 2.2 months behind White British pupils in the early years, but by the end of primary school they have made up that ground and are 2.6 months ahead on average (and then 5.1 months ahead at GCSE).

At primary and secondary level we also look at the attainment of pupils who are recent entrants to state schools in England and have English as an Additional Language (EAL) in the two years prior to being assessed. [9] This is because research shows that the stage at which EAL pupils enter the English education system is key: the later they enter, the more disadvantaged they are, and this is related to their proficiency in the English language. [iv,v] **At the end of primary school, late-arriving EAL pupils are 15.5 months behind native English speakers; at secondary, they are 20.7 months behind.**

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[9] We define late arriving EAL pupils as those who are recorded as having EAL, and who have entered the English state-school system in either Year 5 or Year 6 for key stage 2, or either Year 10 or Year 11 for key stage 4. The reference group against which these pupils are ranked is the group of pupils who are recorded with English as their first language in the current year, and who have never in the past been recorded as having EAL.

Figure 4.1: The size of the ethnicity gap (relative to white British children) at various ages in 2019

Ethnicity	Early years	Primary	Secondary (English and maths GCSE)
Late arriving EAL	n/a	15.5	20.7
Gypsy / Roma	8.1	19.2	34.0
Traveller of Irish Heritage	6.7	16.2	23.8
Black Caribbean	2.0	5.0	10.9
White and Black Caribbean	1.1	3.4	7.4
Any Other Black Background	2.3	2.8	6.9
Pakistani	2.9	1.2	1.4
Any Other White Background	2.2	0.2	1.4
Any Other Ethnic Group	3.1	0.9	0.2
Black - African	1.8	-0.4	0.1
White - British	0.0	0.0	0.0
White and Black African	0.5	-0.4	-0.3
Any Other Mixed Background	0.1	-1.9	-3.3
Bangladeshi	2.2	-2.6	-5.1
White - Irish	-1.2	-4.7	-8.4
White and Asian	-0.9	-4.8	-9.2
Any Other Asian Background	1.6	-4.5	-11.1
Indian	-0.6	-7.4	-14.2
Chinese	-1.0	-11.8	-23.9

Figure 4.2 shows how the secondary ethnicity gap has changed over the last decade. The most striking changes have been a **widening of the gap by three months (77 per cent) for pupils from Any Other Black Background, by 4.4 months (68 per cent) for Black Caribbean pupils, and by 2.1 months (11 per cent) for late arriving EAL pupils.** Meanwhile, pupils from Bangladeshi and Any Other Asian Backgrounds, who on average score higher at GCSE than White British pupils, have pulled away by four months (an increase of fourfold and 78 per cent respectively).

Figure 4.2: Trends in the size of the secondary ethnicity gap (relative to white British children) at English and maths GCSE since 2011

Ethnicity	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Late arriving EAL	18.6	18.8	20.0	20.3	19.8	18.7	18.6	19.3	20.7
Gypsy / Roma	34.8	35.3	34.2	36.1	36.5	36.2	35.5	34.8	34.0
Traveller of Irish Heritage	30.6	30.7	29.9	30.6	29.7	28.5	27.8	29.0	23.8
Black Caribbean	6.5	6.6	6.4	6.2	7.3	8.4	8.7	10.4	10.9
White and Black Caribbean	6.1	5.5	4.7	5.1	5.2	5.8	7.2	7.0	7.4
Any Other Black Background	3.9	6.5	4.9	5.6	6.9	6.3	6.8	6.6	6.9
Information Not Yet Obtained	3.5	2.4	1.3	4.9	5.0	2.9	3.4	5.2	5.3
Pakistani	3.6	2.7	3.3	3.6	3.2	3.7	2.5	2.0	1.4
Any Other White Background	1.5	2.4	2.0	1.6	2.1	2.0	1.2	1.2	1.4
Any Other Ethnic Group	1.0	0.1	-0.6	-0.7	-1.1	0.3	0.3	0.7	0.2
Black - African	-0.1	0.2	-0.3	0.0	0.6	0.4	-0.2	-0.3	0.1
White - British	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
White and Black African	-0.5	-1.5	-2.1	-1.1	-1.7	0.0	-0.5	0.7	-0.3
Refused	-1.1	-2.7	-2.3	-3.1	-3.1	-0.9	-1.6	0.2	-0.6
Any Other Mixed Background	-4.1	-3.4	-4.1	-4.1	-3.7	-3.0	-3.3	-3.3	-3.3
Bangladeshi	-0.9	-1.8	-2.1	-2.8	-4.1	-2.8	-4.7	-4.0	-5.1
White - Irish	-7.9	-7.3	-7.7	-8.5	-7.7	-8.3	-8.7	-8.7	-8.4
White and Asian	-9.2	-8.0	-8.3	-8.6	-8.5	-8.1	-8.2	-8.2	-9.2
Any Other Asian Background	-6.2	-6.0	-6.3	-6.4	-7.8	-8.8	-9.3	-9.8	-11.1
Indian	-13.0	-12.7	-12.7	-12.7	-11.9	-11.5	-12.8	-12.8	-14.2
Chinese	-21.3	-21.6	-21.3	-20.9	-21.0	-21.3	-22.2	-23.3	-23.9

5. Progress in reducing gaps for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) pupils has been slow, particularly for pupils with greater needs, and particularly since the SEND reforms in 2014

There are two main categories of SEND pupils – those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (ECHP) (or, prior to 2014, a statement of SEND support) and those without. SEND pupils without an EHCP normally receive school support through regular school notional special needs budgets. SEND pupils with an EHCP are assessed to have more substantial needs; in this case, SEND support is mandated by, and in many cases partially funded by, the local authority.

As with other disadvantage gaps, the size of the SEND gap increases as children get older (see Figure 5.1). At the age of five, SEND pupils with a statement or EHCP are already 15 months behind their peers, on average. Those differences compound over time, meaning that **by the end of secondary school, SEND pupils with a statement or EHCP are over three years behind their peers, on average.** SEND pupils without a statement or EHCP are two years behind.

Figure 5.1: The gap in months between pupils with SEND and their peers in 2019

	Early years	Primary school	Secondary school (English and maths GCSE)
SEND no statement / EHCP	9.8	18.4	24.4
SEND statement / EHCP	15.3	28.1	41.1

Figure 5.2 shows how SEND gaps at secondary school have changed since 2011. Since 2015, progress in closing the gap for the non-EHCP SEND group has slowed, and it has stalled altogether for those with an EHCP.

While the gap for pupils receiving SEND support without a statement or EHCP reduced by three months (9.6 per cent) in the four-year period from 2011 to 2015, in the four-year period from 2015 to 2019 it closed by just 1.5 months (5.9 per cent).

This slowing of progress has been more pronounced for pupils with greater needs. **The gap for pupils with a statement or EHCP narrowed by three months (7.5 per cent) from 2011 to 2015, but has since stagnated and even increased slightly, by 0.1 per cent.**

Figure 5.2: Trends in the size of the secondary SEND gap in English and Maths GCSE since 2011

	SEND no statement / EHCP	SEND with statement / EHCP
2011	28.6	44.3
2012	28.2	44.0
2013	27.8	43.3
2014	26.7	42.6
2015	25.9	41.0
2016	25.5	41.1
2017	25.5	41.3
2018	25.0	41.5
2019	24.4	41.1
2015-2019 change	-1.5 (-5.9%)	+0.0 (+0.1%)
2011-2015 change	-2.7 (-9.6%)	-3.3 (-7.5%)

These trends should be interpreted within the context of changes in the prevalence of these SEND groups (see Figure 5.3). The group receiving SEND support without a statement or EHCP reduced as a proportion of the pupil cohort by 39 per cent from 2011 to 2015, as thresholds for identification of this group rose in response to the incoming reforms of 2014. This makes the reduction in the gap for the non-EHCP SEND group from 2011 to 2015 surprising, given the policy context and the fact that any reduction in the size of the group due to threshold changes would – if anything – drive an increase in the average severity of the group and thereby the size of the gap. One explanation could be that the pupils who were removed from the school action group were not actually receiving structured additional school support; they were merely recorded on the SEND register to flag that they were facing challenges with their learning. The exit of these pupils from the group would mean that the remaining pupils were those receiving comparatively more support, thus potentially explaining some of the improvement in the gap from 2011 to 2015.

It is not possible to determine what drove the trends with any certainty but it is clear that the current non-EHCP group is making worse progress than the previous non-EHCP group did. Since 2015-16, the size of the non-EHCP group has been relatively stable (see Figure 5.3), while progress in closing the gap slowed (see Figure 5.2).

By contrast, the size of the EHCP group among GCSE pupils has been relatively stable since 2011 (see Figure 5.3).[10] The slight widening of the gap for this group is therefore unlikely to be explained by compositional changes. The turning point around 2015 roughly coincides with the gradual implementation of the 2014 SEND reforms. While it is not possible from this research to conclude whether these changes are causally attributable to these reforms, we can conclude at best that they have not yet been effective in improving outcomes for SEND pupils, and at worst that their implementation may have been detrimental.

Figure 5.3: Proportion of secondary school pupils identified with SEND by type since 2011

	% SEND no statement / EHCP	% SEND with statement / EHCP
2011	20.2	3.7
2012	18.6	3.7
2013	17.0	3.8
2014	15.8	3.8
2015	12.4	3.8
2016	10.8	3.8
2017	10.3	3.7
2018	10.3	3.7
2019	10.4	3.8
2015-2019 change	-2.0 (-15.8%)	-0.0 (-0.7%)
2011-2015 change	-7.8 (-38.7%)	+0.0 (+1.2%)

6. Pupils who are in the care system, have a social worker, or are on a child protection plan are significantly behind their peers by end of secondary school

For the first time this year, we measure the size of the disadvantage gap for children in the care system (known as looked after children) and children who are receiving support from children's services (known as children in need).

Looked after children are cared for by their local authority for a period of more than 24 hours, for example in a children's residential home or a foster home. Meanwhile, children in need receive support from a social worker for a variety of reasons including abuse or neglect, disability, family dysfunction or socially unacceptable behaviour. Of those children who are in need, those who have

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[10] Note that our estimates for the share of pupils who are identified with SEND with a statement/EHCP differ from published DfE statistics (DfE, 'Special Educational Needs in England', July 2020, https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england) because the latter covers all school-age children, whereas our estimates specifically cover to the pupil population in Year 11. DfE's statistics suggest that the share of pupils with an EHCP in schools has increased since 2017; our estimates here suggest that for pupils at the end of secondary school specifically, it has been relatively stable.

experienced neglect, or physical, sexual or emotional abuse will usually have a child protection plan (CPP) drawn up by the local authority to ensure that their needs are safeguarded and protected.

We find that all three of these groups are significantly behind their peers in terms of their educational attainment at secondary school, more so than the disadvantaged group to which we refer in our main analysis.[11] **By the time they sit their GCSEs, looked after children are 29 months behind their peers**. Meanwhile, **children in need with a child protection plan are 26 months behind**, and **children in need without a child protection plan are 20 months behind**.

Figure 6.1: The gap in months at secondary school (English and maths GCSE) between children looked after (LAC); children in need with a Child Protection Plan (CPP); and children in need without a CPP (CIN).

	Looked after children (LAC)	Child protection plan (CPP)	In need (CIN)
2014	30.0	28.4	21.3
2015	29.4	27.8	20.6
2016	29.3	26.4	20.4
2017	29.4	26.2	20.2
2018	29.3	25.9	20.2
2019	29.0	25.7	19.6
2018-2019 change (%)	- 0.3 (-1.1%)	- 0.2 (-0.9%)	- 0.6 (-3.1%)
2014-2019 change (%)	- 1.0 (-3.3%)	- 2.8 (-9.7%)	- 1.7 (-8.2%)

Since 2014, the size of the gap has decreased for all three of these groups, though to differing extents. The gap reduced by 2.8 months (10 per cent) for children on a child protection plan, and by 1.7 months (8 per cent) for children in need. However, looked after children have seen less progress, with the gap reducing by just 1 month (3 per cent).

The progress demonstrated by children in need and children with a child protection plan may be in part a reflection of reduced referral thresholds and the consequent 'growth' of these groups as a proportion of the student population: as the bar for referring children to social services or placing them on a protection plan has lowered, the overall profile of these groups may have become less severely vulnerable, which may have reduced the size of the gap.[vi] As Figure 6.2 shows, **the number of children on a child protection plan has doubled in relative terms since 2014, and the children in need and looked after children groups have also expanded slightly.**

It is notable, however, that like SEND pupils with a statement or EHCP, the looked after group has seen little progress in closing the gap despite its expansion as a proportion of the pupil population.

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[11] We compare the attainment of these three groups with that of children who have been neither in need, looked after, or on a child protection plan at any point over the last six years.

Figure 6.2: Proportion of pupils who are looked after, have a child protection plan, or are in need at the end of secondary school, 2014-2019

	% looked after	% child protection plan	% in need
2014	1.4	0.6	10.7
2015	1.4	0.9	11.7
2016	1.5	1.2	11.8
2017	1.5	1.5	11.7
2018	1.5	1.8	11.8
2019	1.5	1.9	12.0
2018-2019 change (%)	+ 0.0 pp (+ 1.7%)	+ 0.2 pp (+8.6%)	+ 0.2 pp (+1.8%)
2014-2019 change (%)	+ 0.1 pp (+7.4%)	+ 1.3 pp (+213.9%)	+ 1.3 pp (+11.9%)

All three of these vulnerable pupil groups have high levels of socio-economic disadvantage, as measured by eligibility for free school meals. **In 2019, 77 per cent of children on a child protection plan, 59 per cent of looked after children, and 54 per cent of children in need had been eligible for free school meals over the last six years.** This compares with just 19 per cent of their peers.

While children in need and children on a child protection plan have on average become less likely to be eligible for free school meals over time, looked after children have seen no change (see Figure 6.3).

This suggests that the **improvements in the gap for children in need and children on a child protection plan are likely to be driven by the compositional effect of decreased disadvantage and/or lower risk thresholds; meanwhile, looked after children have seen steady disadvantage and a steadier gap size.**

Figure 6.3: Proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals over the last six years for looked after children, children on a child protection plan, and children in need at the end of secondary school, 2014-2019

	Looked after	Child protection plan	In need
2014	59.3	81.6	59.5
2015	60.5	80.7	58.9
2016	60.6	80.4	58.5
2017	60.5	80.1	56.6
2018	58.7	79.4	55.4
2019	59.2	77.1	54.1
2014-2019 change (%)	- 0.1 pp (-0.2%)	- 4.5 pp (-5.6%)	- 5.5 pp (-9.2%)

In sum, **the group that has seen the most policy intervention and the least compositional change – looked after children – has experienced little progress**. Meanwhile, children on child protection plans and children in need have seen better progress, but this could well be a reflection of compositional change, especially in the case of child protection plan pupils who have expanded as a group significantly.

The gaps for looked after children and children on a child protection plan are even larger than the gap for persistently disadvantaged children. Yet while looked after children have some targeted interventions through the Pupil Premium Plus, Virtual School Heads and Personal Education Plans,

children on a child protection plan receive no specific school support funding in spite of experiencing trauma and being, on average, over two years behind their peers by age 16. Twenty-three per cent of children on a child protection plan are not eligible for free school meals and thereby for Pupil Premium funding. Research also shows that children on a CPP are disproportionately likely to be excluded or to experience an unexplained exit from school.[vii,viii]

7. Regional variation in the disadvantage gap is partly explained by different levels of persistent poverty between regions

As shown in Annex A, there is regional variation in the size of the disadvantage gap at local authority level in the early years, primary school and secondary school. Further regional breakdowns, including by parliamentary constituency, Opportunity Area and Regional School Commissioner, can be found in the Geographical Analysis Pack.

There is evidence that the size of the disadvantage gap by region is strongly influenced by the persistence of disadvantage and the ethnic composition of regions, however.[ix] Given our findings about the importance of the persistence of disadvantage in determining the size of the gap, this year we include estimates of a both a 'raw' (uncontrolled) and 'adjusted' (controlled) disadvantage gap. The adjusted gap is what the gap would be if each local authority had the same level of persistence of disadvantage (i.e. the national level). Further information about how we calculate these gaps is available in the Technical Appendix.

Figure 7.1 shows the size and rank of the disadvantage gap by local authority, both with and without adjustment for the persistence of disadvantage. Local authorities are ranked in descending order of their disadvantage gaps, with 1 being the local authority with the largest gap, and 152 the lowest.

We find that adjusting for the persistence of disadvantage in a region has a significant impact on the disadvantage gap, and on the relative ranking of local authorities. The gap worsens for half of local authorities and improves for the other half. As Figure 7.2 shows, it tends to improve the gap for areas with relatively high levels of persistent poverty, and it worsens the gap for areas with relatively low levels of persistent poverty.

For areas with high levels of persistent poverty such as Walsall, Knowsley, Newcastle upon Tyne and Portsmouth, adjusting for persistence reduces their disadvantage gap. This means they might not be doing as badly as the raw ranking suggests, given the profile of disadvantage they are dealing with. These local authorities tend to be clustered in London, the North East, North West and West Midlands, and Yorkshire and the Humber.

Meanwhile, for local authorities with relatively low levels of persistent poverty such as Barnet, Wokingham, Newham, and Oxfordshire, the adjusted disadvantage gap is larger than the raw gap. This means that, conditional on the profile of students they cater for, these areas are not doing as well as their raw gaps suggest. These local authorities tend to be clustered in the South East, South West, East of England, and East Midlands.

These findings suggest that caution should be used when interpreting how well local authorities or schools are doing in terms of their disadvantage gaps, as the gap can be a complex reflection of socio-economic characteristics of the pupil cohort which are, to a certain extent, beyond the control of local authorities, multi-academy trusts and individual schools.

Figure 7.1: The size of the raw and adjusted disadvantage gap at secondary level (English and maths GCSE) by local authority in 2019[12]

Local authority	Mean % of pupils' school lives for which they are disadvantaged	% persistently disadvantaged	Raw gap	Adjusted gap	Difference	Raw rank	Adjusted rank
Blackpool	24.7%	15.9%	26.3	24.5	-1.8	1	3
Knowsley	29.3%	20.1%	24.7	22.0	-2.7	2	30
Plymouth	18.4%	11.2%	24.5	23.9	-0.5	3	5
Derby	18.6%	10.9%	23.9	23.4	-0.6	4	8
Reading	15.9%	8.4%	23.9	23.8	0.0	5	6
South Gloucestershire	8.6%	4.5%	23.6	25.0	1.4	6	1
Portsmouth	20.6%	12.2%	23.6	22.6	-1.0	7	20
Peterborough	15.6%	8.1%	23.1	23.1	0.0	8	10
Sheffield	20.7%	13.3%	23.1	22.1	-1.0	9	27
Torbay	16.9%	9.6%	23.0	22.8	-0.2	10	18
Isle of Wight	14.8%	8.0%	22.9	23.1	0.2	11	11
Salford	24.4%	15.6%	22.9	21.2	-1.7	12	45
Rotherham	17.5%	10.5%	22.8	22.5	-0.4	13	21
Bracknell Forest	9.1%	4.6%	22.7	24.0	1.3	14	4
West Berkshire	6.3%	2.9%	22.7	24.5	1.9	15	2
Sunderland	24.2%	17.3%	22.5	20.8	-1.7	16	55
Kent	12.6%	7.2%	22.4	23.1	0.6	17	13
Cheshire West and Chester	13.0%	7.5%	22.3	22.9	0.5	18	16
Herefordshire	10.1%	4.9%	22.3	23.4	1.1	19	7
Telford and Wrekin	17.3%	9.6%	22.2	21.9	-0.3	20	34
Staffordshire	11.2%	5.9%	22.2	23.1	0.9	21	12
Newcastle upon Tyne	26.5%	17.2%	22.0	19.9	-2.2	22	66
Liverpool	30.4%	21.4%	22.0	19.1	-3.0	23	83
Cumbria	10.9%	5.9%	22.0	23.0	1.0	24	15
Hartlepool	26.3%	17.8%	22.0	19.9	-2.1	25	65
North Tyneside	16.1%	9.6%	22.0	21.9	-0.1	26	33
Somerset	10.6%	5.1%	22.0	23.0	1.0	27	14
Northumberland	13.3%	7.4%	22.0	22.4	0.5	28	22
Central Bedfordshire	9.1%	4.6%	21.8	23.2	1.3	29	9
Wigan	14.9%	8.4%	21.7	21.9	0.2	30	35
Gloucestershire	10.1%	5.5%	21.6	22.7	1.1	31	19
Bradford	20.2%	12.3%	21.5	20.6	-0.9	32	58

[12] Isles of Scilly and City of London are omitted due to low cell counts.

Hampshire	9.4%	4.8%	21.5	22.8	1.3	33	17
Bristol	20.5%	12.6%	21.4	20.5	-1.0	34	59
Worcestershire	11.2%	6.1%	21.4	22.3	0.9	35	24
Dudley	17.4%	10.7%	21.2	20.9	-0.3	36	53
Sefton	16.2%	10.1%	21.2	21.1	-0.1	37	48
Wirral	20.4%	12.8%	21.2	20.2	-0.9	38	63
Poole	9.4%	4.4%	21.0	22.3	1.3	39	25
Bedford	13.6%	7.3%	21.0	21.4	0.4	40	39
Middlesbrough	27.9%	18.5%	21.0	18.5	-2.5	41	91
West Sussex	8.4%	3.9%	20.9	22.4	1.5	42	23
Stockport	14.6%	9.1%	20.9	21.1	0.2	43	47
Southampton	20.1%	12.1%	20.9	20.0	-0.9	44	64
Shropshire	9.9%	5.0%	20.9	22.0	1.2	45	29
Warwickshire	9.7%	5.0%	20.9	22.1	1.2	46	28
East Sussex	13.0%	7.2%	20.9	21.4	0.5	47	40
St. Helens	18.2%	11.1%	20.8	20.3	-0.5	48	61
Bath and North East Somerset	10.0%	5.2%	20.8	21.9	1.2	49	32
Cambridgeshire	9.9%	5.3%	20.8	21.9	1.2	50	31
Stoke-on-Trent	20.6%	12.4%	20.8	19.8	-1.0	51	68
Devon	11.3%	6.8%	20.8	21.7	0.9	52	37
Wiltshire	8.6%	4.5%	20.7	22.2	1.4	53	26
Cornwall	12.0%	6.5%	20.7	21.5	0.8	54	38
Suffolk	12.1%	6.4%	20.7	21.4	0.7	55	41
Walsall	23.1%	14.4%	20.7	19.2	-1.5	56	80
Nottingham	26.8%	17.7%	20.6	18.4	-2.2	57	92
Lincolnshire	11.7%	6.2%	20.6	21.4	0.8	58	42
Redcar and Cleveland	19.5%	12.0%	20.6	19.8	-0.8	59	67
Oxfordshire	9.3%	4.8%	20.4	21.7	1.3	60	36
Norfolk	12.7%	6.9%	20.4	21.0	0.6	61	51
Northamptonshire	11.5%	5.7%	20.4	21.2	0.8	62	44
Brighton and Hove	15.1%	9.0%	20.3	20.5	0.1	63	60
Durham	19.4%	12.2%	20.3	19.5	-0.7	64	76
Southend-on-Sea	13.3%	6.4%	20.2	20.7	0.5	65	57
Dorset	10.8%	6.3%	20.2	21.1	1.0	66	46
Leeds	18.3%	10.9%	20.1	19.6	-0.5	67	73
Kirklees	18.7%	13.8%	20.1	19.5	-0.6	68	77
Darlington	18.7%	10.5%	20.0	19.4	-0.6	69	79
North Somerset	10.9%	5.3%	20.0	21.0	1.0	70	52
Leicestershire	8.5%	4.1%	19.9	21.4	1.5	71	43
Lancashire	13.9%	8.1%	19.9	20.3	0.4	72	62
Cheshire East	9.6%	5.7%	19.9	21.1	1.2	73	49
Essex	10.9%	5.5%	19.8	20.8	1.0	74	56
South Tyneside	24.9%	15.6%	19.8	18.0	-1.8	75	97

North Yorkshire	8.7%	4.5%	19.7	21.1	1.4	76	50
Halton	27.0%	17.7%	19.5	17.3	-2.3	77	106
Kingston upon Hull	26.0%	17.0%	19.5	17.5	-2.1	78	101
North East Lincolnshire	15.2%	8.4%	19.5	19.6	0.1	79	72
Coventry	19.7%	12.3%	19.5	18.6	-0.8	80	88
Oldham	22.6%	13.6%	19.4	18.1	-1.4	81	96
Bury	14.6%	8.9%	19.3	19.6	0.2	82	75
Tameside	19.3%	10.9%	19.2	18.5	-0.7	83	90
Surrey	7.7%	3.8%	19.2	20.8	1.6	84	54
Derbyshire	13.7%	7.9%	19.2	19.6	0.4	85	74
Rochdale	22.2%	13.2%	19.1	17.8	-1.3	86	98
North Lincolnshire	15.4%	8.3%	19.1	19.1	0.1	87	81
Gateshead	19.6%	12.5%	19.1	18.3	-0.8	88	95
Milton Keynes	12.3%	5.6%	19.0	19.7	0.7	89	70
Leicester	19.2%	11.0%	19.0	18.3	-0.7	90	94
Sandwell	21.5%	13.5%	18.9	17.7	-1.2	91	100
Wolverhampton	22.4%	13.6%	18.8	17.4	-1.3	92	102
Warrington	11.0%	6.5%	18.7	19.6	1.0	93	71
East Riding of Yorkshire	10.2%	5.5%	18.7	19.8	1.1	94	69
Wakefield	15.7%	9.1%	18.6	18.6	0.0	95	89
Bournemouth	13.2%	7.1%	18.6	19.1	0.5	96	82
Bolton	19.5%	12.1%	18.6	17.8	-0.8	97	99
Medway	13.6%	6.8%	18.6	19.0	0.4	98	84
Manchester	29.8%	18.9%	18.2	15.4	-2.8	99	119
Barnsley	19.9%	11.8%	18.1	17.3	-0.8	100	105
Nottinghamshire	13.0%	7.5%	18.1	18.6	0.5	101	87
Thurrock	13.7%	7.6%	18.0	18.3	0.4	102	93
Hertfordshire	9.3%	4.6%	17.7	19.0	1.3	103	85
Buckinghamshire	6.3%	2.7%	17.5	19.4	1.9	104	78
Doncaster	18.3%	10.2%	17.3	16.8	-0.5	105	108
Calderdale	15.0%	8.4%	17.2	17.3	0.1	106	104
Lewisham	23.7%	13.1%	17.0	15.4	-1.6	107	118
Swindon	12.2%	7.5%	16.7	17.4	0.7	108	103
Luton	18.3%	9.7%	16.6	16.1	-0.5	109	110
Croydon	19.6%	10.5%	16.5	15.8	-0.8	110	113
Wokingham	5.1%	2.6%	16.5	18.7	2.1	111	86
Stockton-on-Tees	19.0%	12.0%	16.5	15.8	-0.7	112	112
Solihull	11.6%	7.2%	16.1	16.9	0.8	113	107
Blackburn with Darwen	17.3%	10.6%	15.9	15.5	-0.3	114	116
Enfield	21.6%	11.2%	15.7	14.5	-1.2	115	120
Bromley	10.6%	5.3%	15.5	16.5	1.0	116	109

Bexley	11.7%	5.7%	15.2	16.0	0.8	117	111
Birmingham	28.4%	17.9%	15.1	12.5	-2.5	118	127
Greenwich	21.8%	11.5%	15.0	13.8	-1.2	119	122
Havering	12.5%	6.4%	15.0	15.6	0.6	120	115
York	8.2%	4.2%	14.2	15.7	1.5	121	114
Lambeth	29.6%	16.5%	13.8	11.0	-2.8	122	134
Merton	14.9%	8.7%	13.6	13.7	0.2	123	124
Haringey	26.7%	15.9%	13.6	11.4	-2.2	124	132
Windsor and Maidenhead	6.2%	2.7%	13.5	15.4	1.9	125	117
Barking and Dagenham	21.8%	12.2%	13.3	12.1	-1.2	126	129
Trafford	10.8%	6.8%	13.0	14.0	1.0	127	121
Hillingdon	15.9%	8.2%	12.9	12.9	0.0	128	125
Kingston upon Thames	9.8%	4.3%	12.6	13.7	1.2	129	123
Sutton	11.6%	6.0%	12.0	12.8	0.8	130	126
Slough	13.2%	6.3%	11.3	11.8	0.5	131	131
Richmond upon Thames	10.2%	6.0%	11.2	12.3	1.1	132	128
Harrow	14.2%	7.1%	10.9	11.2	0.3	133	133
Wandsworth	21.7%	11.1%	10.5	9.3	-1.2	134	135
Islington	40.2%	24.7%	10.2	5.2	-4.9	135	143
Waltham Forest	20.4%	11.5%	10.1	9.2	-0.9	136	136
Camden	35.6%	21.5%	9.9	5.9	-4.0	137	141
Rutland	4.3%	1.4%	9.6	11.9	2.3	138	130
Southwark	30.6%	18.4%	9.5	6.5	-3.0	139	138
Hackney	36.1%	23.2%	8.9	4.8	-4.1	140	144
Hammersmith and Fulham	29.2%	17.0%	8.8	6.1	-2.7	141	140
Hounslow	18.6%	9.7%	8.7	8.1	-0.6	142	137
Kensington and Chelsea	29.8%	16.4%	7.5	4.6	-2.8	143	145
Brent	19.7%	9.9%	6.9	6.1	-0.8	144	139
Tower Hamlets	43.7%	31.7%	5.9	0.3	-5.6	145	149
Newham	27.8%	13.7%	5.9	3.5	-2.4	146	147
Barnet	14.6%	7.2%	5.6	5.8	0.2	147	142
Ealing	17.4%	9.5%	4.6	4.3	-0.3	148	146
Redbridge	16.3%	10.4%	2.7	2.5	-0.1	149	148
Westminster	37.3%	25.0%	0.5	-3.9	-4.3	150	150

Figure 7.2: Relationship between persistent disadvantage of disadvantaged pupils and the impact of adjusting for persistent disadvantage on the gap at local authority level
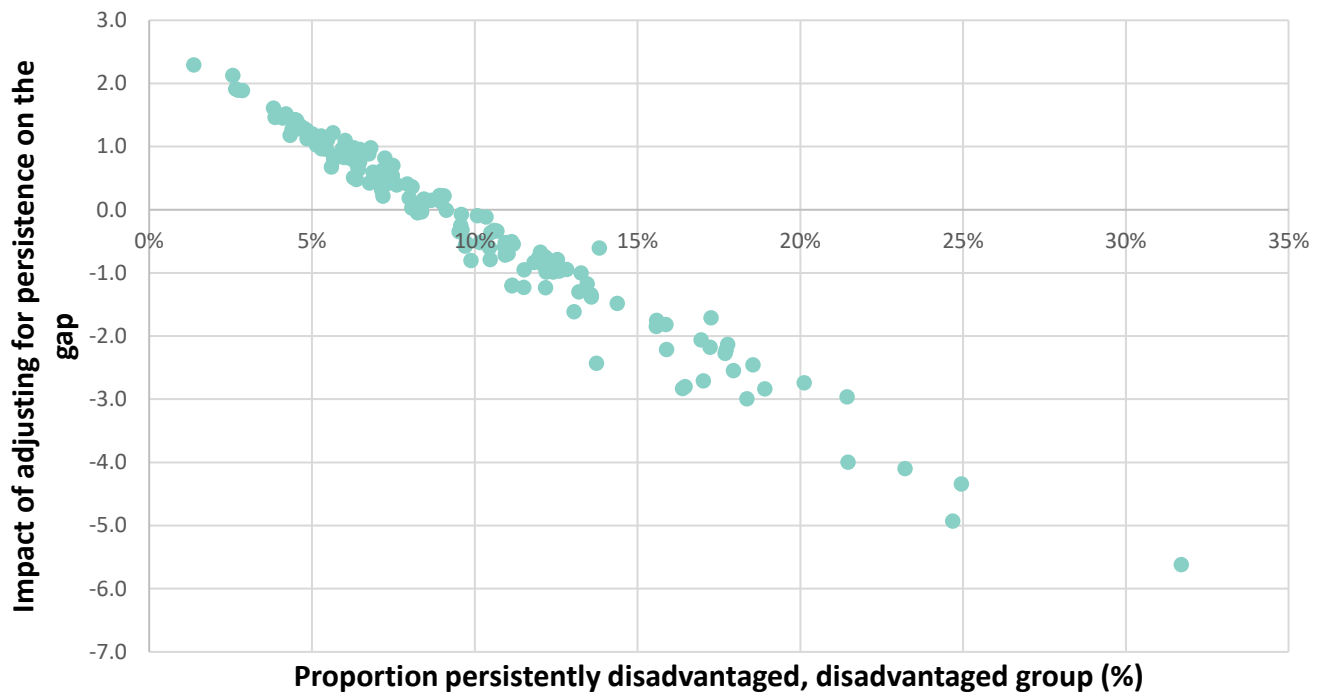
Conclusion

This year's Annual Report provides concerning evidence that progress in narrowing educational inequalities has ground to halt. While educational standards and overall attainment has been maintained since the previous year (and even increased slightly at secondary school), the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers has stopped closing. This was the worrying position from which the school system entered the many challenges of the pandemic and lockdown in 2020, which are widely expected to worsen disadvantage gaps.

The gap has now begun to widen across all three phases of education that we consider in this report – the early years, primary school and secondary school. In 2018, the gap widened for the first time in our data at early years and secondary school. In 2019, the gap also widened for the first time at primary school.

We find that the slowing and/or reversal of progress is related to a rise in persistent poverty among disadvantaged pupils. The gap for the most persistently disadvantaged pupils, already twice the size of the gap for the least persistently poor pupils, has increased in every year but one since 2014. This suggests that progress in closing the gap has not trickled down to the most persistently poor pupils.

This year we also provide a time series for the ethnicity, late-EAL and SEND gaps. The results from this are troubling. Since 2011, the gap between pupils from black and White British backgrounds has increased in the order of 60-70 per cent. Meanwhile, the gap for pupils who arrive late into the English state school system with English as an Additional Language (EAL) has widened by 11 per cent. For SEND pupils, there are real signs of stagnation since 2015, as progress in closing the gap for both school support and EHCP pupils has slowed, and even reversed for pupils with the greatest needs. Further research is needed to understand the causes of these gaps more fully.

Meanwhile, for looked after children, children in need and children on a child protection plan, some progress has been made in closing the gap since 2015. However, some of that progress is likely explained by changes in referral thresholds which impact on the composition of the group in question. For looked after children, the progress has been much slower.

Our findings suggest that an urgent emphasis on closing gaps in education is necessary. They are also a timely reminder that efforts to tackle the social determinants of education, such as poverty and trauma during childhood, are a fundamental to reducing educational inequalities.

It is widely expected that the Covid-19 pandemic will increase the disadvantage gap significantly. This, combined with the fact that the gap was already beginning to widen prior to the pandemic, suggests that without targeted government action to close the gap there is a risk of undoing decades of progress in tackling educational inequalities.

Annex A: Regional Analysis of the Disadvantage Gap

The gap in the early years and primary school

Starting in the early years, the national disadvantage gap in 2019 stood at 4.6 months with some geographical variation across England. In terms of regional school commissioner areas, the West Midlands, Lancashire & West Yorkshire, the South West, and East Midlands & the Humber had an average disadvantage gap of around five months, whilst the East of England & North-East London, North-West London & South-Central England, and South-East England & South London had an average disadvantage gap of around four months. The North of England stood somewhere in between, with an average gap of 4.5 months.

At local authority level (see Figure A1), the gap ranged from 1.5 months in East Sussex to 7.1 months in Wirral. Just over half of local authorities (53%) had a disadvantage gap within one month above or below the national average and there were only 13 cases where the disadvantage gap was greater than six months. These 13 local authorities were: Wirral (7.1 months), Wigan (7.1 months), Dudley (7 months), Nottinghamshire (6.6 months), Central Bedfordshire (6.5 months), West Berkshire (6.5 months), Redcar and Cleveland (6.4 months), Halton (6.4 months) , Cambridgeshire (6.4 months), Plymouth (6.4 months), Walsall (6.1 months), Bedford (6.1 months) and Blackpool (6.1 months).

Figure A1. Disadvantage gap for early years in England in 2019
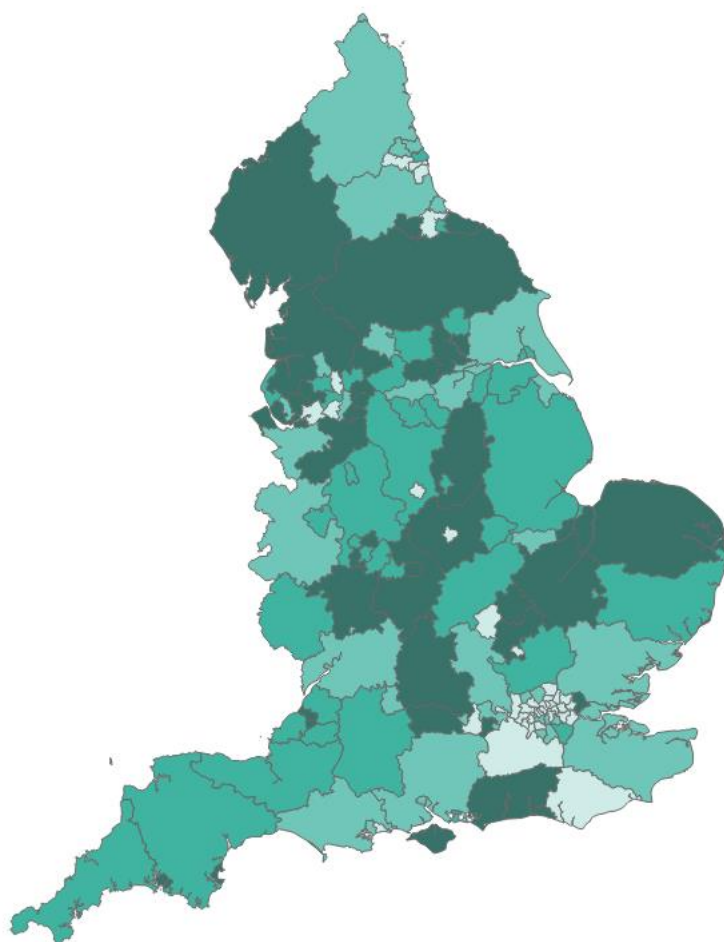
	Smallest 25%	Lower-middle 25%	Upper middle 25%	Largest 25%
Early years - Disadvantage gap	1.5 - 3.6	3.6 - 4.6	4.6 - 5.4	5.4 - 7.1

At the end of primary school in 2019, a pupil from a disadvantaged household is on average 9.3 months behind their peers in school performance or 12.1 months behind if they are persistently disadvantaged. As displayed in Figure A2 below, above average levels of the disadvantage gap span from the South West towards the midlands and eastern regions of England. Meanwhile, lower gaps are concentrated around London and surrounding areas, with 15 of the local authorities with the lowest gaps located in London: Kensington and Chelsea (-0.8 months), Newham (0.8 months), Tower Hamlets (1.1 months), Camden (2.5 months), Westminster (2.7 months), Richmond upon Thames (3.4 months), Hammersmith and Fulham (3.5 months), Waltham Forest (3.6 months), Ealing (2.9 months), Barnet (4.2 months), Brent (4.3 months), Greenwich (4.4 months), Harrow (4.4 months), Redbridge (4.6 months) and Lambeth (5.5 months).

The negative disadvantage gap seen in Kensington & Chelsea represents a situation where, on average, disadvantaged students outperform their peers. However, in this case, it is more likely caused by an atypical demographic make-up and/or low population estimates.

The local authorities with the largest primary disadvantage gaps are Bedford (14.8 months), West Berkshire (13.9 months), Windsor and Maidenhead (13.9 months), Wiltshire (13.4 months), Dudley (13 months), Central Bedfordshire (12.9 months), Cambridgeshire (12.8 months), Peterborough (12.8 months) and Somerset (12.5 months).

Local authorities with a low disadvantage gap tend to have a low persistent disadvantage gap and vice versa: those with a high disadvantage gap generally have a high persistent disadvantage gap. However, in all areas but one (Rutland) the persistent disadvantage gap is larger in magnitude, spanning from 2.2 months in Kensington & Chelsea to 18 months in Windsor and Maidenhead.

The majority of local authorities experience a widening of the gap from early years to the end of primary school. However, there are eight local authorities where the disadvantage gap is smaller at the end of primary school than in the early years: Kensington & Chelsea, Tower Hamlets, Newham, Camden, Redcar and Cleveland, Westminster, Blackpool, and Hammersmith & Fulham.

Figure A2. Disadvantage gap for primary schools in England in 2019

	Smallest 25%	Lower-middle 25%	Upper middle 25%	Largest 25%
Primary school - Disadvantage gap	-0.8 - 7.3	7.3 - 9.7	9.7 - 11.1	11.1 - 14.8
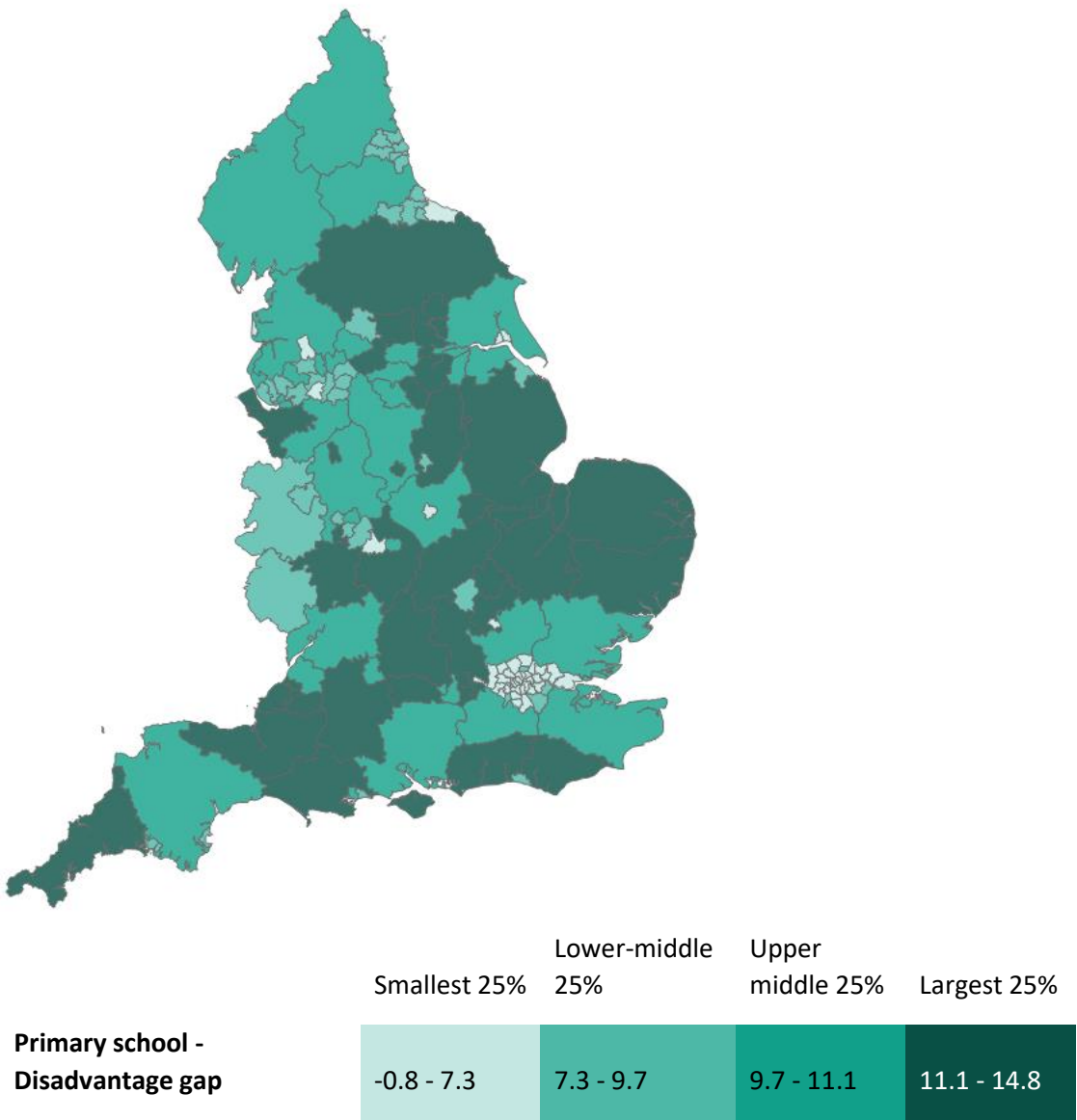
The gap in secondary school

The key stage 4 geographical analysis uses the average maths and English scores to measure performance.

By the end of secondary school, a disadvantaged pupil is on average 18.1 months behind their peers in overall attainment for maths and English – almost double the gap at the end of primary school. For persistently disadvantaged pupils, the national gap is 22.7 months. The gap is largest in the North, West Midlands and parts of the South (Figure A3), whilst the smallest gaps are again concentrated in London and surrounding areas.

At local authority level, the disadvantage gap ranges from 0.5 months in Westminster to 26.3 months in Blackpool. Despite the large range, two thirds of local authorities have a disadvantage gap between 18 to 24 months and only three local authorities have a gap larger than 24 months: Blackpool (26.3 months), Knowsley (24.7 months) and Plymouth (24.5 months).

The local authorities with the smallest disadvantage gaps are all located in London. They are: Westminster (0.5 months), Redbridge (2.7 months), Ealing (4.6 months), Barnet (5.6 months), Newham (5.9 months), Tower Hamlets (5.9 months), Brent (6.9 months), Kensington and Chelsea (7.5 months), Hounslow (8.7 months), and Hammersmith and Fulham (8.8 months).

All local authorities stated above, excluding Hounslow, also have the smallest persistent disadvantage gaps across England. However, each gap is approximately 2.5 months larger on average for persistently disadvantaged pupils.

When adjusting for the average persistence of disadvantage in an area, we find that the gap worsens for half of local authorities and improves for the other half. Further details on our methodology can be found in the Technical Appendix.

When comparing the 'raw' and 'adjusted' disadvantage gap, five local authorities saw relatively large improvements in their disadvantage gap after taking account of the level of persistence of poverty in their area. Tower Hamlets had the largest improvement, as the gap decreased by 5.6 months, from 5.9 months to 0.3 months. This was followed by Islington (5.0 months improvement), Hackney (4.1 months improvement), and Camden (4.0 months improvement). These local authorities all have high levels of persistent poverty.

For areas with relatively low levels of persistent poverty, taking account of persistence levels led to a larger adjusted gap – most of all in Rutland, whose gap worsened by 2.3 months. However, this should be interpreted with caution since Rutland is a very small local authority and is therefore more likely to have a homogenous and atypical demographic makeup. This was followed by Wokingham (2.2 months worse), Windsor and Maidenhead (1.9 months worse) and Buckinghamshire (1.9 months worse).

Adjusting for persistence of disadvantage also has an impact on the relative ranking of local authorities. The largest raw gaps, all of which are larger than two years, are in Blackpool, Knowsley and Plymouth. However, when adjusting for persistence of disadvantage, the largest adjusted gaps become more clustered in rural areas with low persistence of poverty (with the exception of Blackpool): the largest adjusted gaps are in South Gloucestershire, West Berkshire, Blackpool and Bracknell Forest. The differences between the smallest raw and adjusted gaps are less notable: these tend to just shuffle around different London local authorities. The smallest raw gaps are in Westminster, Redbridge and Ealing; the smallest adjusted gaps are in Westminster, Tower Hamlets and Redbridge. Tower Hamlets enters this list when adjusting for persistence because it experiences relatively high levels of persistent poverty.

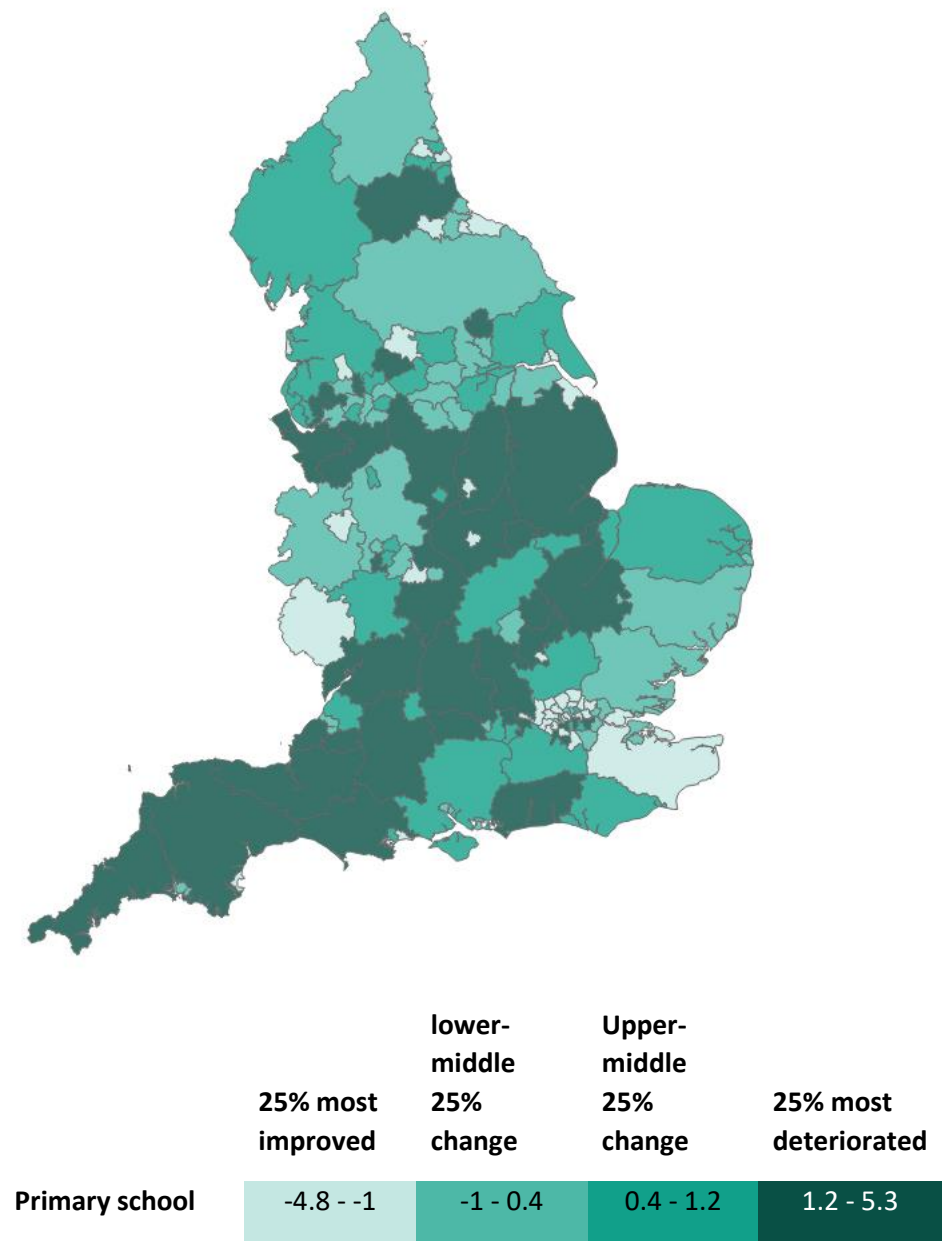**Figure A3. Raw (left) and adjusted (right) disadvantage gap for secondary schools in England**

	Smallest 25%	Lower-middle 25%	Upper middle 25%	Largest 25%
Secondary school - Raw disadvantage gap	0.5 - 16.2	16.2 - 19.7	19.7 - 21.1	21.1 - 26.3
Secondary school - Adjusted disadvantage gap	-3.9 - 15.8	15.8 - 19.6	19.6 - 21.5	21.5 – 25.0
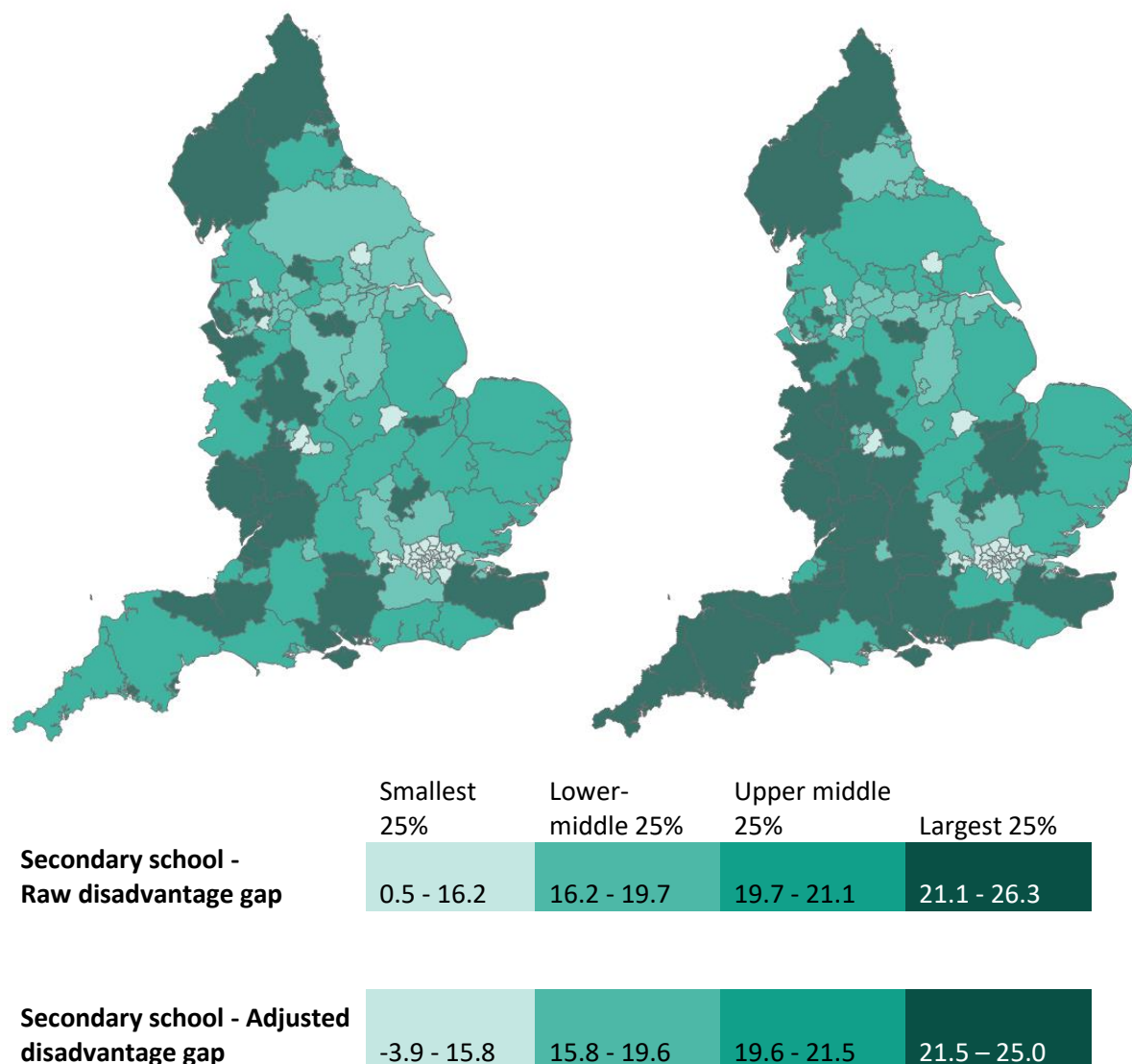
Gap change since 2012

This section looks at how the disadvantage gap has changed since 2012. Each local authority in 2019 is compared with others that had a similar sized gap in 2012, and the reported change in the gap is relative to those with similar starting points. More information on how this is calculated is provided in the Technical Appendix.

In the early years, from 2012 to 2019 approximately 53 per cent of all local authorities experienced a worsening of the gap and 47 per cent saw an improvement. However, the changes were small as 63 per cent of local authorities only saw a change of 1 month since 2012.

The gap at primary school (Figure A4) worsened most across the South West and The Midlands. The largest increases were in Bedford (+5.3 months), Rutland (+4.6 months), and Windsor and Maidenhead (+4.3 months).

A cluster of local authorities around London and the South East of England saw an improvement in the primary gap. Although the largest decrease in the gap was seen in Kingston upon Hull (-4.8 months) in East Yorkshire, followed by Waltham Forest (-4.7 months) and Newham (-4.7 months).

Figure A4. Change in disadvantage gap since 2012 for primary school

	25% most improved	lower-middle 25% change	Upper-middle 25% change	25% most deteriorated
Primary school	-4.8 - -1	-1 - 0.4	0.4 - 1.2	1.2 - 5.3

At key stage 4, the gap worsened in areas scattered around the South West, North West, and West Midlands (Figure A5) and widened the most in Wirral (+5.2 months), Blackpool (+5 months), Wigan (+4.9 months), Plymouth (+3.9 months) and Greenwich (+3.9 months).

Areas that improved the most since 2012 were clustered around the East Midlands, Yorkshire & the Humber, London and surrounding areas. The biggest improvement was seen in Rutland (-11.5 months), followed by Windsor and Maidenhead (-6.3 months) and Ealing (-5.3 months).

Figure A5. Change in the disadvantage gap since 2012 for secondary schools.
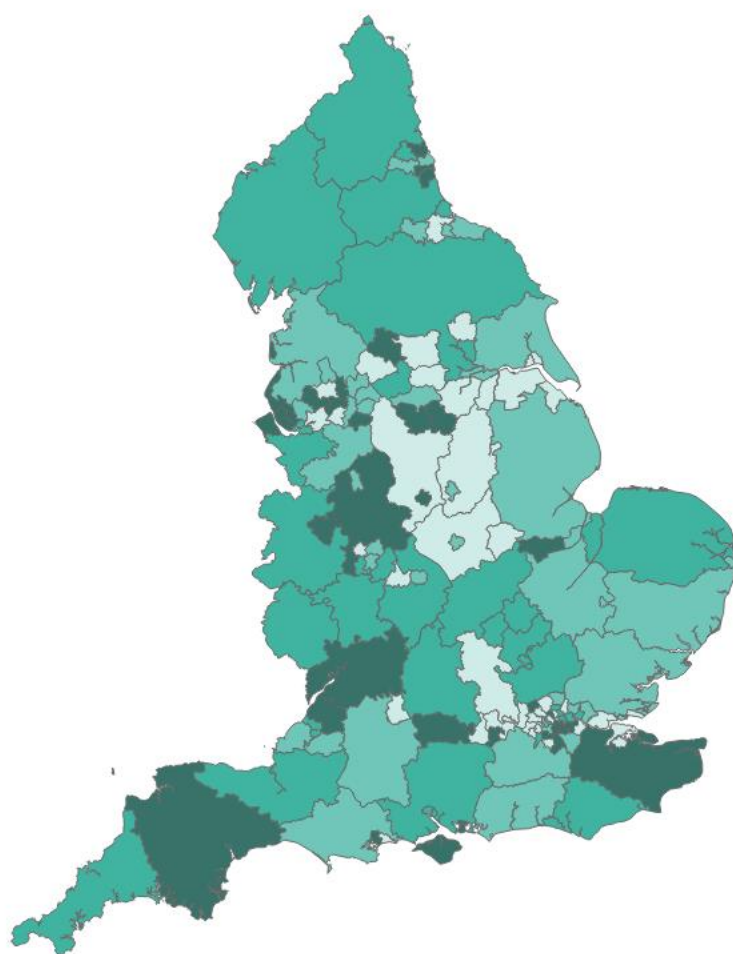
	25% most improved	lower-middle 25% change	Upper-middle 25% change	25% most deteriorated
Secondary school	-11.5 - -0.9	-0.9 - 0	0 - 1.5	1.5 - 5.2

Progress in opportunity areas

The Opportunity Areas programme began in October 2016 with the purpose of improving social mobility in areas that are most in need of additional support. An initial six areas were announced in October 2016 (Blackpool, Derby, Norwich, Oldham, Scarborough and West Somerset), then a further six in January 2017 (Bradford, Doncaster, East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, Hastings, Ipswich and Stoke-on-Trent). The programme included a three-year £72m package in an attempt to focus national and local resources to these areas, spread across the education sector from early years to employment.

When considering progress in the Opportunity Areas, it is important to note that the intervention plans for the first wave were published just under two years before the 2019 results used in this report, and the plans for the second wave were published around 1.5 years prior. Keeping the fairly

short time since Opportunity Area plans were agreed in mind, we review the latest results and find a fairly positive picture at Key Stage 2, but mixed results in early years and Key Stage 4.

Note that unlike the previous section, which presents changes in the gap for each area relative to other areas with comparable gaps, all figures in this section refer simply to the absolute change in the gap for each opportunity area from 2016 to 2019.

In the early years, eight opportunity areas saw an improvement in the disadvantage gap while the gap worsened in four areas (Figure A6). West Somerset saw the largest improvement as the gap fell from 4.5 months to 1.5 months, followed by Hastings where the gap fell from 2.7 months to 0.9 months. The disadvantage gaps in Bradford, Derby, Doncaster, East Cambridgeshire, Norwich and Oldham all improved by an average of 0.7 months. In contrast, other opportunity areas saw a slight worsening of the gap from +0.1 months in Fenland to +1.3 months in Blackpool.

At key stage 2, we find a more positive picture as the disadvantaged gap improved in all but three opportunity areas by an average of 2 months from 2016 to 2019, with relatively large improvements in Blackpool (-4.2 months), Hastings (-3.9 months) and Bradford (-3.1 months). The three opportunity areas with worsening gaps were West Somerset (+1.1 months), Fenland (+0.7 months) and East Cambridgeshire (+0.1 months).

The latest findings at key stage 4 presents mixed results. The disadvantage gap fell in seven opportunity areas, rose in five areas, and one area saw no change. Most notably, there was a huge improvement in West Somerset as the gap fell from 27.3 months in 2016 to 9.7 months in 2019 – a change of 17.5 months. However, as the region has a relatively small population, it means small changes to the demographical make-up of the area may have a profound influence on the results.

Six other opportunity areas reduced their respective disadvantage gap at key stage 4 by an average of 2.9 months: Doncaster (-4.0 months), Derby (-3.3 months), Ipswich (-3.3 months), Norwich (-3.1 months), East Cambridgeshire (-2.0 months) and Oldham (-1.9 months).

Bradford saw minimal change over the period as the gap fell from 21.5 months in 2016 to 20 months in 2018, but then bounced back to 21.5 months in 2019 – resulting in no overall change over the period.

Among the remaining five areas, the disadvantage gap increased by an average of 1.4 months from 2016 to 2019. The largest increase was in Scarborough (+3.1 months), followed by Blackpool (+1.7 months), Hastings (+1.1 months), Fenland (+0.8 months) and Stoke-on-Trent (+0.3 months).

Figure A6. Change in disadvantage gap for opportunity areas from 2016 to 2019

	Early Years - gap change from 2016 to 2019	Primary school - gap change from 2016 to 2019	Secondary school - gap change from 2016 to 2019
Blackpool	+1.3	-4.2	+1.7
Bradford	-0.1	-3.1	0.0
Derby	-1.1	-0.4	-3.3
Doncaster	-0.3	-2.1	-4.0
East Cambridgeshire	-0.5	+0.1	-2.0
Fenland	+0.1	+0.7	+0.8
Hastings	-1.8	-3.9	+1.1
Ipswich	0.0	-0.7	-3.3
Norwich	-0.9	-1.9	-3.1
Oldham	-1.1	-2.3	-1.9
Scarborough	+0.7	-1.2	+3.1
Stoke-on-Trent	+0.7	-0.3	+0.3
West Somerset	-3.0	+1.1	-17.6

Annex B: Post-16 Segregation Index

Calculating a disadvantage gap for pupils in post-16 education is more complex than for education at younger ages because there is more variety in the destinations of study and training that pupils can pursue, making it difficult to make clear comparisons between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils. EPI is currently developing a methodology for a post-16 disadvantage gap which will be published later this year.

In the meantime, a post-16 segregation index can be used to capture the extent to which there is equity in post-16 pupil destinations. These destinations include:

- Further education college or other FE
- 6th Form: college or secondary school
- Other education destination (e.g. special schools, independent schools, alternative provision, higher education institutions and post-16 specialist institutions)
- Sustained employment and/or training destination
- Destination not sustained (e.g. those who participated in education or employment for fewer than two terms, or who had no participation and claimed out-of-work benefits).

The segregation index enables us to measure the extent to which disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged are clustered in certain destinations. On average, disadvantaged pupils are less likely than non-disadvantaged pupils to stay in education or employment after GCSE, and more likely to attend further education colleges as opposed to school sixth forms or sixth form colleges.

If there were perfect equity in the post-16 system, with disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils being equally likely to pursue any destination, the segregation index would be 0.

In 2018 – the last year for which data is available – the segregation index was 20.4 per cent.

As Figure B1 shows, this marks a 1.6 percentage point decrease on the previous year. This is an outlier from the long run trend of increasing segregation since 2013.

Figure B1: Post-16 segregation index, 2013-2018
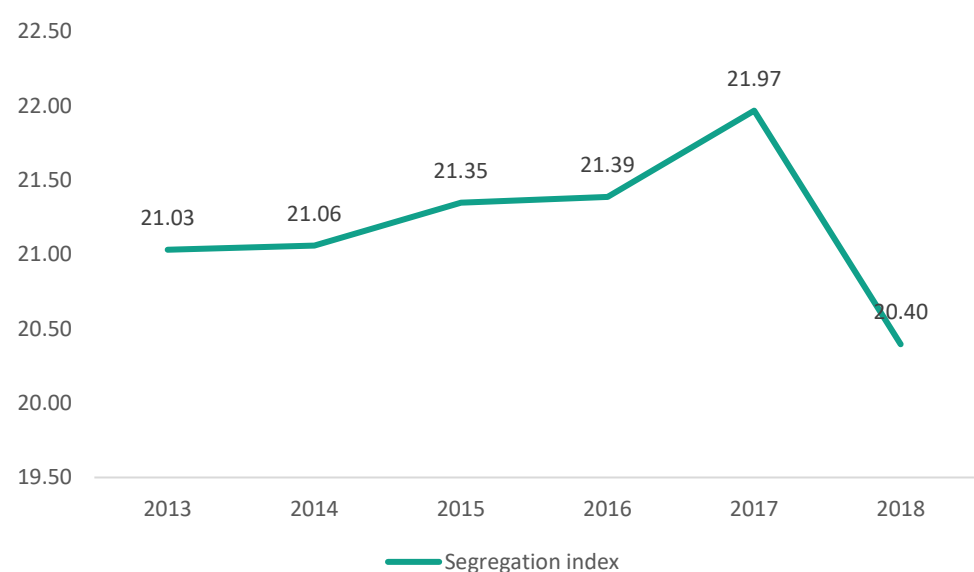
Closer investigation suggests that this change is not, however, driven by more disadvantaged pupils accessing more academic destinations, but instead due to the restructuring of post-16 institutions since 2017/18. In particular, the reduction in the segregation index is likely to be driven by the area reviews, which led to some sixth form colleges converting to 16-19 academies and some merging with FE colleges (effectively becoming FE colleges themselves). This has led to a shift away from sixth form colleges towards FE colleges for all pupils, but more so for non-disadvantaged pupils, thus explaining the apparent reduction in segregation.

Whether this data represents a genuine increase in equity is difficult to say. In theory, the restructuring of FE institutions should have led to more mixing between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils. However, it is not clear whether the restructuring will have changed the geographical sites of institutions or their curriculum offers; in practice it may be that segregation between FE and sixth form paths continues within a new merged entity. Further research would be necessary to establish the implications of these changes.

Figure B2: The post-16 destinations of young people by disadvantage in 2018
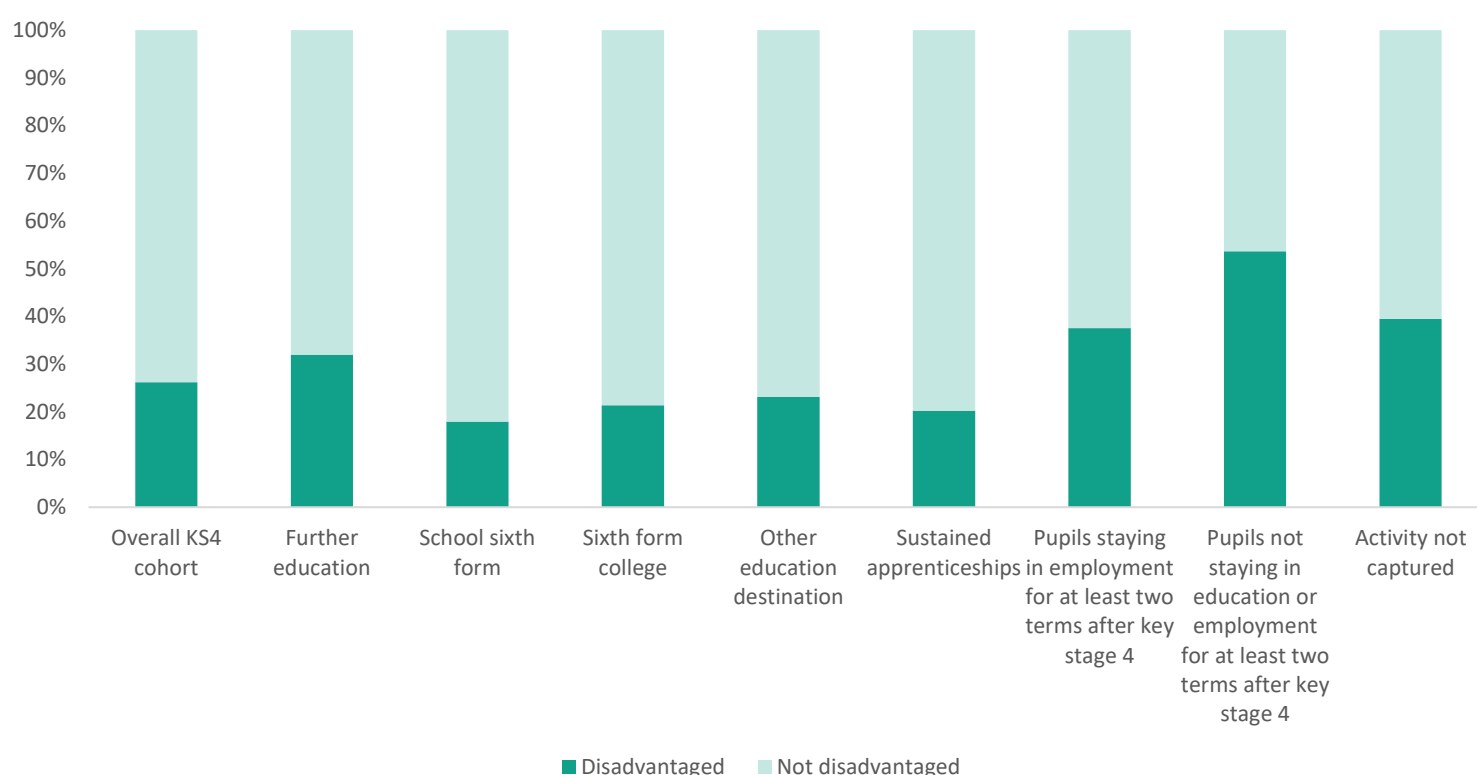
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# BLACK CARIBBEAN ACHIEVEMENT IN SCHOOLS IN ENGLAND

Research Brief

The underachievement of Black Caribbean heritage pupils has been a persistent problem facing national policy makers in schools in England for many years. Two new ground-breaking research reports which are now published, highlight the reasons for underachievement and strategies used to raise achievement. The research was carried out by Dr Feyisa Demie, Head of Research and Adviser for School Self-evaluation at Lambeth LA and Christabel McLean, former Headteacher and Education Consultant.

1.   **The Underachievement of Black Caribbean Pupils in Schools in England**

The first research report **"Black Caribbean Underachievement in Schools in England"** aims to examine in detail the empirical evidence for educational underachievement and to identify the factors responsible in English schools. Three complementary methodological approaches were adopted, comprising of detailed statistical analyses, case studies and focus group interviews. A total of 124 people participated in the interviews and focus groups, consisting of a range of school staff, pupils, parents, governors, educational psychologists, and church leaders. The majority of the staff interviewed were White British, whilst almost all of the parents and pupils were of black or mixed white and black heritage. Seven schools took part in the case studies and 22 participated in the focus groups.

The strength of the research is its data source of the National Pupil Database. The National Pupil Database (NPD) is a pupil level database which matches pupil and school characteristic data to pupil level attainment. This analysis was comprised of 558,432 pupils who took GCSE examinations and 544,220 pupils who took Key Stage 2 tests.
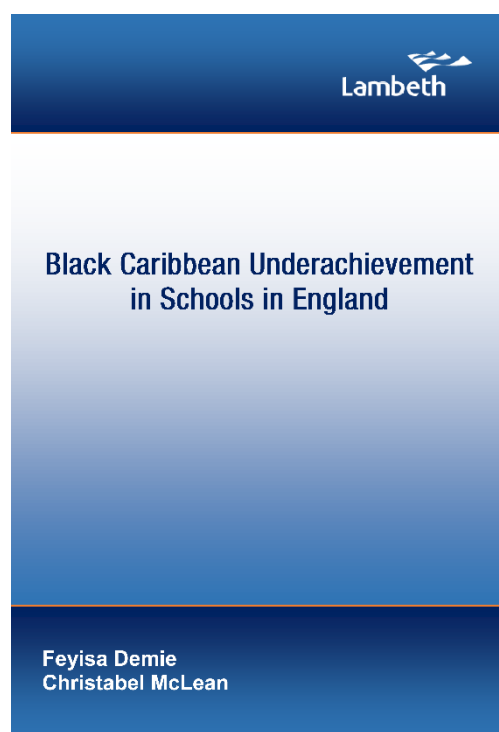
The main findings of the research confirmed that the English school system has produced dismal academic results for a high percentage of Black Caribbean pupils over the last 60 years. Over the past four decades, national research has shown that their achievements persistently lag behind the average achievement of their peers and the gap was growing at the end of primary and secondary education. A key finding from the analysis showed that 42% of Black Caribbean pupils gained 5+A*- C including English and maths at GCSE, compared with 60% of White British pupils nationally (Figure 1). Furthermore, the KS2 data revealed a similar pattern, with Black Caribbean pupils having the lowest levels of achievement of any ethnic group. Overall, the data has shown that Black Caribbean underachievement is real and persistent with consistently low levels of attainment and the difference between their performance and that reported nationally is the largest of any ethnic group.

The reasons for the underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils are wide-ranging and complex. Seven key factors were identified as main reasons for persistent underachievement in English schools:-

1. Headteachers' poor leadership on equality issues
2. Institutional racism
3. Stereotyping

4. Teachers' low expectations
5. Curriculum barriers and relevance
6. Lack of diversity in the work force
7. Lack of targeted support

Figure 1: Black Caribbean Pupil's Achievement Gap
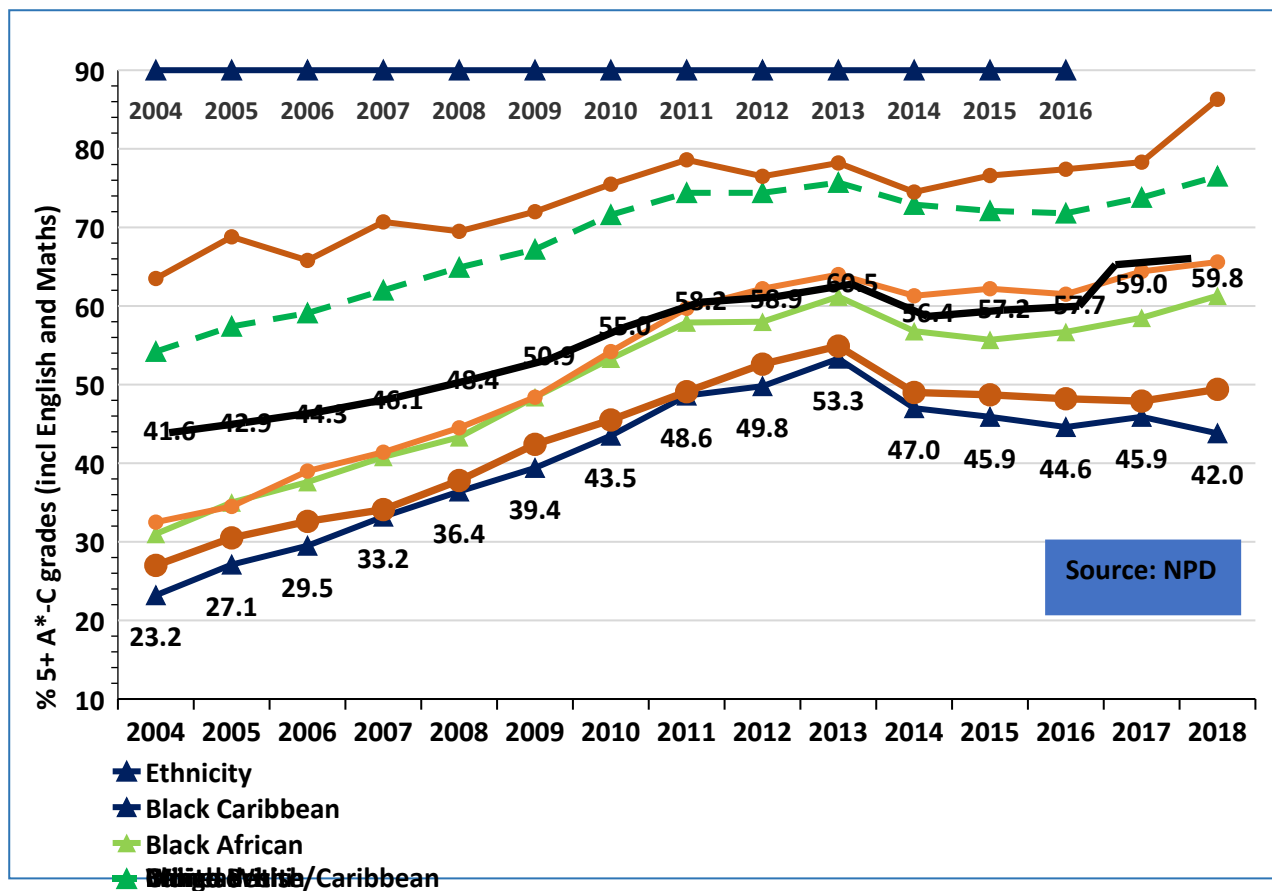
The study also lists other factors reported by the respondents during the interview and focus groups including:

8. Exclusions issues
9. Lack of parental aspiration and low expectations
10. Low literacy levels and language barriers
11. Absent fathers
12. Single parent families
13. Socio-economic disadvantage
14. Poor housing
15. Social class issues
16. Lack of role models and peer pressure
17. Negative peer pressure
18. Cultural clashes and behaviour
19. Schools ability grouping and lower tier entry issues
20. Cultural and identity issues
21. Media negative picture and stereotyping
22. Police stop and search and its negative impact on race issues
23. The pressure of the government's school standards agenda
24. Recruitment and training issues of teachers, Education Psychologists and SENCOs

All of these factors can perpetuate low attainment and disengagement from learning for Black Caribbean pupils. However, the situation is not all doom and gloom. There are good schools that did not accept these factors as a barrier. In successful schools they buck the national trend.

2.   The Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils: Good Practice

The second research report "***The Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils: Good Practice"*** aims to examine the success factors behind outstanding achievement and improvement of schools that serve disadvantaged inner-city areas. This research is an ethnographic study of successful schools. The methodological approach of the research was comprised of case studies of selected schools and focus group interviews. The case studies were supported by a qualitative study of the school strategies used to raise achievement. Eight primary and six secondary schools were selected for case studies. The schools were chosen to reflect schools of different types in the Local Authority which have relatively high numbers of pupils on free school meals. The key criteria for the selection of schools were those with a very high proportion of pupils with Black Caribbean heritage, good KS2 and GCSE results and outstanding Ofsted inspection reports. As part of the research, a variety of members of school staff and parents were interviewed in order to get a range of perspectives on the main practices in schools over a four-year period. These included headteachers and deputy headteachers; class teachers; English as an additional language teachers and special educational needs coordinators; teaching assistants and learning support teachers; family support workers, governors, and pupils. The main findings of the research showed that KS2 and GCSE results have improved significantly in the case study schools, despite a national trend of underperformance. There were a number of reasons why Black Caribbean pupils were doing well and key features and success factors included:

- Headteachers' excellent leadership on diversity and equality issues
- Effective teaching and learning
- Use of a relevant inclusive curriculum
- Parental engagement
- Link with the community
- The work of learning mentors in supporting Black Caribbean families
- Church and community support and guidance
- A clear stand on racism
- Diversity in the school workforce
- Celebration of cultural diversity
- Effective use of pupil voice

Overall, the good practice study suggests that Black Caribbean pupils do well in multicultural schools with a strong school leadership on diversity and equality issues.

3.   Recommendations

The challenge from this research for national policy makers is for the government to recognise that dealing with the underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils is an important part of raising standards in schools.
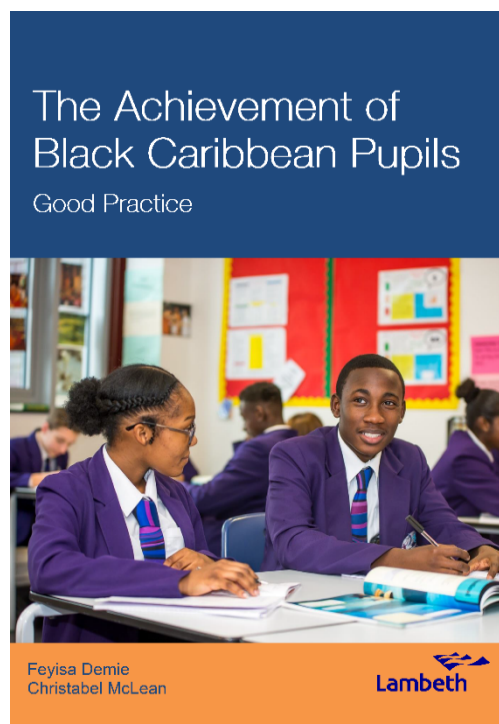
Although there is now a greater recognition of the underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils in schools, there is less intervention work on the ground to support this group. It is now rare these days to find nationally a project relevant to the needs of pupils of Black Caribbean heritage. To tackle underachievement, the DfE and schools must develop targeted initiatives to identify and address their needs. The recommendations emerging from this study for the DfE and for schools with an ethnically diverse population are given below:

Department for Education (DfE)

Establishing Raising Achievement Projects and Ring-Fenced Funding

1. The DfE needs to establish a national Black Caribbean Raising Achievement project where there are the highest concentrations of Black Caribbean pupils, in order to support schools and LAs to address their underachievement.

2. The DfE should introduce ring-fenced targeted funding to schools where Black Caribbean pupils are underachieving and where schools are able to demonstrate the capacity for effectively leading the work, carrying out an audit and developing and delivering an action plan to redress any inequality and narrow the achievement gap.

3. The provision of funding delivered by schools and community groups which is focused on raising the attainment of Black Caribbean pupils, including training on parental rights and responsibilities, understanding exclusions, and working in partnership with class teachers.

Addressing Black Caribbean Exclusion Issues

4. The DfE should review its guidance to schools on exclusions. The DfE should set national and regional targets for reducing Black Caribbean permanent and fixed term exclusions.

Tackling Racism and Addressing Diversity Issues

Many of the people we interviewed in the focus groups reported that they had experienced racism in varying forms and that institutional racism is one of the factors that hindered the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils. To tackle these issues:

5. The government should provide leadership and guidance to tackle institutional racism in public service and schools.

6. The government needs a curriculum that reflects this nation's rich cultural diversity. We need more teachers from ethnic minorities in our classrooms and we need them to be more than role models. We need to recognise that certain groups of students will need extra support and that the schools teaching them will require increased funding as a result.

Schools

To help raise the achievement of Black Caribbean children, schools should:

7. Audit the current workforce and pursue strong diversification at all levels to ensure that it reflects the community served by the school.

8. Discuss openly, race issues and ethnic diversity within lessons and as an integral part of the whole school staff professional development.

9. Celebrate cultural diversity through assemblies, Black History Month, and International Days.

Local Authority (LA) and Multi Academy Trusts (MAT)

10. Local Authorities and Multi Academy Trusts should audit the current workforce and pursue strong diversification at all levels including senior management and ensure that it reflects the community served by the LAs and MATs. Diversity in the workforce is particularly important for those LAs where there are high numbers of Black children.

11. LAs should continue to use data effectively to identify underachieving groups and to improve teachers' and managements' awareness in understanding the roots of Black history in general and in particular Black Caribbean culture. This should aim to improve teachers' understanding of Black children as learners, how and why some underachieve and what teachers can do to target these issues.

Teacher Development Agency (TDA), School Teaching Alliance (STA) and Universities

12. The TDA and STA should develop mandatory training and guidance for trainee teachers concerning the barriers to achievement facing Black Caribbean pupils in particular and Black pupils in general, on effective classroom strategies for overcoming these as part of a whole school approach.

13. Universities do not train enough Educational Psychologists from BME communities and need to set targets to recruit more Educational Psychologists from the Black Caribbean community.

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Black Caribbean Underachievement in Schools in England

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Christabel McLean is an Education Adviser and a former Headteacher. She has worked with HMI/Ofsted at national level and has worked extensively on the inspection, improvement and management of educational establishments. Christabel started her teaching career in Camden and Westminster in inner London and went on to become Headteacher of Sacred Heart School in Hammersmith. Christabel's unshakeable belief that all children can achieve their best, no matter what their background, language or circumstance, also led to a successful period as a full time Ofsted inspector. From this she was specifically recruited as a key member of a school improvement team of Advisers by a new Director of Education, to deal with a large number of schools in special measures in Lambeth. Then as an Adviser in Lambeth she took part in an extensive range of school improvement activities linked to schools facing very challenging circumstances and led a number of very successful school improvement projects. More recently she has been involved in a number of research projects and contributed to books advising parents on education.

Black Caribbean Underachievement in Schools in England

Feyisa Demie
Christabel McLean

BLACK CARIBBEAN UNDERACHIEVEMENT IN SCHOOLS IN ENGLAND

CONTENTS **PAGE**

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Background

> '*We are now seeing the third and in some cases the fourth generation of Black Caribbean pupils in schools in England. Their grandparents came from the Caribbean from the late 1940s, recruited to work in Britain after the Second World War. Like other Black settlers before them, they hoped for a prosperous future for themselves and enhanced educational opportunities for their children. It would be natural to expect those hopes to have been realised by now and to assume that the majority of Black Caribbean children in schools in England are sharing the higher educational standards attained by the most successful pupils in our schools. This is not the case.' (Ofsted 2002:1)*

The underachievement of Black Caribbean heritage pupils has been a persistent problem facing national policy makers in British schools for many years. Over the past four decades national research has shown that Black Caribbean heritage pupils' achievements persistently lag behind the average achievement of their peers and the gap is growing at the end of primary and secondary education. This underachievement issue is a question that has stirred emotions from as early as the 1950s when the Black Caribbean community grew concerned about their children's education. Coard (1971) argued that they encountered widespread lack of understanding about the needs of Black Caribbean pupils, '*fuelling the widely-held belief that Black children were somehow educationally subnormal*'. He explained how the low expectations of teachers damaged pupils' motivation and confidence thus dooming them to a life of underachievement.

The relative underachievement of ethnic minority pupils has also been a major issue in national education policy formulation. An inquiry committee reported on the issue twice during the 1980s. The first official recognition of the problem was *The Rampton Report* (Rampton 1981), which was the interim report of the Committee of Inquiry into Education of Children of Ethnic Minority Groups. This report dealt in detail specifically with the underachievement of pupils of Caribbean backgrounds and concluded, '*West Indian Children as a group are underachieving in our Education System'* (Rampton 1981:80*). The* report identified serious concerns about the extent to which schools were meeting the needs of Black Caribbean pupils. The concerns still persist. *The Swann report* (Swann, 1985) also gave a good deal of attention of the underachievement of pupils of Caribbean backgrounds, and confirmed the finding of the Rampton report. Thus the Swann report concluded *'there is no doubt that Black Caribbean children, as a group, and on average, are underachieving, both by comparison with their school fellows in the White majority, as well as in terms of their potential. Notwithstanding that some are doing well'* (Swann 1985: 81).

Research in the 1980s gave a good deal of attention to the underachievement of pupils of Black Caribbean backgrounds and confirmed that *'they are underachieving as a group within the education system'* (Rampton 1981, Swann 1985). Other research in the 1990s and 2000s also reflected earlier findings with Black Caribbean and African pupils continuing to make less progress on average than other pupils (Gillborn and Gipps 1996; Gillborn and Mirza 2000, Demie 2005; 2003; 2001; GLA 2004). Each of these studies appeared to show considerable underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils in comparison with the achievement of White and Asian pupils.

The previous OFSTED review of research in this area also described the differences in attainment between certain ethnic groups (Gillborn and Gipps, 1996; Gillborn and Mirza, 2000; Ofsted 2002). This review noted that the gap was growing between the highest and lowest achieving ethnic groups in many LEAs, and that African and Caribbean pupils, especially boys, have not shared equally in the increasing rates of educational achievement. The review concluded that *'Black pupils generally may be falling further behind the average achievement of the majority of their peers'* (Gillborn and Gipps, 1996, p 29). OFSTED reports further stated that:

> *'The evidence that has been available from individual LEAs has tended to show that the relative performance of Black Caribbean pupils begins high, starts to decline in Key Stage 2, tails off badly in Key Stage 3 and is below that of most other ethnic groups at Key Stage 4.'* (OFSTED 2002, p.1)

Black Caribbean pupils' underachievement has remained a 'hot issue' within education. This concern has been fuelled by media attention through headlines such as *'Teachers are failing Black boys' (Observer January 6, 2002), 'Fast-tracking will penalise Black pupils' (BBC News 12 March 2002), 'Schools told to do more for Black pupils' (BBC News, 9 December 1998), 'Task force to help Black pupils' (BBC News 16 March 2002), 'Schools called to account for ethnic divide' (Guardian 7 May 2002), 'Black Caribbean children held back by institutional racism in schools'* (Guardian September 2008)*.*

What is more, most of the studies in the field of school improvement in the past decade show that the notion of Black Caribbean pupils' underachievement in British schools is in danger of becoming accepted as an irrefutable fact. For instance, the most extensive review of research relating to Black Caribbean heritage children in British schools between 1965 to 1980 suggested that there was an overwhelming consensus that research evidence shows a *'strong trend to underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils'* (Taylor 1981; Rampton 1981; Tomlinson 1983; Swann 1985; Gillborn and Gepps 1996; Ofsted 2002; Gillborn and Mirza 2000; Demie 2005; 2003; 2001; GLA 2004). This review of previous research suggests that Black Caribbean underachievement in education was real and persistent and they were consistently the lowest performing group in the country, and the difference between their educational performance and others was larger than for any other ethnic group.

This educational disadvantage has led to various other experiences of inequality. For example, the DfE (2014) data shows Black Caribbean pupils are three times more likely to be permanently excluded from school than their White peers. Only 16% of all Black Caribbean men go on to University. They are nearly 8 times as likely to be stopped and searched by the Police as their White counterparts. What is worrying is that 15% of Black Caribbean men are unemployed compared to 5% of their White British counterparts and 30% of Black Caribbean individuals currently live in poverty. There is also now greater disproportionality in the number of Black people in prisons in the UK and in the US. Out of the British national prison population, 10% are Black. For Black Britons this is significantly higher than the 2.8% of the general population they represent (Prison Reform Trust, 2014). NHS (2011) statistics also consistently highlighted that rates of admission and detentions in Mental Health institutions were higher for Black Caribbean and African groups than for the rest of the population with around 70% of inpatients being from these groups.

The reasons for the underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils are wide-ranging and complex. '*Within education literature recently four main schools related factors have emerged: stereotyping; teachers' low expectations; exclusions and Headteachers' poor leadership on equality issues (Demie 2003:243)*. Low teachers' expectations, have been particularly cited by many researchers as contributing to low attainment amongst Black children (e.g. Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Crozier, 2005; Maylor et al., 2006; Rhamie, 2007; DCSF, 2008b). Low teacher expectations appear to be influenced by racism which contributes to Black children being *expected* to experience some problems that will interfere with their performance (Gillborn, 1997; Gillborn and Youdell, 2000). Other research suggested that a key factor influencing the attainment of Black children is the extent to which they are excluded from school and learning opportunities. Black children are most likely to be excluded from school (DfE 2015) and represent the most excluded group of pupils (Gillborn, 1990; Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; DfE 2015; Cabinet Office, 2007). Black Caribbean children have rates of permanent exclusion about three times that of the pupil population as a whole (EHRC, 2016; DfE 2015). Black pupils are often excluded for challenging what is perceived to be teacher racism. Overall evidence suggests that schools perceive and respond to the behaviour of Black children more harshly than to other ethnic groups. '*All of these can perpetuate low attainment and disengagement from learning by Black Caribbean students' (Demie 2003:243)*.

Other researchers also noted that the lack of adequate support to schools from parents, economic deprivation, poor housing and home circumstances (Rampton 1981; Swann 1985), the failure of the national curriculum to reflect adequately the needs of a diverse and multi ethnic society (MacPherson, 1999; Gillborn 2002).

Most recent research also concur that that Black Caribbean pupils are being subjected to institutional racism in British schools which can dramatically undermine their chances of academic success (Macpherson, 1999; Parekh, 2000; DfES, 2006b; Curtis

2008; Strand 2008). This is revealed for example in teachers' differential treatment of Black children in terms of school exclusion and low teacher expectations and in assessments made about the abilities of Black Caribbean pupils. Research suggests that teachers' perceptions and expectations of Black children's' behaviour often influences their decision to put Black children in lower sets as opposed to their ability and more than two thirds of Black pupils in secondary school are taught separately in lower academic groups, (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000). Strand (2012) also noted similar findings that Black Caribbean students are systematically under-represented on entry to the higher tiers relative to their White British peers and this has contributed to achievement gaps. He concluded that institutional racism and low expectations by teachers are one of the reasons why they were not entering for top-tier exams. Moreover, it has been argued that teachers' sometimes '*conscious or unconscious stereotypes and assumptions about minority groups can impact negatively on pupils' achievements'* (Maylor et al 2009). All the above factors can perpetuate low attainment and the body of available research suggests a worrying picture of a failure to address underachievement of at least three generations of Black Caribbean pupils in British schools. There is an urgent need to increase our understanding of the factors which lie behind this underachievement.

Researchers now agree that the biggest obstacles to raising Black Caribbean achievement is the 'colour blind' approach which has put the group at a disadvantage and the failure of the National Curriculum to adequately reflect the needs of a diverse, multi-ethnic society (Gillborn 2002; MacPherson 1999). All Government education reform acts and white papers failed to explore the specific needs of Black Caribbean pupils (Gillborn 1995). Recently the Government has adopted standard rhetoric for all and failed to act decisively against the significant and growing inequalities gap that now characterises the system. Although previous governments have added inequality of education attainment between social groups into their policy statements on social justice and inclusion, there has been no strong lead given to address the issues of the underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils by central government since 2010. Governments have failed to recognise that children of Caribbean origin have particular needs that are not being met by the school system. Evidence from the national data suggests that the gap in performance is widening and Black Caribbean children in England's schools are not sharing the higher educational standards achieved over the last decade in England. Such evidence reinforces the findings of previous research which identified serious concerns about the extent to which the education system and schools were meeting the needs of Black Caribbean children (Gillborn and Mirza 2000; Rampton 1981; Swann 1985 and Gillborn and Gipps 1996; Demie 2003 and 2005). These concerns persist.

CHAPTER 2. THE AIMS AND RESEARCH METHODS

The Aim of the Research

The aim of this research project is to investigate the reasons why pupils from Black Caribbean heritage backgrounds are underachieving and identify the factors that are contributing to their lack of success in the school system. The research examines in detail:-

• The extent of Black Caribbean pupils' educational underachievement;
• The factors responsible for Black Caribbean pupils' educational underachievement;
• The steps schools and policy makers can take to improve the educational attainment of Black Caribbean pupils.

Research Methods

This research is an ethnographic study of Black Caribbean underachievement in British schools. Three complementary methodological approaches were adopted to explore performance and the views of Headteachers, teachers, school staff, governors, parents, SENCOs and EPs, each contributing a particular set of data to the study. Details of the methodological framework are summarised below:

1. **Data Analysis:** An empirical investigation of KS2 and KS4 was undertaken to draw lessons from the last two decades by examining in detail the achievement of Black Caribbean heritage pupils in the local authority and nationally.

2. **Focus Group Interviews:**

   • **Headteacher, teachers and staff interviews and focus groups:** The main aim of the Headteachers and teachers' focus groups was to ascertain the views of school staff concerning the reasons of Black Caribbean underachievement and what practical steps needed to be taken in order to improve levels of achievement for Black Caribbean heritage pupils. The specific objectives were to identify what teachers see as key issues, to share their experience and to discuss their role in raising levels of achievement. Headteachers were asked to select a mixed group of teachers with a range of teaching experience, gender and ethnicity.

   • **Black Caribbean parent interviews and focus groups:** The main aim of the parent and community interviews and focus group research was to ascertain the views of parents and Black Caribbean community groups concerning the reasons for Black Caribbean underachievement and what practical steps needed to be

taken in order to improve levels of achievement for Black Caribbean pupils. Headteachers had been asked to select a mixed group of parents and local groups.

- **Pupils' focus groups:** Pupils focus groups were carried out to ascertain their views about the schools achievements and their experience in school.

- **Governors' focus groups:** The main objective of the governors' focus group was to ascertain their views on the reasons for underachievement and what can be done to improve. The Governors and the parent focus group were drawn from 22 schools.

- **Educational Psychologists (EP) and Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) interviews and focus groups:** Interviews with SENCOS and Educational Psychologists took place including group discussions to ascertain their views concerning the reasons for Black Caribbean underachievement, over representation on exclusions and what practical steps needed to be taken in order to improve levels of achievement and to reduce the exclusion rate in schools.

3. **Case studies:** Using an ethnographic approach, detailed case study research was carried out to study the school experiences of Black Caribbean pupils including the reasons for underachievement. A structured questionnaire was used to interview Headteachers, teachers, parents and pupils to gather evidence on barriers to learning, how well Back Caribbean pupils are achieving, pupils' views about the school and its support systems.

Four primary and three secondary schools with high numbers of Black Caribbean pupils and an above average proportion of students with FSM were selected for case studies. Each of the schools were visited in 2016 and structured questionnaires were used to interview Headteachers, staff, governors, grandparents, parents and pupils to gather evidence.

Table 1 details the interviews and the focus groups carried out. A total of 124 people participated in the interviews and the focus groups. This included 33 Black Caribbean pupils, 14 Black Caribbean parents, 15 teachers, 20 school staff including TAs and Learning Mentors, 7 Headteachers and 10 Deputy Headteachers, 17 Governors, 8 SENCOs and Inclusion Managers. Three of the Headteachers interviewed were from White backgrounds. The majority of staff interviewed were from White backgrounds. Almost all the pupils and parents interviewed or in the focus groups were Black with a small number of Mixed White/ Black parents. The governors interviewed were mixed with equal numbers of White and Black heritage backgrounds. In addition to the case study schools, 22 schools also participated in the governors and parents' focus groups.

Table 1. Interviews and Focus Groups Carried Out in Schools and the Community

Focus Group Participants	Number interviewed or in focus groups
Headteachers	7
Deputy Headteachers	10
Classroom Teachers	15
School Staff (Teaching Assistants and Learning Mentors)	15
Governors	17
Special Educational Needs Coordinators and Inclusion Managers	8
Educational Psychologists	5
Black Caribbean Pupils	33
Black Caribbean Parents	14
Total	**124**

In all the case study schools we visited, we have carried out classroom observations with the main aim of developing understanding of how schools and teachers recognise and value diverse cultures/heritages and how children respond in lessons where this occurs. The classroom observations focused on teacher's interactions with Black Caribbean and BME children, and interactions between diverse groups of children.

The findings which emerged from the data analysis, focus groups and case studies are given in the chapters that follow.

The Data, Performance Measures and Terminology

The Data

The strength of the research is its data source of the National Pupil Database. The National Pupil Database (NPD) is a pupil level database which matches pupil and school characteristic data to pupil level attainment. The sample size of the pupils who completed GCSE in summer 2014 is 558,432 and KS2 in 2014 is 544,220. The data on state schools is highly accurate and has a number of key features. Firstly, the fact that it is a census dataset containing the population of all pupils in state schools is very helpful for a number of different analyses, compared to a dataset based on just a sample of schools. It provides a much richer set of data on school and pupil characteristics. The dataset includes information on language spoken at home, ethnicity, free school meals, gender and results at Key Stage 2 and 4. In addition, data has been drawn from DfE Statistical First Releases (SFR), although some statistics have been calculated by the

author directly from National Pupil Database (NPD) files. The lists that the SFRs are drawn on in collating data on achievement are given in the references.

Measures of Performance

It is important to note that in the English education system, pupils are 5 to 16 years old are taught the national curriculum. This covers subjects such as English, mathematics and science. This is split into four key stages, KS1, KS2 (primary), KS3 and KS4 (secondary). At the end of each key stage, assessments are undertaken. Up until 2015, pupils in key stages 1 to 3, were given levels, ranging from 1 to 8. In key stage 1 and 2, results are reported for reading, writing and maths. Thus a typical seven year old is expected to reach level 2B, an eleven year old (end of KS2) level 4, and a fourteen year old, level 5. At the end of KS4, pupils take General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) exams. These are the major qualifications taken by pupils at the end of compulsory schooling at the age of 15, and are a series of examinations in the individual subjects the pupils have been studying. The measure of performance used in this report was the percentage of pupils gaining level 4 or above at KS2, in reading, writing and maths, and for GCSE it was the national measure of the percentage of pupils gaining five or more good GCSEs including English and maths (5+A*-C). In 2016, the measures used to discuss attainment changed and new indicators will be used.

Terminology: Misuse and abuse of the terms West Indian, African Caribbean, Afro-Caribbean and Black Caribbean.

The starting point for our research was Black Caribbean children, but from the review literature it became apparent that the terminology used to refer to people of Caribbean heritage has been problematic in Britain. There has been misuse and abuse of the term and a number of authors use the words West Indian, African Caribbean, Afro-Caribbean and Black, Caribbean or Black Caribbean, African or Black interchangeably (see McKenley et al 2003; Demie 2001; Gillborn and Gipps 1996; Gillian and Richardson 2003; Sewell 1995; Blair et al 1998). In some cases it has been used in the context of political and historical developments ignoring educational debates. This has confused and complicated underachievement issues of pupils of Caribbean origins. In this paper, we will argue that it is important to be clear on the concept of African and Caribbean origins and differentiate between pupils from Africa and pupils who were born in the Caribbean or whose parent/s have Caribbean origins.

In education, the term West Indian was first used in the Rampton report (Rampton 1981) to refer to pupils of Caribbean origins and was changed to Afro-Caribbean as this was preferable to West Indians in the 1980s. This was followed by African Caribbean, which started appearing in the early 1990s as a direct analogy with the US terminology African-American that was adopted after the civil rights movement in America. The situation is further complicated by the range of these terms in different academic

papers (see Blair et al 1998 and Sewell 1997), which use some of these confusing terminologies without questioning the implications. Gillborn and Gipps (1996) were the first to raise questions about the problems with terminology and the lack of differentiation between African and Caribbean in national data collection. Because of these problems with categorisation, they used the terms African Caribbean and Black in their research. In their report, Black included 'individuals who would appear in census statistics as either Black Caribbean, Black African or Other Black' (p.8). They used African Caribbean to mean African and Caribbean, depending on how the data is collected in different authorities. However, where data were available, this was further differentiated into African and Caribbean (see Gillborn and Gipps 1996), to clarify a focus on the underachievement of the two major Black ethnic groups in the UK. Gillborn and Gipps also argued that some use the terms African Caribbean or Afro-Caribbean for political purposes to 'symbolise a shared ethnic heritage and/or position within the British social-economic structure' (Gillborn and Gipps 1996, p.27). This view is supported by Gillian and Richardson (2003, p.5), who pointed out that the term was '*considered by Black people of Caribbean heritage to be a clearer affirmation of their identity than the current Afro-Caribbean'* which was adopted as being preferable to the 'West Indian' term used in the Rampton report.

However, use of the term African Caribbean has obscured a significant difference in the achievement of pupils with family origins in the Caribbean, those of African ethnic backgrounds, and pupils who consider themselves to be Black British. A previous national DfES national Youth Cohort Survey (YCS) as argued above also has attempted to homogenise ethnic minorities by using the term Black to refer to all African and Caribbean pupils. This problem is even further complicated by the DfE paper *Aiming High: Raising the Achievement of Ethnic Minority Pupils*, which uses the term African Caribbean as a short hand phrase for 'all Black people of African, Caribbean, mixed heritage and those categorised as Black Other' (DfES May 2003, p32). This paper ignores the current census good practice that recognises the heterogeneity of different groups both in ethnic backgrounds and educational experience. The DfES clearly takes a position that to focus on the concerns of Black Caribbean pupils is too narrow to be allowed. It does not help to improve our understanding of underachievement issues and the need to address issues facing different groups of pupils including Caribbean, African and Black British. Unfortunately, as noted by Gillian and Richardson:

'The term African Caribbean has been 'grossly misunderstood and misused by many civil servants, officers in local government', *academic researchers, EMAG teachers and has blurred the underachievement debate in Britain*…It has been used interchangeably with the term Black. Others have used it to mean African and Caribbean. Some have even 'spelt it as African/Caribbean, implying that the two words are close in meaning with the term Black as to be interchangeable… It is unhelpful of the DfES to state that the discourse of educational policy should ignore the substantial differences between the cultures and circumstances of Caribbean people and those of people from the continent

of Africa. The DfES paper is not only raising semantic issues by using incorrect terminology; the DfES encourages schools, local government to ignore the distinctive needs of Caribbean and African or Black British pupils (see Gillian and Richardson 2003, p.5).

It is now widely recognised that there is a serious semantic problem in the categorisation of pupils of Caribbean or African origin. Among educationalists, there is little understanding about the meaning of the terminology and the issues involved and the difference between Black Caribbean and African Caribbean. There is therefore no general agreement among academics involved in this kind of work that one of the categories used is correct to reflect the people of Caribbean heritage, although most agree that Caribbean is a useful concept in the context of addressing the educational needs of pupils of Caribbean origins. The use of the term African Caribbean is being increasingly challenged; not to question the distinctive needs, experience, and circumstances of Black Caribbeans, but because it has been used to blur or obscure underachievement issues at national and local levels.

The first serious attempt to look at the problem of categorisation was in the 1991 census, in which Black was differentiated into African, Caribbean and other. This was further improved, after national debate, for the 2001 census to Black African, Black Caribbean and Black Other. As noted by McKenley et al (2003, p.7) '*Education takes its lead from that national debate and reflects the latest ethnic categories in the Pupil Level Annual Schools' Census (ASC), but this is always a matter of contention.'* The 2003 School Census asked respondents to classify themselves in ethnic terms for the first time. The decision to ask questions about ethnicity followed a fierce debate, lengthy consultation and rigorous testing of potential questions.

For the purposes of the research, we favoured the term 'Caribbean' to define the children of birth families where at least one parent is of Caribbean heritage. This terminology has been used in LA1 and in inner London since the 1990s. We need to recognise not all Caribbean pupils are of African origin. Caribbean culture is 'the product of a unique historical experience and has been affected by numerous cross-cultural influences, including African, Indians, British, Dutch, French, Portuguese and Chinese. British born pupils of Caribbean origin also share this culture through their family background and country of origins' (Gillian and Richardson 2003, p.5). As noted by Ashrif (2002, p.27) at '*least 48% have their origins in the Indian subcontinent.'* This figure may need further research but it clearly questions the use of African Caribbean terminology to refer to people of Caribbean origin in Britain.

Maintaining the focus of studies of underachievement will require that the terms Black African and Black Caribbean be used, as collected in the School Census. We argued in our previous research that:

> *'Black Caribbean, used in School Census data collection should be seen as an inclusive term, which would encompass those pupils of dual heritage, with one parent of Caribbean heritage*. We take a view *'issues of country of birth as opposed to origin, faith, location, and settlement all contribute to the concept of 'ethnicity', 'heritage' and 'background'. These are interwoven with a personal sense of affinity and belonging. Identities and how these might be reflected 'officially' are a lively debate every decade as the national census seeks to catch up with changes in categorisation over the previous decade'*
> (See McKenley et al, 2003, p.7).

The term Black Caribbean in the national school census makes sense for educational purposes, to statisticians and to the Caribbean and African communities as it clearly differentiates pupils of Caribbean origins from Black Africans, which in the past were often lumped together as African Caribbean or Afro-Caribbean on political grounds. It focuses clearly to address underachievement issues in educational debates and ensures that this focus is not lost or blurred in national policy formulation by providing unambiguous data for policy makers and schools. For this reason, in this study, we have used the term Black Caribbean to refer to pupils of Caribbean origin and Black African to refer to pupils of African origin in Britain.

Defining Underachievement

There has been widespread misunderstanding of the concept of the term underachievement. In recent years the term was used to describe the difference in the average educational attainment of different groups. It has become common to see underachievement as a phenomenon relating to particular groups of learners who experience disadvantages that call for additional support. These are identifiable groups whose levels of attainment tend to be lower than those of other groups for no other obvious reasons other than their group characteristics and the inadequacy of the education system in responding to those characteristics. The groups that require attention in this way include ethnic minority groups, boys, mobile children, EAL children and looked after children. However, Gillborn and Gipps (1996) recently questioned the usefulness of the term, arguing that the notion of underachievement has become a stereotype and even sometimes wrongly related to an outdated older concept of ability that each individual had a more or less fixed potential and there is little that can be done to increase a learner's potential. They also argued that the concept is used 'to support the argument that the reasons for the underachievement of some groups are because of the pupils and/or their families, rather than the education system itself' (Gillborn and Gipps 1996). The assumption, on which this view is based, has long been attacked and underachievement is nothing to do with fixed potential or ability but it is the consequence of ineffective educational practices which prevent the potential of learners being realised (Gillborn 2002).

The government has now adopted this concept of underachievement, and it views it as the product of inadequacy of the education system rather than of poverty or other social factors alone. The government believes that schools should have high expectations of everyone, regardless of background, gender or circumstances. They must target support to those who need most help to reach those high standards and we must change the culture.

We think the notion of underachievement should emphasis the difference in attainment between groups and is a useful concept particularly to identify an inequality of opportunities. Therefore, in this paper underachievement is used, stressing the sense of being under, as the Caribbean pupils are the lowest achievers of the main ethnic groups.

Ethical Considerations

The research into the underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils was conducted in line with the Data Protection Act (1998) and all the interviews and focus group participants were given assurances that their confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained. Thus schools were given pseudonyms. However, it should be noted that some of the case respondents were concerned that their viewpoints might be identifiable. The extent of this concern was exemplified by some respondents who agreed to being interviewed with the proviso that their interview was not tape-recorded. In recognition of the identification concerns expressed by some respondents the data discussed in this report is done so without any attribution being made to a particular school or person. Care has been taken with all stages of the research process therefore to not only ensure that participants and institutional names remain anonymous, but that the data is kept securely and individual digital recordings have been deleted or destroyed upon transcription. Pupils, parents and teachers were given an opportunity at the beginning of their interview to decline from participating, once a member of the research team explained the nature of the research.

CHAPTER 3. THE EXTENT OF BLACK CARIBBEAN PUPILS' EDUCATIONAL UNDERACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLAND

Introduction

This section examines the achievement of Black Caribbean students in British schools at the end of KS2 and GCSE. Two methodological approaches are used. Firstly, the study looks at the pattern of the Black Caribbean pupil population in English Local Authorities to establish the number of Black Caribbean pupils in British schools. This is followed by detailed data analysis on the performance of Black Caribbean pupils in England compared to the other main ethnic groups. The main questions posed are:

- What is the total number of Black Caribbean children in schools in England?

- How well do Black Caribbean pupils perform in British schools? What are the differences in level of attainment at the end of KS2 and GCSE between Local Authorities?

- What are the factors influencing achievement?

The National Context

This research considers evidence from schools in England. England is one of the more ethnically, linguistically and culturally diverse countries in Europe. About 31% of the school population are from Black and ethnic minority groups. The 2014 census shows that there were 6,970,556 pupils in England schools. Of these, White British pupils formed the largest ethnic group with 69%, followed by White Other at 6%, Pakistani 4%, Indian 3%, Black African 3%, Bangladeshi 2%. The Black Caribbean school population is about 1% or 86,253 pupils. The Mixed White and Black Caribbean school population has increased and is now 101,676 pupils in schools.

There are large regional variations in the proportion of pupils. Data by region from the latest school census are presented in Figure 1. Across England this varied widely, from lows of around 80 in the North East and the South West, to slightly above the national average in the West Midlands but with the largest concentrations in London, where minority ethnic pupils accounted for nearly two thirds of pupils in Outer London and four-fifths of pupils in Inner London.

Regional data has been aggregated and the above figures hide large variations between Local Authorities (LA). Of all cities in England, it is London that serves the largest proportion of Black Caribbean pupils. Any findings from our study therefore have significant importance in the formatting policies and strategies aimed at raising the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils at both national and local level.

The variation in the number of Black Caribbean pupils in each Local Authority in England is shown in Figure 2. The main findings of the survey show that:

- Over 86,253 Black Caribbean pupils were in primary, secondary, special schools, pupil referral unit and alternative provisions in England in 2014. Of these just over half were boys and 15% were eligible for free school meals in England.

- There were 40,938 pupils in primary schools, 42,763 pupils in secondary, 1,507 pupils in special schools, 573 in pupil referral units and 472 in alternative provision.

- The distribution of Black Caribbean pupils in England varies considerably between Local Authorities (see Figure 2). The overwhelming majority of Black Caribbean pupils in the UK reside in the larger cities and few are recorded in rural areas. Twenty six of the 150 LAs have more than 1000 Black Caribbean pupils (Table 2), with the largest cohort residing in Birmingham. London has significant numbers of Black Caribbean pupils and the largest LAs in terms of cohort were Lewisham, Croydon, Lambeth, Brent, Southwark, Hackney, Enfield and Haringey.

Figure 1. Total Number of Black Caribbean Children in Primary, Secondary and Special Schools by Regions
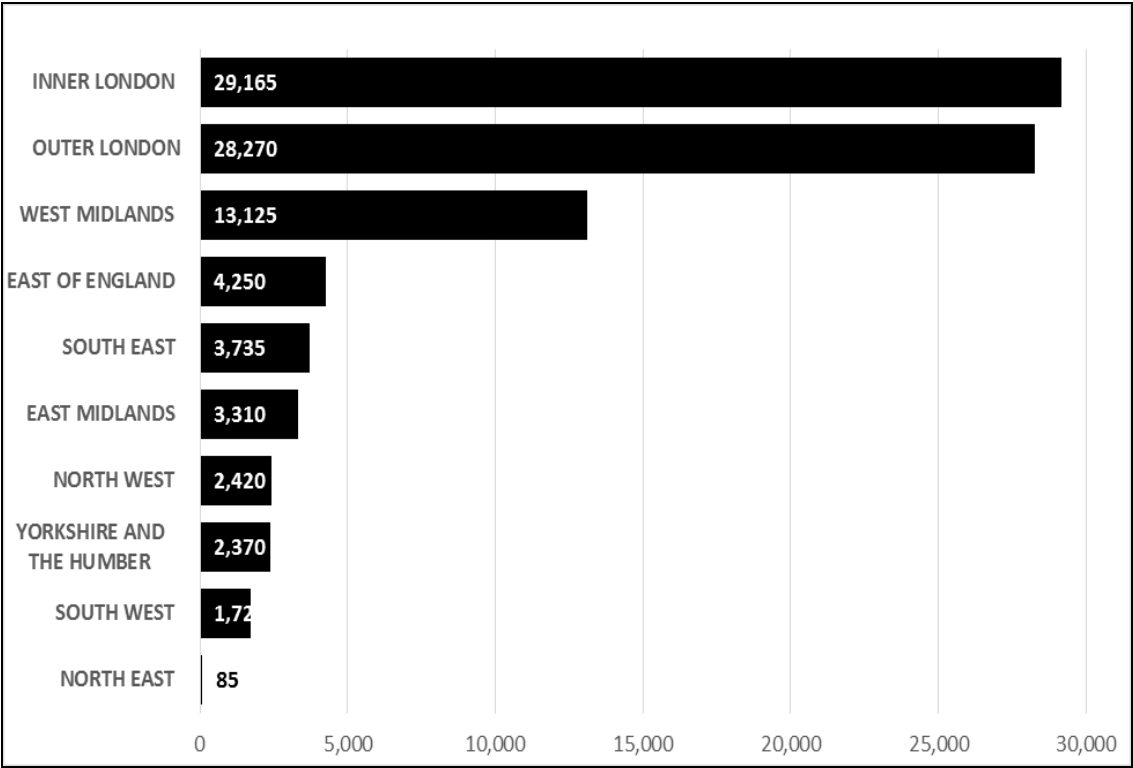
Figure 2. Number of Black Caribbean Children in England Schools by Local Authority

Local Authorities with more than 500 Black Caribbean pupils

Local Authority	Number
Birmingham	7,407
Lewisham	5,657
Croydon	5,649
Lambeth	5,001
Brent	3,460
Southwark	3,309
Hackney	3,243
Enfield	3,071
Haringey	2,899
Waltham Forest	2,704
Wandsworth	2,212
Newham	1,977
Ealing	1,902
Sandwell	1,840
Redbridge	1,683
Wolverhampton	1,602
Manchester	1,381
Bromley	1,370
Islington	1,246
Nottingham	1,241
Luton	1,240
Greenwich	1,219
Merton	1,137
Hammersmith and Fulham	1,121
Hertfordshire	1,102
Harrow	1,055
Bristol, City of	959
Hillingdon	944
Leeds	909
Barking and Dagenham	877
Barnet	806
Westminster	744
Tower Hamlets	667
Buckinghamshire	642
Walsall	635
Camden	621
Essex	612
Northamptonshire	594
Havering	585
Hounslow	576
Sutton	518
Leicester	513
Sheffield	500

Table 2. Number of Black Caribbean Pupils in Local Authorities

Number of Black Caribbean pupils	Number of LAs
1000+	26
500-999	17
100-499	36
11-99	42
0-10	29

As part of this study an extensive analysis was carried out using the NPD data on the number of Black Caribbean pupils at the end of primary and secondary education, as well as performance data relating to KS2 and GCSE by subject, FSM and gender.

KS2 and GCSE Attainment of Black Caribbean Pupils in Schools in England

This section considers underachievement of Caribbean pupils at national levels. Since the 1990s, there has been a marked improvement in the proportion of pupils attaining five or more higher grade passes in GCSE examinations at the end of secondary education. The proportion of 15 years olds attaining at least five higher grade passes rose from 37% in 1998 to 60% in 2013 in England (Demie and McLean, 2015 p23).

It is difficult to ascribe the above pattern of improvement to education reform alone but previous research confirms how significant the government policy measures were in raising standards (Demie and McLean, 2015). However, not all ethnic groups shared equally in the overall improvement in attainment at the 5+A*-C level (See Figure 3). As we will argue in the next section the government policy measures have also had a negative impact by increasing inequalities between different ethnic groups within the education system.

Broadly speaking, Chinese and Indian pupils are the highest achieving groups at GCSE followed by Bangladeshi, Black African and White British pupils. Black Caribbean and Pakistani are the lowest achieving groups. The national data in England suggests that Black Caribbean underachievement in education is real and persistent and they are consistently the lowest performing group in the country. Of real concern is that the gap in educational performance of Black Caribbean pupils is larger than for any other ethnic group.

Figure 3. Black Caribbean Achievement in England (5+A*-C including English and Maths)
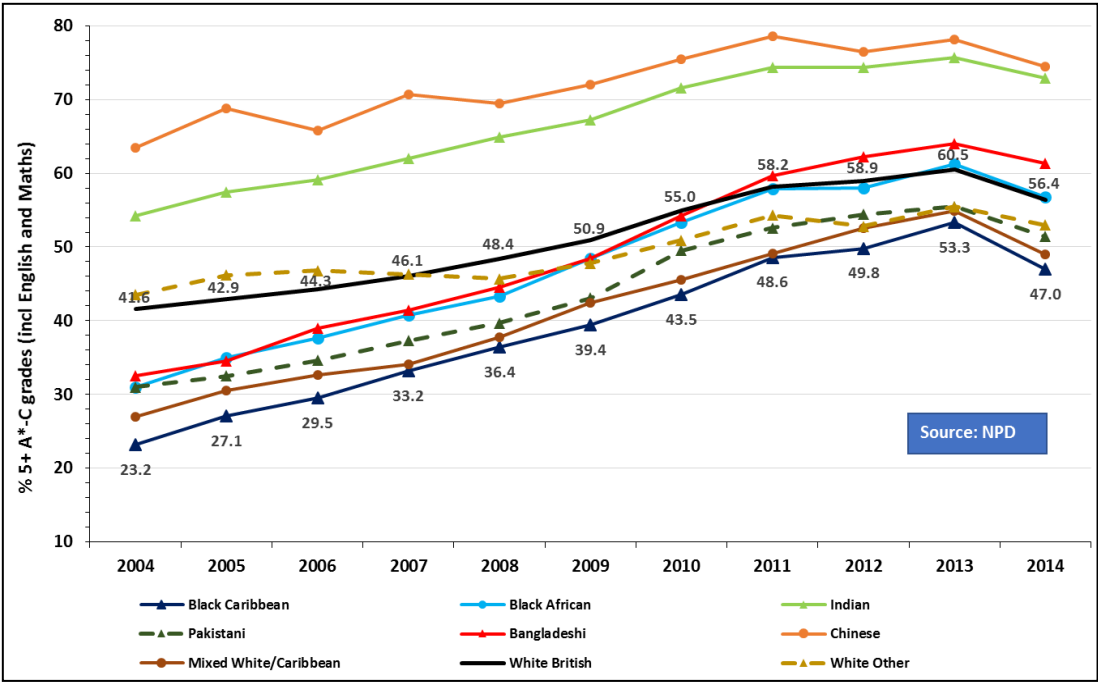

Table 3 shows the KS2 and GCSE results for each group at national level. As at GCSE, Black Caribbean pupils are one of the lowest achieving groups at KS2. The main findings show that at KS2, 75% of Black Caribbean pupils achieved level 4 and above compared to 80% for all of England. Similarly at GCSE, 46% of Black Caribbean pupils achieved 5+A*-C including English and Maths compared to the national average of 54%.

Table 3. KS2 and GCSE Performance by Ethnic Origin in England Schools (%)

Ethnicity	KS2 L4+ (Reading, Writing and Maths)				GCSE (5 + A*-C including English and Maths)					
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Bangladeshi	77	76	81	82	54	60	62	64	61	62
Black African	73	75	78	81	53	58	58	61	57	56
Black Caribbean	69	70	73	75	44	49	50	53	47	46
Chinese	84	85	88	88	76	79	77	78	75	77
Indian	83	83	86	87	72	74	74	76	73	72
Pakistani	69	74	75	77	50	53	54	56	51	52
White and Caribbean	71	82	75	77	46	49	53	55	49	49
White British	75	86	79	81	55	58	59	61	56	57
White Other	68	68	71	73	51	54	53	56	53	53
All Pupils	**74**	**75**	**78**	**80**	**54**	**59**	**59**	**59**	**53**	**54**

This is not surprising as the findings from a number of previous studies came to similar conclusions (Demie 2001; Gillborn and Mirza 2000; Gillborn and Gipps 1996). Perhaps the most important new finding from the national data is that there is evidence that Chinese, Bangladeshi and Indian heritage pupils are high achieving and continuing to improve. However, there have not been sufficient rates of improvement for Black Caribbean pupils to narrow the gap (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Black Caribbean GCSE Performance (5+ A*C inc. English & Maths 2004 -2015)
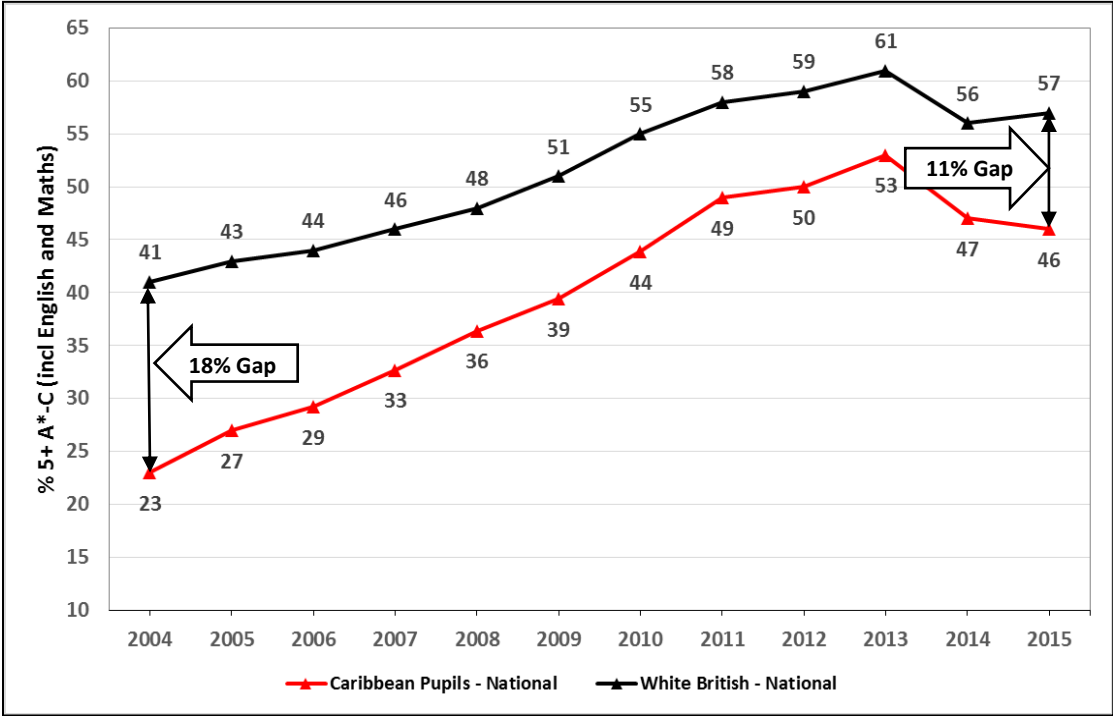
As with findings from previous studies the data highlights a particular disadvantage experienced by Black Caribbean pupils in the English Education system (Demie 2001; Gillborn and Mirza 2000; Gillborn and Gipps 1996). To date it has been difficult to draw generalised conclusions from research on Black Caribbean educational achievement but the new national data is at least helpful and confirms that Black Caribbean pupils have not shared equally in increasing rates of achievement at KS2 and GCSE (Table 3 and Figure 3 and 4). These findings have important implications for strategies of raising achievement, making it at least easier for researchers to examine the differences in experiences between pupils from different ethnic groups and for practitioners to identify appropriate strategies to tackle perceived problems.

Overall the national data supports previous findings that the gap is growing between the highest and lowest achieving ethnic groups and Black Caribbean heritage pupils are achieving significantly below the level of other main ethnic groups at KS2 and GCSE.

Gender and Black Caribbean Attainment

Table 4 repeats the pattern established earlier, whereby girls tend to outperform boys at each key stage (See Demie, 2001 and Gillborn and Gipps, 1996). Overall, the findings of the results between key stages indicate that girls achieve higher averages than boys by a quite noticeable margin. This is true for African, Caribbean and White British pupils' at all key stages. It also confirms that for Black Caribbean pupils, the gap in performance between boys and girls is higher than for Black African and White British pupils, suggesting the underachievement of boys. Overall, these findings question some of the previous studies which argued that only Black boys, and not girls, face inequalities. The data in Table 4 and Figure 5 confirm that Black Caribbean boys were lagging behind White boys and both groups were some distance behind White girls.

Figure 5. GCSE Performance of Black Caribbean Pupils in England by Gender 2010-15 (%)
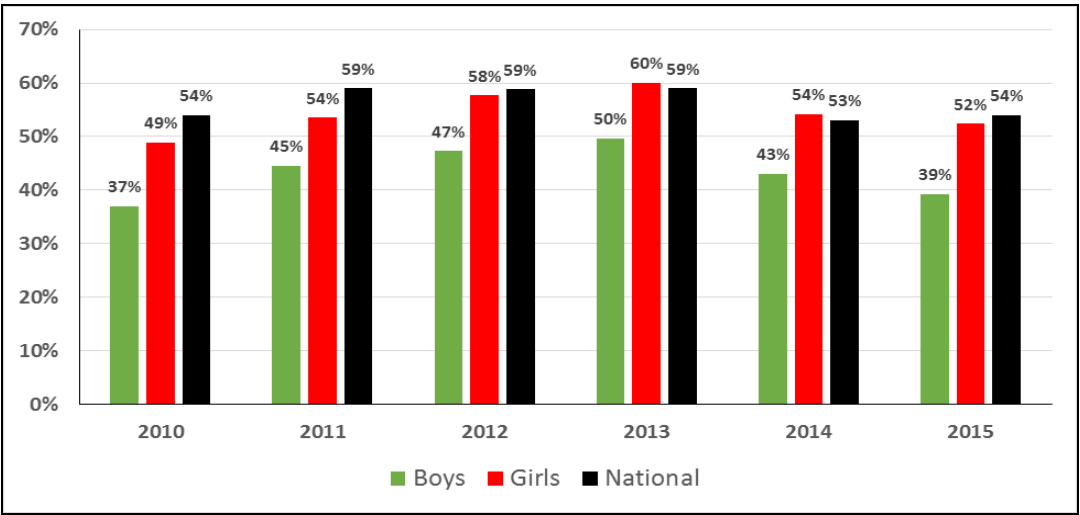

Table 4. KS2 and GCSE Performance in England by Gender and Ethnic Background (%)

Ethnic Group	KS2 Reading, Writing and Maths			GCSE 5+A*-C including English and Maths		
	Boys	Girls	GAP	Boys	Girls	GAP
Bangladeshi	80	84	4	58	66	8
Black African	78	83	5	51	61	10
Black Caribbean	71	80	9	39	52	13
Chinese	85	90	5	70	83	13
Indian	85	89	4	69	76	7
Pakistani	74	79	5	48	56	8
White and Black Caribbean	73	80	7	44	54	10
White British	78	84	6	52	62	10
White Other	70	75	5	48	57	9
All Pupils	**77**	**83**	**6**	**53**	**62**	**9**

Disadvantage and Black Caribbean Attainment

The free school meals variable is often used as a proxy measure of the extent of social deprivation in the backgrounds of pupils and has been linked to underachievement in a number of studies (see Gillborn and Youdell 2002; Demie 2001). The proportion of pupils taking KS2 in 2015 that were eligible for free school meals (FSM) was 41%, and for the GCSE cohort, it was 43%. Table 5 indicates that there is a marked difference in KS2 and GCSE performance between pupils eligible for free school meals and the most economically advantaged groups in schools. At the end of primary education, the difference between pupils eligible for FSM and those not is significant, with about 67% of Black Caribbean eligible pupils achieving level 4+, whereas 79% of pupils who are not eligible achieve at this level. The GCSE data also shows a significant gap, with pupils on free school meals gaining only 32% 5+ A*-C, compared to 50% attained by those not eligible. Overall, the findings from the national data confirm that Black pupils eligible for school meals did considerably less well than their affluent peers and the gap at GCSE is 18%.

Table 5. KS2 and GCSE Performance in England by Ethnic Background (%) 2015

Ethnic Background	KS2 Reading, Writing and Maths (Level 4+)			GCSE 5+A*-C including English and Maths		
	FSM	Non FSM	Gap	FSM	Non FSM	Gap
Bangladeshi	80	83	3	56	65	9
Black African	75	83	8	46	59	13
Black Caribbean	67	79	12	32	50	18
Chinese	85	88	3	74	77	3
Indian	75	88	13	55	74	18
Pakistani	72	78	6	42	55	13
White and Black Caribbean	67	81	14	31	54	23
White British	63	84	21	28	61	33
White Other	64	74	10	38	55	17
All Pupils	**66**	**83**	**17**	**33**	**61**	**28**

There are also some striking differences within the main ethnic groups when the data is further analysed by pupils eligible for free school meals. Table 5 shows that at GCSE, 28% of White British pupils eligible for free school meals achieved 5+ A*-C, compared with 61% of pupils who were not eligible. The White British difference is higher with a gap of 21 percentage points at KS2 and 33% at GCSE. However, there are narrower gaps for Chinese, Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Black African at KS2. This is despite a high number of pupils on free school meals compared to White British. This finding underlines the

importance of treating any measure of school performance which does not allow for the influence of background factors such social class and deprivation with skepticism. Social class data is particularly essential for the analysis of performance of White British and Black Caribbean pupils in addition to other disadvantage factors. As we have argued in the previous section, our analysis is not complete because of a lack of data on social class. Care must be taken in generalizing the results of particularly White British pupils from this study to a wider context. Further research in other populations outside inner London is clearly required. Overall the evidence from analyzing free school meals (FSM) data is that:

- Black Caribbean and White British children eligible for FSM are consistently the lowest performing ethnic groups of children from low income households

- The attainment gap between those children eligible for free school meals and the remainder is wider for Black Caribbean, White British and Mixed White and Black Caribbean than any other ethnic groups

- The gap widens particularly at the end of secondary education for White British and Mixed White and Black Caribbean pupils.

Figure 6. Black Caribbean GCSE Performance in England by Free School Meals 2015 (%)
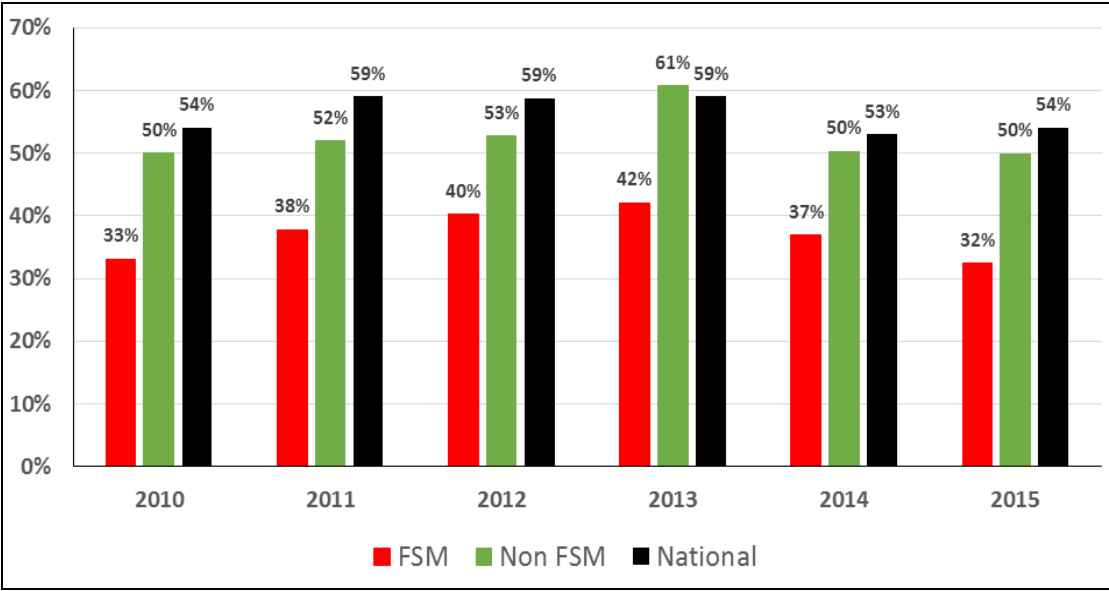
Black Caribbean Pupils Attainment by Region of England

Using the empirical data from the 2014 NPD, the achievement of Key Stage 2 and GCSE pupils was examined by the region of England they live in (Table 6).

Table 6. KS2 and GCSE Attainment of Black Caribbean Pupils by Region 2014

Region	GCSE (% 5+ A*-C)				Key Stage 2 (% Reading, Writing and Maths Level 4+)			
	Black Caribbean Cohort	Black Caribbean	White British	Region	Black Caribbean Cohort	Black Caribbean	White British	Region
East	388	51%	57%	47%	369	71%	79%	77%
East Midlands	340	41%	54%	50%	238	74%	79%	78%
Inner London	2373	47%	60%	60%	2777	75%	84%	82%
North East	5	80%	55%	45%	9	44%	81%	79%
North West	258	44%	56%	47%	213	73%	82%	80%
Outer London	2437	50%	61%	66%	2350	75%	83%	82%
South East	328	48%	58%	57%	284	74%	81%	79%
South West	129	35%	57%	54%	154	62%	80%	79%
West Midlands	1094	43%	55%	47%	1233	72%	79%	77%
Yorkshire and the Humber	254	42%	55%	52%	219	71%	78%	76%
National	**7606**	**47%**	**56%**	**53%**	**7915**	**73%**	**79%**	**79%**

The analysis of the achievement of Key Stage 2 and GCSE pupils by the region of England revealed wide variations in performance and in the achievement gap (Table 6, Figure 7). Key findings from the data show that at KS2:

- Inner London and Outer London have the highest density of Black Caribbean pupils in England

- The North East region has only 9 pupils with Black Caribbean heritage

- Black Caribbean pupils in outer London appear to perform better than Black Caribbean pupils in other parts of the country (Table 6). 75% of Black Caribbean pupils in Inner London and Outer London achieved expected levels or better at KS2

- Black Caribbean pupils overall do not perform as well as their peers, but the gap in achievement between Black Caribbean and White British pupils in the

Southwest was amongst the highest in the country, with only a 18 percentage point difference, whilst the average gap for all of England was six points.

- Black Caribbean pupils in Inner London performed similarly to those in Outer London.

The GCSE data also revealed that:

- There were 5 Black Caribbean pupils who took GCSE in the North East region compared to 2,373 in Inner London, 2,437 in Outer London and 1,094 in West Midlands.

- Black Caribbean pupils from all regions were performing below the national average for achievement at GCSE (Figure 7). Black Caribbean pupils living in the South West, were 18 percentage points lower than the national average.

- East Midlands and the North East also showed the biggest gap in achievement between Black Caribbean pupils when compared to the national average (Figure 7). Perhaps significantly, the percentages of Black Caribbean pupils in the regions with the largest gaps are much lower than in Inner and Outer London where the Black Caribbean pupil population is much higher. There does appear to be a correlation between the density of the Black Caribbean pupil population and their success at GCSE.

- Regions with the highest proportions of Black Caribbean pupils such as Inner and Outer London, but also the West Midlands appeared to have a higher percentage of their Black Caribbean pupils achieving expected levels, than for example the South West of England, where Black Caribbean numbers were much lower and which appears to have a negative impact on attainment.

There is only one region in the North East where Black Caribbean pupils outperform other regions at GCSE. In this region only five Black Caribbean pupils were recorded and the data cannot be compared with others as it is such a small number. However, the overwhelming evidence of the data shows that Black Caribbean pupils are underachieving in all regions of England. Similarly the variations in performance by Black Caribbean are also reflected when the data is analysed by LA areas (Figure 8).

Figure 7. Black Caribbean Pupils GCSE Performance by Local Authorities (5+A*-C including English and Maths)
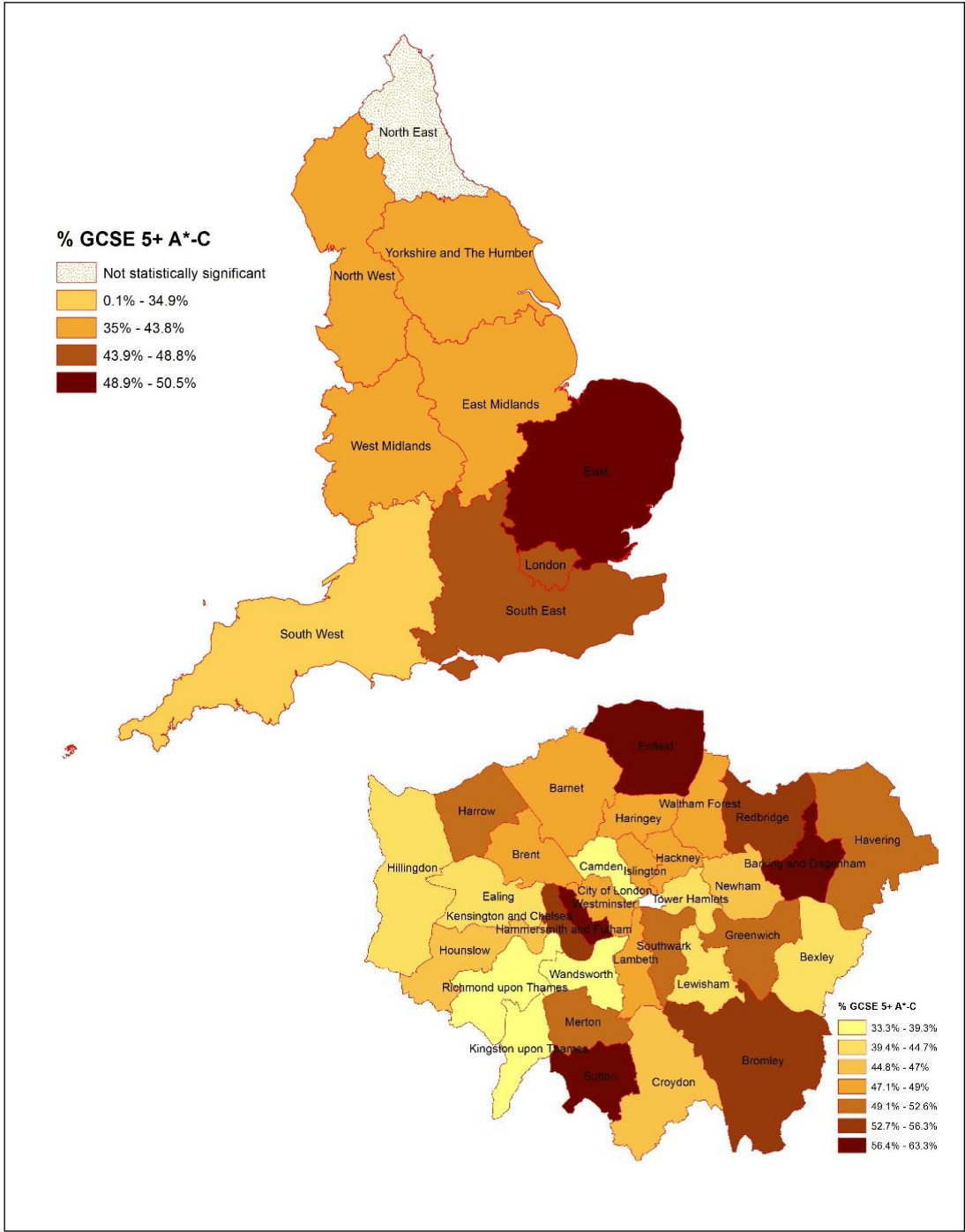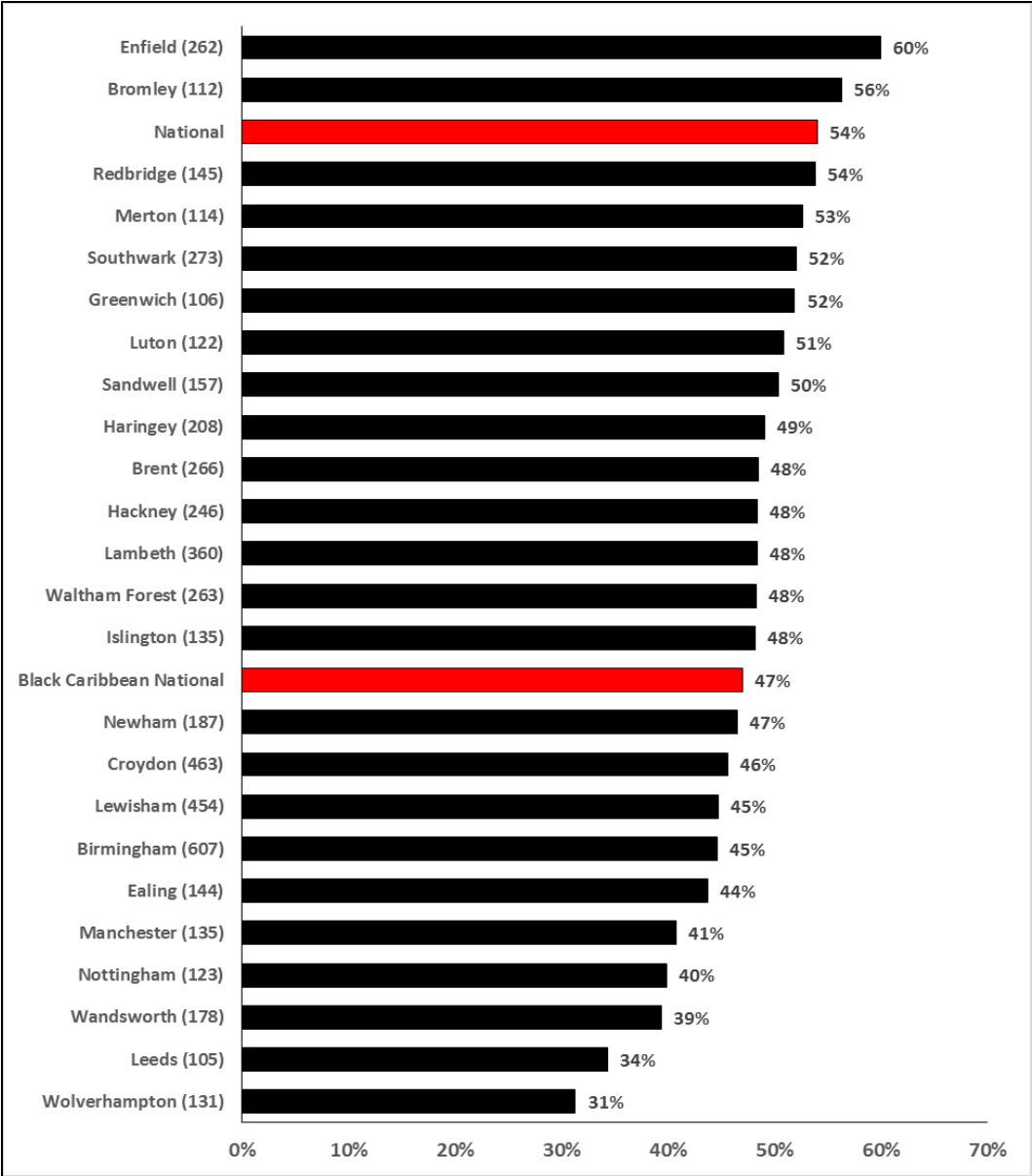
Figure 8 - Black Caribbean GCSE Performance by LA (5+A*-C including English and Maths)

Conclusions and Implications for Further Research

The national data in England also suggests that Black Caribbean underachievement in education is real and persistent and they are consistently the lowest performing group in the country, and the difference between their educational performance and others is larger than for any other ethnic group. The next section looks at the reasons for underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils in British schools.

CHAPTER 4. SCHOOL FACTORS THAT MAY CONTRIBUTE TO BLACK CARIBBEAN PUPILS' UNDERACHIEVEMENT

Headteachers' Poor Leadership on Equality Issues

For a number of years, researchers (Hall et al., 1986) and inspectors in the UK have been concerned about the wide variations in the practice of school leadership. Studies in the US indicate a similar breadth in interpretations of the role (Leithwood et al; 1992). The following quote illustrates that what school leaders do is most directly a consequence of what they think:

> 'Heads give indicators to others, to staff, pupils, parents, advisers, governors, as to their preferred or intended style by means of verbal, non-verbal and written communications in face-to-face encounters, informal and formal meetings' (Evetts, 1994, p.86).

It is in this sense, in the day-to-day minutiae of school leadership, that the values and beliefs of individual school leaders are often conveyed to others. Sources in the literature indicate that there is a connection between thinking and doing in relation to leadership style. Being a Headteacher is currently a responsibility assigned to one person and how they attempt to fulfil that responsibility is an individual matter in which they have to draw as best they can on their own beliefs, understanding, experience and abilities. Leadership is part of a whole tradition and culture as well as being a manifestation of individual beliefs and styles of operation. While Headteachers communicate core beliefs and values in their everyday work, teachers also reinforce values in their actions and words.   It is important to identify which aspects of the culture are destructive and which are constructive.

John MacBeath in 'Effective School Leadership – Responding to Change' argued that:

> 'School leaders need to be able to draw on a repertoire of styles and skills which changes and develops over time and is shaped by context and culture. To talk about 'the' or 'one' effective leadership style is certainly unrealistic and inherently dangerous…. 'The effectiveness of the School leader needs to be defined not only in terms of the qualities of the individual but also in terms of their fitness to a context which itself is subject to continuities as well as change and development both from forces 'within' the school and from those in the wider environment'…. 'We can also see how reforms may begin to modify behaviour by accentuating certain aspects of the job and downgrading others and where some of the resultant discomfort for school leaders may arise as they feel themselves pulled away from what they regard as effective practice towards new models dictated from the centre.'

The past twenty years have witnessed a remarkably consistent, worldwide effort by educational policymakers to reform schools by holding them publicly accountable for improving student performance in national tests. For school leaders the main consequence of this policy shift has been considerable pressure to demonstrate the contribution that their work makes to such improvement. This pressure has not actually emerged from a widespread scepticism about the value of leadership; quite the opposite. Indeed, it would be more accurate to characterise this as a demand to 'prove' the widely-held assumption that leadership matters a great deal.

How much leadership matters, is most often demonstrated in those schools serving areas of deprivation and high rates of unemployment. The challenges these communities face, create a combination of pressures for school leaders including difficulties in the recruitment and retention of staff, challenging behavior of pupils, lack of parental support and the lack of collegiality among colleagues. Add to this, the mix of competition between schools which has been engineered by successive governments' 'standards' agendas and the tensions this has created between the various types of schools, (free schools, academy chains), league tables and so on. It may be worth our while to remember that we once hoped that schools would create new models of community, encourage new commitments towards meaningful vocations, end racial discrimination, and open up new avenues out of poverty and unhappiness.

A happy and fulfilling school experience could stay with a child throughout their life and make it more likely that they would return to formal education as adults. Sadly, for many Black Caribbean pupils, their experience of school has been negative, their learning needs have not been addressed and sometimes their very presence is seen as a threat to others. Exclusion rates among even very young Black Caribbean pupils are now higher than for any other group of pupils in England.

The challenge for Headteachers is to respond to the school's inner life, troublesome as it may be, as well as meeting the demands of constantly changing internal and external constituencies which are often in uneasy relationships with one another.

The Headteacher of an inner city primary school illustrated the challenges presented by the community she serves:

> *'There are huge problems socially in this area, poverty, mental health, unemployment or low paid employment, poor housing. The school's largest groups are of Caribbean and African heritage. When I became Headteacher twelve years ago the behaviour of pupils was poor. There was a culture in this school of noise. I had children screaming and shouting in the hall and in the corridors. Some were Black Caribbean boys but not all. One boy would throw a tantrum and fling himself on the floor and at one time he tore down a wall display. At that time it was the culture of the school. Children copy each other. If they played up they were removed from class and went off to play*

therapy in another place. When the behaviour changes and becomes calm and this is the norm, then children conform to that.' (Headteacher, School A)

This is a successful school with exemplary leadership. The Headteacher has always lived and taught in inner city schools and has a thorough understanding of the cultural context in which she is working. This however, is not always the case where Headteachers are recruited to lead schools without the requisite understanding of its 'inner life', with little or no understanding of the cultural backgrounds of the families which make up the school community.

Our interviews revealed recent examples where Headteachers, successful perhaps in many respects, but lacking sensitivity to the cultural context in which they were working, were not mindful of their own stereotyping which caused offence to Black Caribbean parents, as the following example illustrates:

'When I went to the school, the teacher was there with the Headteacher and caretaker. The Headteacher asked me to come to her office for a chat. She asked me 'what Council Estate do you live in?' 'Are you a single mother'? She said: 'sometimes when children come from single parent families and live on an estate they are a lot rougher. I told her that you are extremely racist in what you are saying. I am in education myself and am educated. I asked why all the Black children were sitting on one table and being given different homework. My son's teacher was White, from outside London and was totally unable to relate to Black children.' (Parent H)

The reluctance that many Black Caribbean parents exhibit in engaging with their children's schools may be as a result of their own negative experiences at school in Britain, or because of incidents such as the above example, which can cause tension and lack of trust.

As we have mentioned earlier, it would seem to be an essential requirement in the recruitment of Headteachers to have experience of living or working in an inner city environment. The Deputy Headteacher of a secondary school in south London, described what motivated him and qualified him to become a teacher in a challenging urban environment:

'I grew up in London, New Cross. The school I went to in 1984 had a mixed intake. My dad was Headteacher of Deptford Park School. There were times that my dad brought children to our home after school because they hadn't been collected. I was always going to be a teacher from 13 years of age. I left school, went to University and started teaching at 22. I have taught for 18 years in inner city schools, I feel comfortable, I feel at home and I make a difference. I do a lot with families, I have a pastoral role. I say to the young Black students, people are judging you, what you are wearing, when you are in a group, it's important how people perceive you.' (Deputy Head Inclusion, School E)

The need for teachers and school staff to be knowledgeable about diversity and the need for training to increase understanding of pupils' cultural backgrounds was identified back in the 1970s:

> '*There are many primary schools containing upwards of 30% Asians and West Indians; most teachers at these schools are White. These teachers have been given very little training that would significantly help them to cope with the problems of teaching Asian and West Indian children. They probably have little intuitive understanding of the home background of these children and find it hard to communicate with the parents. They probably have little idea of how to go about teaching an Asian child who speaks no English, or a West Indian child who speaks in a strong dialect. They are facing an extremely difficult task with very little useful assistance. It is quite clear that there must be an intensive programme, backed by considerable resources, to develop appropriate teaching methods, to give future teachers the appropriate training and to arrange for re-training of present teachers in schools with significant numbers of Asian and West Indian children.*' (Smith, 1997)

It seems extraordinary that in the 21st century, there is still a need to encourage schools and teacher training establishments to provide guidance on Equalities. It cannot be overstated—high-quality teacher professional development is essential to great teaching. Too few teacher training establishments, however, emphasise strengthening student/teacher interactions and/or help raise teacher awareness of their own biases so that they are able to develop higher expectations and change negative behaviours. There are a number of ways to provide teachers with development opportunities, but to be successful, such opportunities must offer adequate time for collaboration and support amongst colleagues.

 An Educational Psychologist we interviewed echoed the need for staff training, whether they are a diverse group or not, she said:

> '*Equalities training should be regularly updated as safeguarding is…. schools should be inspected in terms of equality issues by Ofsted or someone else. Critical conversations which say these are things that could be done better by the school, to encourage reflection.*' (EP A)

The belief that teaching is a vocation is articulated by the Headteacher of another large secondary school in south London:

> '*I have the very old fashioned theory that teaching is a vocation and I believe that everyone who comes into your institution leaves better than when they came in. Wherever you come from you have an equal opportunity to achieve. I won't pander to a group of parents who make a noise. I pander to making sure everyone gets a good deal.*' (Headteacher, School D)

Nonetheless, not everyone shares this view and other inducements to enter the teaching profession, both financial and/or for career development, may result in individuals being recruited to schools, without the requisite understanding of diversity and equality.

It was suggested in some of our interviews that Headteachers should be willing to open up the whole discussion about racism with their staff, as some teachers are fearful of being called racist by parents if they raise issues about a child's behaviour, as an Educational Psychologist pointed out:

> *'Language is important. We need to find ways of discussing it that makes people feel less threatened. It probably comes down to the Headteacher who should say to staff 'what are we going to do about this' and open it up. If you can talk about different groups all the time and put it on the agenda, disability, gender, ethnicity, religion. Our institutions do not recognise that racism still exists and it is deeply entrenched.' (EP A)*

Another Educational Psychologist added her views:

> *'We have come to a point where there is a myth that equality issues are behind us. People say things like 'colour isn't important to me' or 'colour doesn't matter.' People are in denial. You should have a safe place to talk about some of these things.' (EP C)*

The following account amply illustrates the need for equalities training in schools for staff at all levels:

> *'As a senior leader on one occasion, when I went in to observe a class, beforehand the Deputy Headteacher was giving me all this information about the teacher. He then said after about ten minutes observing the teacher 'this is unsatisfactory'. I said 'if we are making a judgement about this teacher, we need to give him longer and we should ask for a lesson plan. The teacher was Black African and his English wasn't perfect as he was not born in this country and this went against him.' (Former Vice Principal, Church Leader B)*

Ultimately, the failure by some Headteachers to address issues of inequality, either by turning a blind eye, or through ignorance or neglect, can have a detrimental impact on the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils and the well-being of staff in schools.

Teachers' Low Expectations

A growing body of research suggests that the expectations a teacher sets for an individual pupil can significantly affect the pupil's performance. Teacher expectations can, for example, be based on pupils' characteristics such as race, ethnicity, and family income level, or indicators of past performance. These expectations can cause teachers to differentiate their behaviour towards individual pupils, such that teachers set lower expectations for some pupils, provide briefer (or no) feedback on pupil errors - and less positive feedback after correct answers - and grant pupils less time to answer questions, or fail to give some pupils the opportunity to answer. All of these teacher behaviours, when repeated day in, day out, over the course of a year or multiple school years, can negatively impact student performance and ultimately perpetuate the achievement gaps that plague the education system. While varied expectations for pupils are rarely developed out of malice, teachers need to be aware of the consequences of different pupils' expectations and understand how to correct them.

There was a mixed response from those we interviewed as to the impact of teachers' expectations on the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils. A teacher who is of Caribbean heritage and is now an Adviser for Behaviour Management recalled that her own teachers had very high expectations of her success:

> 'I was an ILEA child, born and brought up in Islington and went to Barnsbury Girls' School. My partner grew up in Tottenham at the same time as me. He didn't do well at school and didn't go to College or University, whereas I did. High expectations are embedded in you early on – this expectation came from my teachers.' (Parent D)

Nevertheless, she recognised that this is not the case with some teachers:

> 'I remember hearing a Black teacher say 'she doesn't need to go to University'. I said 'hang on, would you say that if the child was called Annabel'? We should make any child feel that they can go to University. For me, I did not expect my child to do anything other than go to University.' (Parent D)

A number of people interviewed spoke about how they were told by teachers that they wouldn't stand a chance of getting to University or having a career:

> 'In the 6th form at parents evening, my mum was told that someone like my sister stood no chance of getting to University. She was extremely clever and went on to get unconditional offers from a number of Universities.' (Parent E)
> 'My father is Black and my mum is White and I was brought up by my dad. Teachers told me I wouldn't get anywhere. It knocked my self-esteem and knocked my belief.' (Deputy Head, School D)

'My friend's child wanted to do A level English but her teacher did not accept that she was capable of achieving this – she went on to get an A*.' (Governor)

'The Careers Adviser said I wouldn't amount to anything and wanted me to go for a low level job but I thought 'no way.' (Parent D)

In 1968, Rosenthal and Jacobson released an influential study, Pygmalion in the Classroom, one of the first to provide overwhelming evidence that teacher expectations can significantly affect student achievement. The researchers gave teachers false information about the IQ results of select students and indicated that those students were on the brink of rapid intellectual growth. The findings were startling. Those students whom teachers expected to perform well showed significantly higher gains in intellectual growth than their classmates at the end of the year.

Teacher training may be the ideal time to identify and weed out those teachers whose perceptions of pupils' ability keep them from providing an equitable and highly demanding education for all. To do this, schools and colleges must first be knowledgeable about the potential impact of teacher expectations on pupil achievement and know how to identify inflexible perceptions among student teachers. Colleges of education can educate student teachers about the risks of inequitable expectations, offer training in recognising and amending negative attitudes based on pupils' backgrounds, and counsel those who are not appropriate teaching candidates to other professions.

When we asked our focus group participants if they felt that low teacher expectations were a contributory factory in the underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils, there was some variation in experience depending where in England, they had attended school. For example, a parent who grew up in West Yorkshire in the 1980s noted:

'I did not feel I was treated any differently as a Black pupil because of my race. There was no racism from teachers it was mainly from pupils in contrast to London schools where there is institutional racism. I think people in London schools have a certain expectation of Black pupils as being less clever and under-achieving.' (Parent C)

This view was born out by a teacher who recalled her own experience of racism and her teachers' low expectations of Black students at a secondary school in Hammersmith in the 1970s:

'Racism was overt from teachers and pupils. We faced racism every day. Africans called us 'baby slaves' or 'sons of slaves'. Although I had won an 11+ prize I was taken out of the maths group because we were deemed not to be able to do maths, even though we were in the top class. I wasn't allowed to go into the 6th form. I wanted to do journalism, but my teacher told my

parents that he didn't think I would be successful in it. They were gullible and didn't know the system. In my class there were two Black girls, in the lower sets they were dominated by Black students. These pupils have gone on to be very successful in later life. My teacher told my parents I had to do typewriting and office studies and I was just broken by then. I was young and didn't know how to manoeuvre through the obstacles in my way. Mum was defensive of us even though she didn't know the system.' (Teacher, School F)

A parent, whose parents came from St. Vincent and Anguilla, who is now working for a local authority, shared his experience of growing up in LA2 in the 1980s where he attended a one-form entry school with a mixed intake of working class pupils:

'There were a few Indian, Pakistani and Somalian pupils. It was not a very good school. Some of my classmates were very bad and by the time I was 8, 9 and ten years the good children were seated on one table and the rest were over there. Our class teacher had given up. She didn't want to take us on school journey so the Headteacher had to do it….. Education wasn't a big deal for many people who went to our school. I had friends who came out barely able to read or write. I had a friend who asked me how to spell 'the' and he was about ten years old! My school experience at primary and secondary schools in the 1980s and 1990s was poor. Anything I learned wasn't from the school. Anyone who achieved anything they had got it from home with parents pushing them.' (Parent A)

A SENCo who grew up in an army school and attended many different schools in Germany and England stated:

'I was usually the only Black girl with two Black parents. School didn't have high expectations of me and they almost put me in a special school at age seven years. I woke up at that point and said 'No, I am not doing that!' (SENCo, School G)

A Black Caribbean teacher-governor in a boarding school in Sussex remarked on the low expectations of supply agency staff who do not expect the Black pupils at his school to be polite:

'They do not expect much of the pupils. Some staff, maybe through fear, do not challenge negative behavior.' (Teacher/Governor, School H)

'I do a radio programme and the person I was interviewing complained about the low expectation that teachers have of children in primary schools – even children as young as 5, 6 and 7 years. The problem starts at primary school.' (Governor, School H)

He continued…

> 'You need a staff team who understand the children and expect a lot of them.
> High expectations – you should believe in them.' (Governor, School H)

In some schools pupils faced different expectations according to the ethnicity of their
teachers as the following comment by a parent illustrated:

> 'In Year 2 my son had a Black, female teacher. She just had high expectations
> for all the children and he blossomed for the next two years. Then in Year 4
> he had a White teacher who was disinterested.' (Parent H)

A former Vice Principal of a secondary school in London who was born in Brixton and
whose parents were from Guyana added his own experiences of teachers' low
expectations of Black Caribbean pupils at his grammar school in Battersea in the 1980s:

> 'I was amongst the first generation born and educated in this country. Even
> though I was able to get into grammar school, I remember one incident stood
> out. I think it affects visible minorities. We had a teacher from Rhodesia who
> commented to a White pupil 'People like you should not misbehave because
> one day you will be leading this country'. From this I gathered I would not be
> running the country! This is a reason why people get discouraged, they have
> anglicised names, speak with an English accent and you can see this in
> operation at interview, they think you are going to be White – from then on
> you are judged by the colour of your tan.' (Former Vice Principal, Church
> leader B)

The Black Caribbean parents we interviewed compared expectations of teachers in their
children's schools unfavourably with their own experiences of attending schools in the
Caribbean. For example, a Trinidadian parent who is a Senior CAMHS Commissioner in a
London borough explained how teachers' expectations are lower here for her own
children:

> 'My son was in Year 2 doing some spellings. I came from a school where you
> learned tables by rote. We were learning ten spellings with him. He got to a
> tricky word and he said 'Mum, I don't need to get it right because I will get a
> sticker if I get one or two wrong'. In his mind that was good enough. That got
> me worried because back home in Trinidad you'd never do that you would be
> aiming to get 10/10!' (Parent E)

Despite her children attending what are regarded as the best schools in their local
authority, LA3, she arranged for privation tuition for them both:

> *'I got a tutor for my daughter in Year 5 and my son has had a tutor from Year 3, for English, Maths and reasoning. He is a child who has to be told every day to do his homework. He plays football but my thing is you need to study. When we talk about careers he says he wants to be a footballer. I say, 'Fine, but you need to be able to read to be able to check your contract'! I suggested he become a Sports Doctor! Back in Trinidad I do not think I would have to struggle so much to get his homework done because they would push him more at school.' (Parent E)*

A parent governor, who was born in the UK but sent to live with an aunt in Jamaica when she was nine years old, felt she was better off having being educated in Jamaica:

> *'If I am thinking of myself at school in LA 1 in 1969 and in the early 70s, I went to live in Jamaica when I was nine years old. My mother died and my father couldn't cope with four children so my sister and I were sent over to Jamaica to live with an aunt. I was living in a small rural place. I adapted. Looking back as an adult, I wasn't properly prepared. My aunt had been widowed after 25 years of marriage and she also fostered children. I was just one of the family and you just get on. I stayed in Jamaica until after my A levels and came back to the UK for my tertiary education, to my father and siblings. Looking at what I saw among Black Caribbean in the UK, their aspirations seemed low, people didn't think they were able or capable. In Jamaica if you want to be Prime Minister then you could, whereas here there was a ceiling. In Jamaica I developed confidence and a 'can do' attitude because expectations were high. Here is a stark contrast as my cousins didn't even think of going to University.'*
> *(Parent Governor, School B)*

A father, who was educated in Jamaica, contrasted his own schooling in Jamaica (where he said his teachers had the highest expectations of pupils) with his own experience with his son at school in London:

> *'The first time I realised how ingrained these low expectations are here with teachers, I had to face this with my own son. He had an operation when he was three years old and this affected his attendance at school. He had 50% attendance because he wasn't well and the school was contemplating taking legal action. An intervention was made but as this played itself out so many things came out. At secondary school, although my son was only attending 50% of the time he was still getting 'A's and 'B's but the school suggested that my son attend a school for excluded pupils. Why on earth would you put a child like this with excluded pupils?' (1st generation parent from Jamaica).*

'Looking at the situation here in the UK I wonder could it be the subtle messages that pupils get here that cause them to give up? I have considered this. I remember an incident at my high school with a teacher who insulted us by saying 'you cannot do it'. I took her to task by getting 100% - she didn't last long at the school either. I think probably there was such a strength of feeling in our class that we were expecting to learn, to do well, that if someone came in who didn't expect us to do well, and wasn't up to the mark themselves, then we wouldn't take it.' (1st generation parent from Jamaica)

'By the time I found out about the issue it was too late for me to do anything about it. Low expectations and poor communication failed my child. I believe low expectations are institutional.' (Church Leader A and 1st generation parent from Jamaica)

'In primary schools they broaden children's horizons but they shut them down in secondary schools. If we as teachers spoke more in every lesson, that we explain the purpose of what we are doing, then pupils will understand. When you teach to examinations you miss the point. By Year 10, they should have an idea of what they are going to do. At least have it as 'I want to go to China'. If their horizons were opened up there might not be such a situation in education. There are teachers who have worked in industry before going into teaching and they do this. It's a good thing to share this with pupils and they can relate to the person in front of them – kids love to hear about my interesting life.'
(Teacher and Parent, School F)

Teachers need greater knowledge about pupils of Black Caribbean heritage. They need to know the history of Britain's involvement in the slave trade, the circumstances which led up to the arrival of people from the Caribbean to the UK and what challenges they faced, such as racism, difficulty in finding housing and employment and which many continue to face today.

Teachers who are keen to work in schools in inner city areas should receive higher remuneration and housing to retain their services, as a highly professional, experienced staff team is essential for the stability of pupils whose lives are otherwise chaotic.

'You need to have a very good team, experienced professionals. Schools simply cannot cope with the challenges pupils are facing.' (Educational Psychologist)

A school governor summed up the views of many:

'You need a staff team who understand the children and expect a lot of them. High expectations, you should believe in them.'

Curriculum Relevance and Barriers

In England, it has always been possible to secure a good education, through top comprehensive schools, grammar schools or independent schools. But it is socially disadvantaged pupils who have historically missed out, and found their life chances limited by the quality of education they received. Research by the Sutton Trust in 2014 showed that pupils eligible for free school meals who scored in the top 10% nationally at the end of primary school were significantly less likely to be entered for the EBacc than their wealthier peers who achieved the same level aged 11. Disadvantaged pupils, the very children most in need of an academic, knowledge-based curriculum were the least likely to be given the opportunity to benefit from it. A core academic curriculum should not be the preserve of a social elite, but instead the entitlement of every single child. Though there are some inequalities which schools cannot address, the unequal distribution of intellectual and cultural capital is one that they can. There are those who accuse the traditional, academic curriculum of being a relic of the 19th century, a 'factory model' of schooling, which squanders pupil creativity.

Daniel Willingham, professor of cognitive science at the University of Virginia, with reference to robust scientific evidence, contends that 'thinking skills' that are prized by schools and employers, problem-solving, creativity, inventiveness, are dependent upon considerable background knowledge. Thus, he makes the case for a knowledge-based curriculum.

In our discussions with 1st, 2nd and third generation Black Caribbean heritage persons, the quality of the education received in Britain and the relevance of the curriculum to themselves and their children was the subject of much concern.

A secondary school teacher who was born in Trinidad & Tobago but came to the UK in 1964 when she was six years old and went to primary and secondary schools in Hammersmith reflected on how she felt 'disconnected' from the curriculum:

> *'In the classroom I always wanted to know more about my culture and background. Once we had to do a project about food and I wanted to do food from Trinidad and the teacher marked me down. She said 'you live in England so why do you want to do a project on Trinidad?' It was ridiculous what she gave me for my project. In the history class we were attacked by a teacher who was later dismissed. We were doing history and I asked if we could do African or Black history. I said 'I don't know where I come from and I want to know about my part of the world'. He told me off and said 'what history am I talking about?' As I walked out of the class he slammed the door and it hit me in the chest, so a White girl jumped in and grabbed him. He picked up a stick and he hit her and split her cheek. He was dismissed.' (Teacher, School D)*

'I grew up in Jamaica. At five years of age I went to basic school on the grounds of the Baptist Church and I was already reading and writing because my mum had taught me. I learned Psalms 23, 1 and 100 by heart. My mum was an avid reader and was well-read. This helped inspire me to read. After that I went to a primary school one or two miles away. I had to walk to school. There was another primary school ten miles away that had a large number of pupils who pass the Common Entrance exams. So from ten years I travelled 10 miles to this school every day...' He goes on *'I passed the Common Entrance and went to a grammar school in the 1970s...' 'We had some fantastic teachers... it was their command of the subject but also their sense of fun. They would bring into the class engagement; we felt part of the place'. …..'I achieved eight GCE's and studied Chemistry and Maths at A Level. The teachers were inspiring. The Deputy Head who was Jamaican had been to Oxford and the Sri Lankan Latin teacher had been to Cambridge. He inspired me in a broad sense because he knew so much, for example, we were in a Latin lesson about war horses and he would tell us about poetry – he would read it with a beat.'* (1st generation Jamaican father)

Parents who were well educated in the Caribbean find they have to work hard to instill high aspirations in their children, whereas this was not the case in their experience of school in the Caribbean:

'The thing I realise about my kids is they push the boundaries. He doesn't want to look in the dictionary for a word; he wants to ask 'Siri'. He will check words on the computer. Now he is not interested in paper. In my family the plan is you go to a good school – in fact most of us went to St. Joseph's Convent an excellent RC school in Trinidad. Then you are expected to go to University and then you do a Master's Degree.' (Parent C).

Frustrations were expressed by teachers and governors at the constant changes to the curriculum in the UK over the last two decades and all the initiatives that have come and gone with successive changes of Education Minister:

'There is not a consistent approach to initiatives. Something starts well and it gets taken away. Then someone else gets a bright idea and then it gets taken away. There are shadows of vain hope and the money gets taken away – there is no consistent approach to education'. (Teacher-governor, School S)

A teacher who had been involved in a successful initiative to tackle the underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils which abruptly ended gave an example of the lack of continuity schools face when targeting work with children and families:

'There were twelve teachers and schools could bid for one of these teachers for a year. Raising boys' achievement, leadership, getting parents involved. I think it worked well. I was able to work with parents, target individual pupils and develop resources. Parents had to be willing and able to come. You would get some but not all. Reading a book with their child and attend various workshops for parents. When the money ran out it ended.' (Teacher, RA, School M)

'The new curriculum hasn't had sufficient time to impact. It has impacted a lot of children in Years 3 and 6 but it is too soon to tell.' (Retired Headteacher/governor, School Z)

'The government do not make it easier by constantly changing things, the curriculum, assessment etc. It makes it difficult to recruit staff.' (Governor, School S)

'The issue is that they change the curriculum too often. The school needs to take a panoramic view of what they are doing for these pupils.' (Retired Headteacher/ governor, School Z)

The content and narrowness of the curriculum in the 1980s and 90s was criticised by some of those 2nd generation Black Caribbean heritage persons interviewed:

'If we are looking at education and race in inner cities, sometimes the curriculum felt narrow. When you are at University you meet people who have a much greater understanding of a subject. That can be a problem for ethnic minorities.'

It has been suggested by some of those involved in our focus group interviews that the history of the enslavement of Africans who were sent to the New World has not been well-taught in our schools. This has left pupils who are descendants of those who came decades ago from the Caribbean confused about their own identity as British citizens of Caribbean heritage. There is a need for an honest re-appraisal of the history curriculum which would enable all pupils to see the connections between people from the Caribbean and Britain.

Those we interviewed were not always positive about the content of Black History Month topics:

'Black History Month is a joke. Children do not relate to it in any way. There are no role models that they relate to, especially if they are out of context. We do it because of Ofsted. We should have local role models in LA 1, such as Olive Morris – it puts it in context.' (Learning Mentor)

There were questions from some of those interviewed as to why schools seem to focus on slavery during Black History Month:

> 'The mental state of mind amongst many youths (which unfortunately is being reinforced in schools today) is the perception that Whites are better than the Blacks. I remember once I went into the secondary school and when I asked about the curriculum I was told that history would include slavery and some other issues. I asked why is it always slavery that they are taught? Why isn't African history (which is rich) emphasised, so that children can have a balanced input? The Black child is thinking of himself as a victim and it reinforces White supremacy.' (Teacher and Parent C)

> 'Black History Month – I always raise this with schools; I ask them what they do. They said 'I am doing slavery' and I said I don't want this, I want something with positive role models. I said you don't have any Black positive role models here! So they employed a Black teacher in my child's class. I said they need Black teachers in other classes too.' (Parent I)

An Educational Psychologist felt that the lack of representation of Black Caribbean pupils in the curriculum resources currently found in classrooms was a hindrance to learning to read. She suggested that books and resources in classrooms needed to be audited to check for diversity and SATs papers and teaching materials need to reflect different communities. (EP D)

> 'If you are a poor reader, it could be the choice of books on the book shelf. Generally they show White children, or have fairies, or Black Caribbean heritage pupils do not see themselves represented'. (EP E)

Lack of Diversity in the Workforce

There is lack of diversity in the school workforce. The evidence from Table 7 shows that in England, 86% of teachers, 91% of the leadership, 87% of Teaching assistants and all school staff are White British. This national data shows a worrying picture and raises a question about the chances of headship by BME teachers and an issue of representation for students. It limits an understanding of diversity. In England schools have not yet recruited teaching and non-teaching staff that reflect the language, cultures and ethnic background of the pupils in the schools.

Diversity not only involves how people perceive themselves, but how they perceive others. Those perceptions affect their interactions. For a wide assortment of employees to function effectively as an organisation, school leaders need to deal effectively with issues such as communication, adaptability and change. Employees from diverse backgrounds bring individual talents and experiences in suggesting ideas that are flexible in adapting to the demands of the communities they serve. Perceptual, cultural and

language barriers need to be overcome and there will always be employees who will refuse to accept the fact that the social and cultural makeup of their school is changing.

Table 7. Percentage of Black Caribbean and BME Staff in Schools in England

	Black Caribbean	White British	Ethnic Minorities
Leadership	0.8%	91.3%	8.6%
Teachers	1.0%	86.3%	13.6%
Teaching Assistants	1.5%	86.4%	13.5%
Other staff	1.4%	86.5%	13.4%
All school staff	1.4%	86.5%	13.4%
School population	1.2%	69%	31%

Source: DfE School Workforce Census 2016

During the 1980s the Inner London Education Authority actively promoted an 'Equalities' agenda and efforts were made to recruit more Black Caribbean teachers and school staff. A retired (first generation) Headteacher, originally from Guyana, described that being a Black Headteacher herself was a positive factor in Caribbean heritage pupils' achievement:

> *'In 1990 I became Headteacher of a Catholic school in LA11 and stayed for twelve years. Children who have come back to visit me, all of them Black African, Caribbean and White, they have gone on to University. Their parents told me that we built a solid foundation in their children's lives. Two former parents I still see tell me I have been a great role model to their children. I got lovely letters from White and Black parents telling me how much they valued my work with the children. Having more Black Headteachers is critical for the success of Black Caribbean and African pupils in schools. It's not about appointing Black Headteachers because of their colour though; you need Black Headteachers who are equally good but with a good understanding of the local context in which the school is operating. Some Headteachers come from suburban and rural areas and they really don't understand what it is like to work in a multi-cultural environment.' (Retired Headteacher, School Z)*

She continued:

> *'In my school I had teachers from Sierra Leone, Jamaica and an Irish male teacher. It really did pull everyone together. It should reflect the makeup of the local community.' (Retired former Headteacher, School Z)*

In 1986 just after the second Brixton riots, there was recognition that more Black people were needed in the education system. A former Vice Principal recalled his experience:

'It was interesting because all the Initial Teacher Training Colleges had to come together to deal with issues of race and colour. We have 400-500 trainee teachers. One person commented: 'it's easier if you are a Black and disabled person to get a job than if you are a 'normal' person! The whole room went quiet. If she is now a Secondary School teacher, taking 150 pupils per year and that's her perspective, that the child in front of her is not 'normal', it begs the question what effect will she have on these children? It is important to understand the people and the context in which you are working.' (Former Vice Principal, Church leader B)

Some of the Headteachers we spoke to wanted to recruit more Black teachers but found there were very few people of colour entering the teaching profession.

'I am a White Headteacher and most of the teachers are White. We only have one Black teacher but we have a mixed staff. Although I interview teachers for LA 1 Schools, I have not interviewed any Black teachers and there are fewer Black Headteachers now in LA 1 than there used to be.' (Headteacher, School A)

We asked this one Black Caribbean heritage teacher at the school why there are so few Black teachers now:

'I have always been curious to find out why many of my friends do not want to be teachers. It is a lot of stress being a teacher. There were not many Black Caribbean people going through the system on my course.'
(Teacher, School A)

In answer to the question as to whether there was any correlation between the lack of interest in becoming a teacher and their own negative experiences at school, she replied:

'That negativity could be expressed at home and it could put people off becoming a teacher.' (School A)

Another teacher commented:

'Sometimes I wonder whether Black staff want to get to senior leadership. My experience shows me that in all the schools I have worked in there is not Black representation in the SLT. We have Black administration.' (Teacher, School A)

The question of teacher recruitment and retention by BME groups was addressed in a briefing paper by the Runnymede Trust:

'Worryingly, whilst more likely to stay in the geographical area in which they are currently teaching, teachers from Black and minority ethnic communities reported that they were less likely to stay in teaching than their White counterparts – raising questions about the effectiveness of retention strategies and career progression for these groups. In terms of career progression, the IPSE survey found that teachers from Black and minority ethnic communities were more likely to be on main scale grades rather than having positions of greater responsibility. This was especially true when considering the careers of male teachers. While only 31.1% of White male teachers were found to be on the basic main grade, 46.3% of Asian male and 43.8% of Black males were in this lowest category. Taking into account experience (given the evidence that many teachers from Black and minority ethnic communities are likely to qualify at a later age), of the teachers surveyed who qualified before 1986, 10.7% of the White teaching population are Headteachers. Only 4.9% of Asian and 3.9% of Black teachers are heads. Small-scale qualitative research into the experiences of teachers from Black and minority ethnic communities suggests some of the difficulties that they face. They include · subject stereotyping · promotion only available through specialist routes that do not lead to headship · expectation that they will 'deal' with parents or children from minority ethnic backgrounds · expected to legitimise school decisions that they expect may have discriminatory origins · perception of teaching as low status among certain minority ethnic communities and encountering racism during training/teaching practice.'
(The Runnymede Trust)

There were instances where those interviewed expressed amazement when as pupils they saw Black teachers in schools. What is concerning is that this surprise was not just expressed when it happened to those at school five decades ago but by others with more recent experience of schools:

'I went to a Roman Catholic primary school in Clapham in the 1960s/1970s where Black pupils were in the minority. At one time we had a couple of Black teachers and I was amazed that we had qualified teachers who were Black!'
(Parent C)

'I remember a Black teacher called Miss Pink and I thought 'wow a Black teacher'. Teachers were mainly Asians.' (SENCo, School P)

A former Vice Principal of a secondary school in LA1 contends that there are so few Black Headteachers now because:

'White people struggle with Black leadership. For me a sign of success would be to see a Black Headteacher leading an all-White school. A lot of people struggle under Black leadership, but Black-led Churches are very successful at

developing leadership. I went to a senior leadership training programme and we had to do a 'goldfish bowl' exercise. I was one of 28 candidates at NCSL. I noted that when we were working together and it came to my time to lead, I could literally feel people pulling against me. We had to do a critical incident exercise and the solution I offered was rejected. The next day there was another critical incident. The observing Headteachers said 'you allowed people to talk over you'. These were two observers who were of the same race as the group. A year later, in a similar situation, someone started speaking over me and I said 'excuse me, I was speaking'. The observers said: 'we saw the way you laid into Tory boy', it seems you are damned if you do and you are damned if you don't. This is just an anecdotal story of what people face day in day out. When you are working as part of a group this is a problem. Interestingly, I was taking part in a diversity programme at the Institute of Education, all involved were people of colour taking part in another goldfish bowl exercise. The observers said 'your group won by a country mile'. The thing I saw, it was the same exercise but in this one you had people who were not pulling against you and I saw how effective we were.' (Former Vice Principal, Church Leader B)

The lack of expectation that Black people can hold senior positions in school is illustrated in the following comment by a Deputy Head in a LA1 primary school:

'I am the Deputy Head but, for example, I may be walking down the stairs with someone who is White (it doesn't matter if they are a TA) and a visitor comes into the school, they will ask the White person for directions. It doesn't matter whether the visitor is Black or White. I tend to ignore it. They are not ready to accept a Black person as a leader. We are getting there slowly; we have Black politicians in this country. I do not know what we can do to change racism.' (Deputy Head, School B)

The Deputy Headteacher of a large secondary school feels that it is important for parents and the community to have a Black Headteacher, he commented:

'I have not questioned it before. If parents of any background have a trust in the school then it shouldn't be a problem.' (Deputy Head, School D).

As a White Deputy Head we asked whether he thought White people might find it difficult to work under Black leadership and he replied:

'I have seen racism towards the Black staff, particularly to those who have to deliver hard messages. If that were told to White families or it were given by me it might be difficult. I think it is important that the makeup of the leadership team reflects the area. We have Black members of the senior

leadership team and in terms of gender and ethnicity there is a good mix across our faculties.' (Deputy Head, School E)

In one instance, a Jamaican contributor queried why there hadn't been a strategy to recruit teachers from the Caribbean to raise the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils in Britain, such as that adopted by Tower Hamlets and its Bangladeshi community.

'A Harvard study on Tower Hamlets showed that the Local Authority recruited Bangladeshi teachers and this made a huge difference to the achievement of Bangladeshi pupils.'

A White Headteacher wondered why there appeared to have been so little done in the past to teach schools about the cultural context of people from the Caribbean who were invited to come to the UK to work in hospitals and London Transport:

'In the late 1990s when there was a large influx of people from Madeira in LA1, strenuous efforts were made to teach schools about the context in which they lived in Madeira, from rural farming communities. The Portuguese Embassy was involved and resources made available to support schools to raise the achievement of pupils. As a result Portuguese speaking pupils made dramatic progress. For Black Caribbean people, this needed to happen fifty years ago.' (Headteacher, School A)

Those interviewed were generally of the opinion that there was a need to have more Black teachers in schools:

'It's about identity. If you put a young White female teacher from outside London in a class with secondary Black Caribbean boys they know that they can wind her up and she'll easily leave within a couple of weeks. If you put a mature Black teacher in there, it will be different.' (Parent H)

A Teacher/Governor took his own children to schools abroad and thought that Black parents ought to do the same:

'Why not let them go abroad, what about schools run by Black people for Black people? I see a lack of belief in that child's ability in some people. When my daughter came back to school in the Secondary state sector in this country she said, 'This school knows nothing about competition'. Although it doesn't have to be Black staff – just staff who believe in the children. If you want to make a difference be a Black Headteacher in an all-White school. They need the ability to connect with the children in front of them. I teach children I don't teach a subject. If you focus on the subject you have lost the plot already.' (Teacher/Governor, School H)

Lack of Targeted Support

There was a general feeling amongst staff, governors and parents that little support was targeted at Black Caribbean pupils in schools. There are no national strategies or little targeted support to tackle low attainment. Until the mid-sixties central government had no policy on the education of children from Commonwealth countries. The main concerns were to teach English to non-English speakers and to disperse immigrant pupils, partly to prevent individual schools having to cope with large numbers of them and partly to facilitate their assimilation into British society. Birmingham LEA and the Inner London Education Authority having large numbers of immigrant children rejected this dispersal policy.

Section 11 of the 1966 Local Government Act made funds available '*to help meet the special needs of a significant number of people of Commonwealth origin with language or customs which differ from the rest of the community*'. This included funding to support the education of EAL and bilingual learners. In general, support for early stage bilingual learners took place in specialist and separate Language Centres or through withdrawal from mainstream classes in schools. Specialist language support was subsequently provided in schools and usually in the context of mainstream classes from the mid-1980s onwards.

Many LEAs and schools began to develop their own policies and practices, mainly concerned with the teaching of English as a second language. ILEA in particular achieved a considerable reputation for its equal opportunities policies.

Towards the end of the 1980s 'assimilation' was replaced by 'integration' in policy documents which began to refer to diversity, tolerance and equal opportunity and attempted 'to give at least some recognition in schools to the backgrounds of ethnic minority children.' (Swann 1985:191)

Consequently there was a mixed picture of how schools and LEAs used funding to target support for Black Caribbean pupils from the 1960s until funding was eventually withdrawn in 1999 and replaced by the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant. This grant was distributed to local authorities on a formula basis relating to the number of EAL learners and the number of pupils from 'underachieving' minority ethnic groups in local authorities, combined with a free school meals indicator. The EMA grant was intended '*to narrow achievement gaps for those minority ethnic groups who are underachieving and to meet particular needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language.*'

The generations of Black Caribbean people we interviewed who attended school in Britain in the 1960s, 70s and 80s did not appear to have had any specific targeted support that they could recall:

*'I know people who went to……. (*A large secondary school in LA2) *in the 1980s and they couldn't do the basics. I remember a teacher in a maths lesson asking us to answer a question on the board and we didn't have a clue! A boy who had come from another primary school came up to the board and was able to do it and I thought 'hello'! I came out of …………. Just before I was 16 years. When I went to Southgate College there were some good teachers there and they were able to explain things clearly and I found it easy. My experience at primary and secondary schools in the 1980s and early 1990s was poor. Anything I learned wasn't from school. Anyone who achieved anything they got it from home, with parents pushing them.'* (Parent A)

'I went to a Roman Catholic primary school in Clapham in the 1960s/70s where Black pupils were in the minority. My mum said to me 'at the end of the day, you have got to achieve much more than Kate (a White, English girl), she will get a job and you wouldn't, so you have to study'. At school I just existed in the system and didn't learn much. I was in the second lowest set in the school and it was my mum who pushed me with spelling and reading but it was inconsistent. What I notice about myself is that all my friends were Black not White. We felt left out.'…. 'I always felt stupid at school – I didn't understand and I was too scared to put my hand up and ask any questions.' (Parent C)

During this period 'supplementary schools' began to appear as parents of children from the Caribbean became concerned that their children were not achieving as well as they expected in the UK education system. The supplementary schools, which were run by community groups and parents on a voluntary basis, were also designed to combat the racism that children experienced growing up in British society.

In terms of regarding the supplementary schools as part of the process of adaptation of the West Indian community to a hierarchical school structure, it is interesting to note the contribution of Austin and Garrison to this discussion in *The Times Educational Supplement* in 1978, they offered the analysis that the West Indian community was responding to educational failure, high unemployment and both local and central government indifference to the plight of urban Black youth. They wrote:

'The community has responded by starting its own supplementary schools, to provide the skills it considers lacking in formal educational institutions. These supplementary schools have developed professionalism and expertise. Basically, they were manned by interested parents. Eventually Black teachers and other professionals in education took over their running and related what was being taught to that taught in the conventional schools. They also expanded the basic curricula to include African and Caribbean history, creative writing and Black literature.' (Austin & Garrison, TES 1978)

It is telling that supplementary schools still exist today almost five decades later and the same concerns about Black Caribbean pupils' underachievement have not gone away. There have been initiatives from time to time to try to address this issue, for example The Raising Achievement Project which targeted Black Caribbean pupils in LA1 schools in 2006 and provided much needed support for children and families but this intervention ground to a halt when the funding ran out. A retired Headteacher from LA1 who is now a governor commented:

> 'Most good schools have intervention groups for their pupils. No good school would ignore the fact that some of their children are failing to make progress.' (Retired Headteacher, School Z)

Nevertheless, the mother of a child who was in a Year 1 class in 2008 in a school (recognised as outstanding by Ofsted) complained that:

> 'all the Black children were on the same table in my son's class.'

A number of those interviewed mourned the loss of the Sure Start programme:

> 'The government should reintroduce Sure Start and target Black Caribbean pupils from age one and there should be free nursery education.' (Governor, School K)

> 'If we are looking at five year olds and you do have to look at different cohorts, I think some schools have been struggling to meet learning needs. It coincides with the increased formalisation in EYFS. A lot of these children haven't had access to Sure Start. I think there is a rising rate of autism in children; it's possibly because of early identification or because of better medical care, more premature babies and changes in environment. You are seeing children with more complex needs and profiles.' (EP D)

> 'I used to work in Sure Start and I still have parents who telephone me. It was like a home from home for young parents and teenage mums as they were children themselves.' (Parent D).

> 'You can have all the support in school you need but if you are not going to make an equivalent intervention in the home through Sure Start then it won't work. The problem is not just in the home but there are housing issues, mental health issues.' (Governor, School K)

> 'If you could have literacy classes for parents, providing you didn't make them feel embarrassed about learning it would have a huge benefit, especially for Jamaican parents from rural areas. I am working for an organisation that thinks we do not have to worry about equal opportunity because we are all integrated now! It's all about money.' (Governor, School R)

Negative Peer Pressure

Most academics recognise that a child's peers can have an impact on achievement, but the extent of that effect has been an open question. Further, few studies have focused on quantifying the academic outcomes associated with the peer effect.

Children are socialised by the people with whom they associate; through daily interaction over the course of many years, acceptable social customs are taught and fostered. Other children as well as adults can have a great impact on a broad range of issues in the child's life, including achievement in school. Understanding the way social interactions affect academic achievement is important for parents, educators, and policymakers.

Persons of Black Caribbean heritage we interviewed had much to say about the negative influences around Black Caribbean pupils and the pressure they experience to conform to them. A mother, who is also a teacher wanted to move her son out of the inner-city school that he attended, to prevent him being drawn into the gang and drug culture in their area:

> 'When my son was in Year 10, I put my flat on the market with a view to moving out of London to get him into a decent school but I couldn't sell it. He was telling me all kinds of stories, growing weed in cupboards, some girls selling their bodies, being rude to teachers who were new and weak. He wasn't in detentions, he was the gentle giant. There were no expectations of this set. The difference when I was at school was that we could be involved in all kinds of sports but not at this school, they did nothing. I had to take him outside school.'….. 'I arranged for him to get work experience at King's College during his summer holiday and as a result of that he got on to an apprenticeship. He loved it after two days he wanted to stay. I didn't want him as a Black boy to be hanging around during the holidays. You cannot blame it solely on the teachers and the school. The behaviour in school can be awful. The association with groups is one thing and the lack of control in the classroom.'…. 'From Year 7 they were all smoking weed and they were growing it. They were listening to Rap music which is negative and there were negative influences outside the school. To this day I take him to Sports Clubs. It seems everyone is smoking weed now; it is skunk. People on the Council Estates are growing it and dealing it into primary and secondary schools. They go into the park and smoke and drink, that's why I take my son out.' (Parent H)

The Senior CAMHS Commissioner we interviewed echoed the problem of drugs:

> 'I think drugs are an issue. They have an idea that they do not expect anything, they cannot see a future. A lot of young men end up being influenced by the negative behaviour of friends. There is a perception by

schools and professionals that because these boys are big and tall that they are scary. Psychosis can be helped. People can recover. We have to change the perception of psychosis. People tend to write them off. There is probably a misunderstanding about what young Black kids need. Sometimes they are torn between home and society in terms of what is acceptable – on how you fit in. Everyone wants to belong. Professionals may have the wrong perceptions about the potential threat of the young Black men who are loud and laughing. There is general misunderstanding among social workers and professionals in the Criminal Justice System.' (Parent E)

'The major influence by peers, older brothers and sisters is massive, and so are the media and social network sites for both boys and girls. Girls are more aspirational than boys for the future. It's not that they don't care. Some find it difficult. We have got groups of children who feed off each other and they are aspiring to go to college – they say they want to be good people, doing the right thing. More girls than boys.' (Headteacher, School E)

'Angell town is renowned for its unsociability. Gangs – boys from Year 5 upwards get involved. Sometimes older brothers and sisters play out without any parental supervision.' (Governor, School S)

'The problem is gangs, older siblings who influence. They see that as more important than a good education. It's more cool to be in a gang than to be educated.' (Governor, School S)

A Headteacher gave an example of the influence older siblings and their peers can have on very young children:

'There is a five year old child in Reception, who is collected by an older brother. He comes into school with chicken and chips, with his friend, and is rude to everyone. Mum doesn't come in; she drops the five year old at the gate in the morning.' (Headteacher, School A)

'There is a 'Yardie' perception. They have a certain idea of things that you ought to be like, or sound like. Because the home lacks influence the street takes over.' (Behaviour Mentor, School A)

'We as teachers say 'it's not cool to be dumb'. There is one particular pupil who went to Jamaica for three weeks and he has picked up the accent. Maybe he sees gang culture and uses this as being attractive because he is not doing so well. Having said that there are Jamaican heritage pupils who are really smart and are proud to be clever. We need to do more to promote this. I think we have lost kids already that's why they joined gangs.' (Teacher, School A)

Cultural Clashes and Behaviour

Cultural tendencies impact the way pupils participate in education. Teachers who lack knowledge about cultural differences may cause them to inaccurately judge students from some cultures as poorly behaved or disrespectful. In addition, because cultural differences are hard to perceive, students may find themselves reprimanded by teachers but fail to understand what they did that caused concern.

In her book published in 1981 entitled 'The Education of the Black Child in Britain', the author, Maureen Stone wrote:

> *'It is well known that in British schools, West Indian children are seen as boisterous, hyperactive children who present teachers with particular problems of classroom management and discipline. Many West Indian teachers and parents regard the schools themselves as being responsible for this state of affairs. They see English schools as being too 'free and easy' and offering children no real discipline. I was therefore interested to see how teachers and others in supplementary schools managed the problems of maintaining order and discipline amongst the children who attended them. I should have realised that these problems would hardly exist in a voluntary project which children attended either because they wanted to or to please their parents. It may be that trouble-makers just do not go to Saturday schools, but during all the time I spent observing these projects I did not see any boisterous or hyperactive behaviour; in fact, the children were unnaturally 'good', sitting quietly working alone or in small groups or attached to an adult. Teachers said they had no problems with discipline; children knew they came to work and they worked.'*

A former Vice-Principal spoke about how a Church-based supplementary school led him into a career in teaching:

> *'Being involved with a supplementary school, it highlighted the achievements of people who looked and sounded like me. At the supplementary school one of the teachers there suggested I go into teaching because I was good at it.'* (Former Vice-Principal, Church leader B)

He reflected on the importance of understanding the people and the context in which teachers are working:

> *'I have seen far too often what is inside a teacher by the way they discipline children. Why is it if it's a Black child who is underperforming, or has behavioural issues that they are excluded? Children will rise to your expectations and perceptions of them. Why is it children will behave for some teachers but not for others? Is it the way they are treated and responded to? Children need to feel loved by their teacher. There was a teacher at St. M's*

and he would say 'I am going to knock your block off' but they loved him because they knew he was joking. Sometimes children would disobey other teachers but they would do it for me. What children pick up is whether a teacher likes them and expects them to behave. One teacher in a class with just one White child said 'I want to send someone responsible on an errand' and he chose the one White child. Empathy is really important; you cannot be dispassionate towards children. What is inside of you, children will pick it up. How you encouraged, how you supported them.' (Former Vice Principal, Church Leader B)

'I wonder whether teachers have enough insight or understanding of the behaviour they see in the classrooms. Could it be down to a learning need or an emotional need that hasn't been identified or something going on at home?' (EP E)

'When I look at the type of teachers now you get the 'old school', then you have the career teacher – the fast track teacher; these two groups. Then you have got people who don't know the impact of their behaviour on children. They don't understand the cultural backgrounds of pupils.' (SENCo, School R)

During our interviews with three male Behaviour Mentors, of Caribbean heritage, in a large secondary school, we heard the same message about how students' behaviour varies according to the teacher:

'I go into classes and they behave differently from one teacher to another. They almost want you to be strict but then you have to find a balance… they will test you.' (Behaviour Mentor A, School E)

'I have sat down and had a heart-to-heart with them and I say to them straight 'you wouldn't do this in a Jamaican system – you wouldn't get away with what you get away with here.' (Behaviour Mentor B, School E)

'London schools understand the issues but in other places they don't. Parents say 'we will send them back to Jamaica – they will sort them out'! Corporal punishment has been abolished. African children are smacked at home. At school we wouldn't. They do not think we have authority.' (Governor, School H)

'We had an incident where a father started to beat his son in front of us. We had to call Social Care. It was heart-breaking – it's an awkward thing. The law changed about corporal punishment but it wasn't explained what the new expectations are.' (Governor, School E).

'I have had experience in the Caribbean system for 15 years and am also learning the system here. I find the young men ask me what is the system like in Jamaica? In schools in Jamaica you have uniform inspection. There you have parents who are more supportive of the school system. They trust the system to manage their child. Yes you do have those that rebel against the system.'…. In Jamaica there are issues there too, it's not a perfect scenario. You don't find parents disputing the school system there. There's more respect. I think this system has not helped our people, it has brainwashed them into an entitlement mentality because of the benefits system. The system in Jamaica is more rigid but if we had more earning of things… they take things for granted here so they throw things away. Parents in Jamaica tell children education is the key to success. Here girls will say 'the system will give me a flat if I'm pregnant.' (Behaviour Mentor C, School E)

Some schools have gone the extra mile to build up parental trust whilst others seem to have given up. An assistant Headteacher in a secondary school expressed his concerns that in Year 7 the school was:

'inheriting a problem from the primary school perspective; they would say some of the Black Caribbean pupils have a problem with anger. The parents are unwilling to sign anything re: the Educational Psychologist. I have managed to get parents to agree to sign any forms for assessment because trust has been built up – they trust the relationship.'
(Assistant Headteacher, School E)

There is a sense that parents and pupils have a fresh start when the child who has had difficulties in primary school, transfers to secondary school:

'The impressions I have got from the schools I have spoken to I get a sense they have tried hard. There's a sense of a second chance here. We are fortunate at the moment because we have the staff that has that skill of engaging parents. Without those staff we would find it very difficult to deal with the social problems that pupils are bringing to school. I do not think class teachers would be able to manage. It would be difficult to have an impact.' (Secondary Curriculum Specialist, School E)

The newly appointed Headteacher of another large secondary school gave his views on why there is parental mistrust by Black Caribbean parents and pupils of the education system in Britain:

'From the first generation there is a sense of bafflement… they say 'in Jamaica we had to walk six miles to school and we cannot understand why our kids are doing this.'

In society there is institutional racism and to some extent it permeates into school. You have children of those who had a bad experience in the 1970s, 80s and early 90s. When they went to school there was very clear streaming. Those parents have a negative attitude to school. 'It was bad for me and these people are out to get you'. Parents say 'it was awful for me and I am going to make sure it doesn't happen to my children'. They do not trust you. 'I don't trust you when you say you are going to do this for my child'. They don't want anything to do with the school and they are the hard to reach parents.' (Headteacher, School D)

'There is a big culture gap between ethics, religion and behaviour. You need to show respect to people and have good behaviour. This seems to have got lost over generations. Our third generation parents, where the matriarch is still around, Granny can bring them back.'
(Vicar/Chair of Governors, School C)

Exclusion Issues and Racial Equality

A key factor influencing the attainment of Black Caribbean children is the extent to which they are excluded from school and learning opportunities. Black Caribbean children are most likely to be excluded from school and represent the most excluded group of pupils in British schools (Gillborn and Youdell 2000; Cabinet Office 2007 and EHRC 2015).

Table 8. National Permanent Exclusions 2006-2015 - Percentage of School population

Ethnic Background	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
White British	0.13	0.12	0.12	0.09	0.08	0.07	0.08	0.07	0.07	0.09
White Other	0.10	0.09	0.08	0.08	0.06	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.06
White/Black Caribbean	0.36	0.36	0.32	0.25	0.24	0.22	0.22	0.19	0.18	0.22
White/ Black African	0.18	0.20	0.17	0.1	0.14	0.11	0.11	0.09	0.09	0.08
Indian	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01
Pakistani	0.08	0.09	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.05
Bangladeshi	0.08	0.08	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.03	0.04	0.02	0.03	0.03
Black Caribbean	**0.41**	**0.38**	**0.36**	**0.3**	**0.34**	**0.23**	**0.24**	**0.22**	**0.24**	**0.28**
Black African	0.16	0.13	0.16	0.11	0.11	0.09	0.07	0.07	0.08	0.07
Black Other	0.30	0.26	0.32	0.2	0.22	0.16	0.13	0.14	0.11	0.11
All Pupils	**0.14**	**0.13**	**0.12**	**0.1**	**0.09**	**0.08**	**0.08**	**0.07**	**0.07**	**0.08**

Table 9. National Fixed-Term Exclusions 2006-2015 - Percentage of School Population

Ethnic background	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
White British	8.58	6.4	5.9	5.62	5.14	5.01	4.8	4.2	4.21	4.67
White Other	6.47	4.2	4.1	4.05	3.5	3.32	2.93	2.65	2.52	2.85
White/ Black Caribbean	20.04	13.8	11.9	11.4	10.8	10.6	9.75	8.42	8.14	8.86
White and Black African	13.60	8.1	7.0	6.42	6.31	5.79	5.19	4.57	4.23	5.14
Indian	2.74	1.8	1.5	1.33	1.28	1.07	1.01	0.86	0.74	0.8
Pakistani	6.77	4.3	3.8	3.55	3.37	3.05	2.77	2.59	2.44	2.77
Bangladeshi	5.10	3.3	3.1	3.2	2.7	2.55	2.27	1.92	1.79	1.83
Black Caribbean	**16.99**	**12.7**	**11.1**	**11.2**	**10.8**	**10.6**	**9.23**	**8.22**	**8.21**	**9.64**
Black African	9.79	6.5	6.0	5.63	5.37	5.27	4.56	3.79	3.42	3.84
Black Other	15.69	10.6	9.6	9.18	8.27	7.46	6.4	5.17	4.98	5.76
All Pupils	**10.39**	**6.3**	**5.8**	**5.5**	**5.03**	**4.91**	**4.59**	**3.99**	**3.96**	**4.39**

Source: Permanent and fixed-period exclusions in England: 2006 to 2015, DfE SFR26/2016

The most recent DfE statistics on exclusion show that Black Caribbean pupils are over-represented in both permanent and fixed term exclusions (Table 8 and 9). Nationally in 2014-15, 0.08% of pupil enrolments resulted in a permanent exclusion. However the figure for Black Caribbean pupils was 0.28%, indicating that they were more than three and a half times as likely to be permanently excluded as pupils overall. When breaking the statistics down by gender, Black Caribbean boys were even more over-represented in the permanent exclusion statistics. The only ethnic group that had higher rates of permanent exclusion nationally were "Gypsy/Roma", a relatively small ethnic group. When considering the fixed term exclusion data, a similar pattern appears. Both Caribbean boys and girls were over twice as likely to have fixed term exclusions as pupils overall. (See DfE 2016)

The over-representation of Black Caribbean pupils in the exclusion statistics has been noted for many years. Black Caribbean pupils were nearly four times more likely to receive a permanent exclusion than the school population as a whole and were twice as likely to receive a fixed period exclusion. (DfE 2016).

Figure 9. The Exclusion Gap: Permanent Exclusion Rate for Black Caribbean and White British Pupils in England
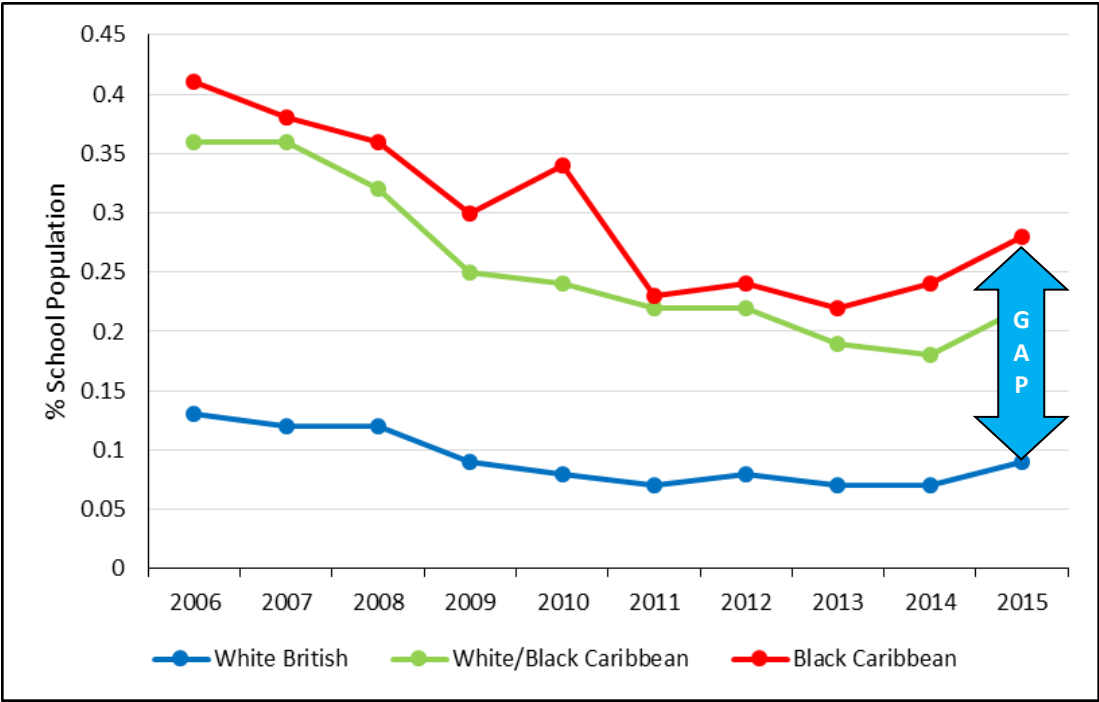
Black Caribbean pupils are often excluded for challenging what is racism, teachers' low expectations and institutional racism. For example, a briefing on ethnicity and educational attainment by the Runnymede Trust (2012) revealed that:

> *'Black Caribbean boys are far more likely to be excluded from school – the Office of the Children's Commissioner found that they are 37 times more likely to be excluded than girls of Indian origin. Also in 2009-10 if you were a Black African-Caribbean boy with special needs and eligible for free school meals you were 168 times more likely to be permanently excluded from a state-funded school than a White girl without special needs from a middle-class family.*
>
> *Being excluded from school has a massive impact on a pupil's attainment levels. For example, research by David Gillborn and David Drew found that excluded pupils are 4 times more likely to finish their education without having gained academic qualifications. Subsequent access to higher education and employment is therefore limited. Furthermore, if a child has lower academic achievement they are more likely to become involved in criminal activity.' (The Runnymede Bulletin 2010).*

'A reason for educational attainment differences could be unconscious bias from teachers, leading them to assume that children of certain ethnic groups are more (or less) likely to misbehave or work hard. There has been concern from a sizeable number of newly trained teachers that their training does not well prepare them for teaching pupils of different ethnicities, improved teacher training on this issue may improve outcomes.' (The Runnymede Bulletin 2010)

Research by the former Department for Education and Skills (*Getting it, Getting it Right, 2006)* suggests a number of reasons why Black pupils are disproportionately excluded, including institutional racism. The report argued that:

'Black pupils encounter both conscious and unconscious prejudice from teachers – for example, research has found that throughout their education Black pupils are disciplined more (both in terms of frequency and severity) and often for milder offences than those leading to their White peers being punished. The report recommended that to help decrease exclusions of Black pupils there should be consistent and continued monitoring of pupil progress to identify problems early on, more teacher training on matters of race equality, involving pupils in designing and setting rules and providing support from academic mentors.'

The trend whereby very young children are now being excluded from school and sent to Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) was highlighted by those we interviewed as a serious concern, but it is significant to note that it is mainly Black Caribbean boys that are being excluded: Educational Psychologists expressed their concerns:

'One of the things we need to do as a profession, quite often we are brought in during a crisis situation and we have to think about how we work proactively or assertively. In Reception and Year 1 what can we be doing systematically, offering a supportive challenge, being critical friends to think about what might make a difference early on? Some of it is to do with mismatch in school about attainment and progress, whereas diversity issues and other major issues such as disproportionality are not picked up. We can refuse to go into schools at the eleventh hour to say that this child is a problem – if you want a piece of paper to say we have seen the EP therefore they have emotional and behavioural issues so they are out! You can feel pressured but we wouldn't do it.' (EP E)

Another Educational Psychologist gave an example of this worrying trend:

'We are asked to do an assessment on a child and the next week the school excludes them – in some cases permanently. I have had this happen five times personally. I have just had a Black Caribbean child in excluded in Year 2. His learning needs were not addressed and he had emotional needs. I contacted the Educational Psychologist who covers the PRU and she said 'I'll see if he turns up here'. I am confused about the system. If the schools are Academies we cannot do anything about it. There are a lot of illegal exclusions, e.g. a child coming into school for mornings only, or a Headteachers says 'take them home to calm down' or 'managed moves' to another school or 'transfer'. The issue for Black Caribbean boys or other disadvantaged groups is that they do not have parents who know the system, so they do not have the power to say this is wrong you are not allowed to do that. They say 'the school is threatening to exclude my other children in the school' – they are powerless.' (EP A)

'My understanding of a PRU is that it is supposed to be a temporary measure to enable pupils to reintegrate back into school but it seems many of them stay there. When they leave, people say they have been to a PRU and even if their behaviour has improved, there is a stigma that this carries.' (EP D)

We asked those interviewed for their views about the reasons why there is over-representation of Black Caribbean pupils being excluded from schools:

'I think there are a number of different reasons. My personal view is I think there is quite a lot of institutional racism, particularly against boys of Black Caribbean background. In one school I have two children behaving in the same way, one from a middle class White background and the other Black Caribbean and the Black Caribbean child was excluded. About the Black Caribbean boy they were saying: 'the family is very traditionally Jamaican'. When I asked her what that meant she said: 'there's a lot of violence in the family and mother wears a lot of different wigs every day'! When challenged schools can get defensive. People get sensitive about being called racist…' 'It is important to question when your referrals are coming from a particular group and you should be asking why this is. For me, I think there are Black Caribbean boys who are excluded because of their needs which haven't been assessed.' (EP A)

'When we talk about behaviour issues, there are a lot of youngsters Black and White who misbehave. Because of stereotyping and the

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media, as far as teachers are concerned, we are talking about a system that has taught them that the Black male has a problem, or is difficult, so as soon as a young Black boy picks up something and throws it, he is regarded as being a difficult child. If a White boy does it, they say he's having a bad day. It's the branding. LA1's gentrification is going backwards. If we are having people in LA1 who have no general understanding of the population in LA1, with all its people groups and people managing who have no idea of the local community, then they are going to be branded.' (Parent B)

Another Educational Psychologist gave her views about the over-representation of Black Caribbean pupils being excluded:

'I would say that racism is a factor in this. A school is not in isolation of community and racism exists in our society at large. We have families under stress that the child is exposed to and the child might be more likely to themselves have stress, and exhibit symptoms or behaviours which the school finds difficult to manage. An identical behaviour might be perceived as being more aggressive if it is coming from a large Black boy than a small White girl. It's what is described as 'challenging behaviour'; the attributions teachers might have for Black pupils might be seen more negatively. It could be about perceptions. The school feels powerless. They do not want to exclude but they have reached a point where they cannot do anything with the child. There seems to be less tolerance now in schools, perhaps because of the demands on teachers.' (EP B)

On the question of why there were so many Black Caribbean pupils excluded from mainstream primary and secondary schools, it was proposed that it was because these pupils do not know their own history and identity:

'The problem is history and how it is taught. Why are you not aware of your history? Where is your story? How can you continue to move forward if you don't know about yourself? This is not being addressed.' (Learning Mentor)

Another difficulty expressed was the complexity of relationships which are a feature of the Black Caribbean community, which result in children moving between family members when conflict or difficulties arise:

'In LA everyone is related to everyone else. There is so much conflict within the family and the community and they bring that into school. They are all related somehow. It is hard to find these children because they are not in a stable situation. They live with an aunty and there is a

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problem, so they are moved to another… they constantly move because of their circumstances. You cannot find them because they are always moving from various relatives. This is another barrier to their achievement.' (Learning Mentor)

We suggested that family connections like this exist in Caribbean countries also, so why is it a problem here? The Learning Mentor responded:

'There is more disconnect here because they do not have the support systems. There are also other issues around housing, and poverty. What is expected here is very different compared with the Caribbean – there are different expectations.' (Learning Mentor)

A Senior Educational Psychologist commented:

'This is not a new issue. When African Caribbean people first came to this country, the challenges they faced have all had an impact, the disaffection, disengagement from the curriculum, discrimination in society. Now there is quite good achievement in Primary Schools but as pupils have more access to information when they get to Secondary School they start to see things differently. Over my time in LA1 I have certainly seen five year olds, pre-school children at Nursery level excluded from school for being violent, not being able to socialise, kicking and biting other children, putting themselves and others at risk, not being able to work in a classroom even with individual support from an adult, not being socialised. You look at issues behind this, substance misuse, domestic violence, there are lots of reasons why the child cannot cope. It wouldn't be right to blame the schools for this. The Primary Pupil Referral Unit is unable to pick up all the support schools need. We have picked this up, we visit schools and offer advice and support.' (EP C)

We asked for a case study example of a pupil which would help us to understand what had happened in the child's life which had led to them being excluded from school:

'A fifteen year old girl of Jamaican heritage who is pregnant, she is an able girl, who came here from a good school. She is creative and independent. The father was a pupil here last year. When she realised she was pregnant, the father of the unborn child said 'go and find M……..' (A member of staff). *When I heard about this I thought: "We had the father, the mother and soon we will have a baby because of the chaotic life they lead". 'The girl is in Care and thankfully she has a very good Health Visitor and a good Social Worker. She doesn't have any contact with her own mother or any other relative. She has a couple of brothers but doesn't*

know them. She has been permanently excluded from school. She is bright and if her circumstances were different she could have gone into the 6th Form. Apparently she and a group of girls stole a teacher's credit card and used it.' (Learning Mentor)

With regard to the father of the unborn child, a sixteen year old former PRU pupil, she described his circumstances:

'The boy's own father comes from the Congo and they have many issues. His mum had mental health issues and was not allowed to keep the children. The father didn't have the skills or understanding to cope with the structures for living here, for example the son said "Miss.. why is he buying steak when we do not have an oven". It is ridiculous he is growing up in a dysfunctional situation. This father has a new young wife from the Congo with two young children and they have told the father of the unborn child that he couldn't live with them anymore and he has been sent to a hostel. He will be a father of this new baby due in a few weeks. This lad's father saved all his money to send £5,000 to the Congo to have this young girl and they are expecting the young lad to respect her. The boy himself is able, educated but underachieving, he got a C in Science at GCSE and a D so it wouldn't have taken much to get him to achieve better grades if he had come to school every day. If he had food every day or was clean when he attended school - he could have attended 6th form.' (Learning Mentor)

We asked a Church Leader whether the Church should have a bigger role in addressing issues of child exclusion from school and he replied:

'Yes. The established Church has negated its responsibility. I cannot see how schools can exclude a five year old. Something cannot be right if you are going to do that. Yes they may be rude, mischievous and disruptive; you have to begin to mentor that child into the right way of behaving. The Black Caribbean pupils were at one time well-disciplined at home – taught to have good manners and be respectful to everyone. I am not sure that exclusion of pupils was as prevalent as it is today. The question for schools is 'are you interested in the child or are you just interested in your mark-ups'? The Church has negated its role to the Government; all schools were started by the Church. When we go back in history, we see that prisons were started by the Church but were designed to rehabilitate. Then the Government took them over and it began to punish. If you look at history, Robert Riggs started to take children to Sunday school. Six year old children were sent down the mines and into factories. This is how school started in England. It was through Christians who started them. We have

negated our responsibilities and hence we have what we have today in our society. Many people may not like this and one of the things the Bible tells us is you should not spare the rod – children will remember the smack but won't remember the conversation. Do not underestimate what is happening. The power that has been taken away from parents in disciplining their children, it is very necessary and if this cannot be done at home, then it will happen at School. Children are challenging authority.'
(Church Leader A, 1st generation)

A retired Headteacher, who is now a governor, gave a school's perspective on exclusion:

'You always felt guilty after you excluded a Black Caribbean child. But you have a behaviour policy and you have to follow it. You have to ask why this is happening to a particular child, so you unpick the behaviour. Sometimes the parents do not have enough influence to want to work with you. Sometimes the child's attitude has developed to such an extent that it's almost impossible to change. This happens early in Primary, so goodness knows what happens at secondary school.'
(Retired Headteacher, School Z)

An Educational Psychologist believes that there are very few teachers now that would hold overtly racist views but within that there is the 'I' and the 'me'. She reflected:

'Sometimes it's about cohort beliefs. It could be about what teachers decide to notice or not notice. Sometimes we notice that three or four children are presenting challenging behaviour and there might be occasions where the Black Caribbean child misbehaves and he might be noticed. What we have to ask ourselves and the school system is, why this child and why now? It's for us to take a self-critical approach to ask 'why is the school stating this now', with this particular child. What we have to do is try to unpick. We have to ask difficult questions 'why this child now'? We have to take ownership of that and ask difficult questions. We also have to integrate our own views and practice which we in do regularly.' (EP A)

We asked whether SENCo's are challenged by Educational Psychologists if they make wrong judgments about pupils.

'We do as Educational Psychologists do that, but might do it through the types of questions we ask and raising it as a question can allow you time to reflect. Our policy requires us to raise it directly if there are overtly racist issues.' (EP A)

'There are illegal exclusions, say for half a day, or parents are advised to take the child to another school or they will be permanently excluded.'
(EP C)

Secondary schools report that this can result in children attending many different primary schools:

'Parents chop and change schools and children are increasingly moved sometimes up to seven primaries. Some are told to just go and they have home schooling. It's an indictment of the system.' (Deputy Head, Secondary School, School E)

'The numbers of Black Caribbean students who come in to us (PRU) have undiagnosed SEND, ADHD, MLD, SLD – a disproportionate number. The question is when our Black children with SEND act up they are excluded. Some children have been to 3 or 4 primary schools because parents are told to remove them, so this is how they remain undiagnosed. The additional needs are seen as behavioural problems rather than special needs.' (SENCo, School R)

According to an Adviser on Behaviour Management working with schools in a London borough, fixed term exclusions whereby a pupil is sent to a partner school, is something schools are using:

'They send pupils to a partner school so that the statistics don't go up. They say can you hold this child until somebody does something? You sometimes have a child there for up to six months, in limbo. Schools are thinking how are we going to get this child off roll. Eventually as he was in an isolation room and didn't cause any trouble they put him in a classroom.'

The Runnymede Trust in their briefing paper to the government 2010 "Exclusion and Discipline in Schools" highlighted concerns about the efficacy of alternative provision for pupils excluded from school because of their behavior. They stated:

'Research suggests that there is a gap in our knowledge generally about the ethnic make up of onsite units, the length of time that students are placed in them and the educational support received by students once there.'

In response to the question of why the number of permanent exclusions of Black Caribbean pupils is so high, the Adviser for Behaviour Management commented:

'A lot of people find Black Caribbean pupils threatening. History is being brought to bear on this. Black children mature earlier, they look bigger so they present as a threat. Everybody thinks that. Very few people can see

them as a child. A teacher can see a White child and a Black child both misbehaving but it's the Black one that gets into trouble. It's not just a White thing. I know Black teachers who are the same. I grew up in a house of women, so my first experience of a man was my husband. When I had a son I thought what am I going to do with a boy? Seeing him as a baby and then a child I know more. A lot of people don't see them like that.'

When there is an exclusion 'hearing' a Chair of Governors said that he is interested in who turns up to speak up for pupils:

'Always someone supports the children. I do not get any sense of lack of aspiration in fact they are very committed.' (Chair of Governors)

The Runnymede Trust's publication, 'Behaviour and Discipline in Schools 2010) warns that given the extremely negative impact exclusions have on a pupil's life chances, it is a concern that the abolition of the Independent Appeals Panels, seen as undermining Headteachers' authority, could result in miscarriages of justice and parents' voices not being heard. It states that only 2% of exclusions were overturned by Appeals Panels and approximately 90% of exclusions were simply not brought before these independent groups, thus highlighting that the situation is far from a widespread undermining of teachers' authority. It is crucial that teachers are held to account on exclusions decisions, particularly give the massive impact such decisions can have a on a child's future.

Schools Ability Grouping and Lower Tier Entry Issues

The impact of ability grouping or setting pupils according to ability on pupils' attainment has been the subject of research for decades. Schools in the UK have for many years been responsible for the form of grouping they adopt nevertheless the evidence from previous research indicates that the effect of ability grouping on pupil attainment is limited, as the following report illustrated:

'British studies (Acland, 1973; Barker Lunn, 1970; Fogelman, 1983; Kerckoff, 1986; Newbold, 1977) and international reviews (Kulik & Kulik, 1990; Slavin, 1987; 1990) indicate mixed findings for the effects on academic achievement. Two important British studies were based on data from the National Child Development Study. The first found little difference in performance on standardised tests of achievement in mathematics and reading when ability level was controlled, but there were differences in the patterns of entry in national examinations and in access to the curriculum (Fogelman, Essen & Tibenham, 1978; Fogelman, 1983). The second study compared pupils attending four types of secondary school, secondary modern, grammar, comprehensive and private (Kerkhoff, 1986). Data were collected at ages 7, 11 and 16 years. Standardised tests of reading and mathematics, and verbal and non-verbal scores from a general ability test administered at age 11

were used. Children attending grammar schools showed relatively greater improvement in mathematics over time, compared with those in the secondary modern schools. In schools that grouped pupils by ability, there was a marked divergence of attainment, with students in remedial classes falling further behind, while those in the high ability groups increased their average performance beyond that exhibited by comparable pupils in ungrouped classes. The pattern was sufficiently clear that it was possible to differentiate between the effects of a two and a three-group system, the latter producing a greater divergence of attainment scores.'

'On a wider level, structured ability grouping can be perceived as denying educational opportunity to particular groups of pupils. There is evidence that low ability groups tend to include disproportionate numbers of pupils of low socio-economic status, ethnic minorities, boys and those born in the summer (see Hallam & Toutounji, 1996; Ireson & Hallam, 1999). There are also difficulties associated with the allocation of pupils to streams or sets. Selection error is a particularly serious problem in a selective school system, where small differences in test performance may lead to substantial differences in opportunity to learn and in future employment. In a non-selective but streamed, or tracked, system the effects of selection error may be less marked but nevertheless significant. Allocation to groups is based not only on prior academic achievement or ability but also on school organisational constraints (Jackson, 1964). In theory movement between groups is possible, but in practice it is restricted, because of the increasing gap in curriculum covered.' (Ability grouping in the secondary school: the effects on academic achievement and pupils' self-esteem. Ireson, Hallam, Mortimore, Hack, Clark and Plewis 1999).

Research in both the United States and Britain overwhelmingly concludes that Black pupils and their working class White peers are likely to be over-represented in lower-ranked teaching groups, for example, where schools adopt 'setting by ability' or other forms of selective grouping. Their disproportionate concentration can be mapped by tracing the process of selection inside schools. Research has documented how these processes are significantly influenced by teacher expectations, which tend to be markedly lower for these groups of pupils. The pupils' subsequent placement in lower ranked teaching groups, in both primary and secondary schools, institutionalises these differences and can create additional barriers to achievement. Even in schools that do not embrace setting, some form of selection is increasingly common. The structure of the GCSE examination itself now requires most subject areas to enter pupils for one of two different 'tiers' of exam, where the highest grades are only available to pupils in the top set.

The changes in the UK education system over the past twenty years have led to a rekindling of interest in the ways that pupils might be grouped within schools. There is a perceived need to raise standards nationally whilst retaining a comprehensive system. In

addition, some schools have been experiencing difficulties in relation to the behaviour and attendance of some pupils. Grouping arrangements are needed that enable pupils of all abilities to make maximum progress without increasing alienation and disaffection.

A School Improvement Consultant whose son had undiagnosed hearing loss until it was detected that he only had 70% function in one ear when he was ten years old, talked about his experiences of secondary schooling:

> *'He started secondary school and was put into the middle set for most subjects, but the bottom set for maths. In his last two years he had 13 different maths teachers. With his other subjects the quality of his work was terrible. I thought if I was a teacher and saw this quality of work I would think this was terrible. The assignments he was given didn't even meet the criteria for GCSE and this is when I learned about predicted grades. There's a big difference between expecting excellence and failure. If you are a top set child and you go into secondary school you are guaranteed a good education. If you go in as middle or bottom set you might find the behaviour is so bad that they do not learn anything. They base these predicted grades on Year 6 SATs results so they tell us what their grades are going to be at GCSE. A lot of parents are not educated so they don't know what is going on.'*

A father whose son also had health problems which made his attendance erratic at secondary school, but who, nevertheless was getting 'A's and 'B's told how his son was put into a lower set for English literature, without his knowledge:

> *'In Year 10 I realised he was not doing English Literature. I said 'I know nothing about this'. When I contacted the teacher he said he would give him a mark when my son had done the test. Why are you going to give this to him afterwards? I asked'. I contacted the Head of Department and that meeting wasn't coming fast enough so I contact the head of the school. I told them they were discriminating in terms of illness. My wife had told the school to send her work and she would do it with him at home. I had to fight to keep him at school and they were not supportive. Finally I was very forceful because my wife was very emotional. We were leaving work to come to the school for meetings. From that day on they have played a different role. I am not pleased with it. The school is close to home but even though I didn't like what was going on, I had to weigh up everything at least he could hobble home when he is feeling unwell. The school may have felt intimidated because in my email I was forced into a position of being assertive. I am a very calm person, I measure my words carefully but I knew I had to get my message across somehow. My point was why do you put my son in a lower group for English Literature because you don't have a mark for him? He did his English Literature examinations at GCSE. They could have put him in a*

higher set as they had no marks. They could have had a higher expectation of him. Why not be a little supportive? ' (Church Leader A and 1st generation father from Jamaica)

The mother of a daughter at a secondary school in London, who achieved Level 6 in English at the end of Year 6, talked about her experiences with setting in ability groupings and the confusion it causes when communication is unclear:

'She achieved Level 6 in English. When she subsequently went to secondary school she was put in Set 1 for everything. At the end of Year 7 I got a letter to say she was missed off a list for extra work – she is quite competitive. She is good at sports but was put in set 2 for PE even though she represented the school. In Year 8 she was disappointed that she didn't get a gifted and talented prize. She got prizes and recognition for Geography and French. She has had a series of English teachers but marking isn't done. She is doing well in science also.' (Parent E)

Labelling of Pupils

In the study '*Two Strikes: Race and Disciplining of Young Students'*, by Professor Jennifer Eberhardt of Stanford University, published in the journal *Psychological Science* two experimental studies showed that teachers are likely to interpret students' misbehaviour differently depending on the student's race.

In the studies, primary and secondary school teachers were presented with school records describing two instances of misbehaviour by a student. In one study, after reading about each incident, the teachers were asked about their perception of its severity, about how irritated they would feel by the student's misbehaviour, about how severely the student should be punished and about whether they regarded the student as a troublemaker. A second study followed the same protocol and asked teachers whether they though the misbehaviour was part of a pattern and whether they could imagine themselves suspending the student in the future.

The researchers' assigned names to the files which suggested that the student was Black (with a name such as DeShawn or Darnell) and in other cases that the student was White (with a name such as Greg or Jake).

Across both these studies, the researchers found that racial stereotypes shaped teachers' responses not after the first misdemeanour but rather after the second. Teachers were more troubled by a second incidence of misbehaviour they believed was committed by a Black student rather than by a White student.

Our interviews revealed a worrying picture of schools labelling pupils in much the same way in the UK as the research in the US described:

'Black people are seen as violent, they are seen as physically stronger, whereas they have poorer health than Whites. They are thought of as being strong. It translates down into school. A Black Caribbean pupil would be excluded rather than a White child. Now that schools have to write down how many days pupils are excluded, schools find another way, so they have to stay in a classroom on their own and officially it's called internal exclusion. I advised a friend whose son had been excluded to ask to see the official school figures for exclusions. He was never excluded again. He was autistic.' (Parent C)

'I was working in some schools in LA11 it was a shock to me how teachers talked about children in the staffroom and how information was shared, named and shamed and circulated amongst staff. Sometimes teachers from White middle class backgrounds might try to understand but they cannot because of their lack of experience. There seems to be a threat by teachers about how Black masculinity presents itself. There is a lack of understanding about this, how this can impact on how their behaviour is perceived by educators.' (Parent B)

'My son has always been bigger than the average child. From Year 1 onwards he got labelled, stereotyped from Year 1. They put all the Black children on the same table in his class. From then on I felt I needed to fight. There was a particular incident where my son told me his teacher kept calling him 'Violent'. At Nursery they called him 'Orange'. For a long time it didn't click until one day I went into school and they said he was rough and needed to watch his behaviour. I once told him to become careful because he was so big. Then I had a telephone call to say he was traumatising a child by locking him in the toilets (he was only five years old). I asked him explain what had happened and he said the boy had kicked him and called him a 'black monkey' and because he had been told not to fight he pushed him into the toilets. It turned out his teacher called him a 'violent' liar.' (Parent H)

An Educational Psychologist felt that parents were right to be worried about labelling:

'The Conners Scale which is given to the parent and the teacher to fill in (about the child) is used to diagnose ADHD. Black Caribbean pupils are coming out as anti-social. There is discrimination in the tools that are being used. Paediatricians evaluate the scale but it is faulty and contextually inappropriate as research has shown that teachers sometimes rate children higher with African American backgrounds in the US. This is now happening with Black Caribbean pupils here. I do not blame parents for being worried or terrified of psychologists. My doctoral research project was on SBD difficulties. We have changed the labels but they come from an historical context, still a stigma... it is called, social,

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emotional and mental health now. The problems now focus on behaviour rather than on the child's learning. Schools will often say we need the behaviour to improve before they can learn. I tell them it's chicken and egg, we need to look at both.' (EP A)

'I believe there has been some labelling of children – many years ago when I first became Headteacher of this school, I was given the label for a child as having 'oppositional defiance order' – I said 'sorry, he is just naughty!' He was behind with learning, his literacy and basic skills were below par, and he had low self-esteem. I believe this school had failed him. To me the focus was on the wrong things. That boy ended up in prison, he turned up here a year ago and it was like he was returning to his family.'
(Headteacher, School A)

'It seems to me that Black males, both Black African and Black Caribbean are a bit more penalised on issues compared with their counterparts from other countries. When children are naughty, the Black African and Black Caribbean boys get into trouble, while their counterparts who do the same thing, they wouldn't get the same penalty. With under-fives there are a lot more Black Caribbean and an increasing number of Black African underachieving. The distinction is getting more blurred.' (Parent D)

'I have some concerns about the labelling of Black Caribbean boys. A paediatrician said he was looking at a child having ADHD but we were worried about his speaking and listening skills. There is a big issue about labelling ADHD if it is a Black Caribbean boy. It becomes self-reinforcing for a Black Caribbean boy to be labelled, whereas a little White girl it's a different view. Terms such as 'attitude', 'rude', they are enforced by saying to a child 'you are rude.' (EP A)

'There's an issue with boys in particular. We know that boys are later than girls in picking up their reading skills. The reasons for Black Caribbean boys picking up these skills later though are interpreted in a different way. Schools would say 'they probably don't read at home' and we try to unpick that.' (EP A)

Overall the people interviewed expressed strongly about the damaging effect of labelling Black boys as a result of what they wore, who their friends were, how they spoke or whether they were in trouble before. Once the Black boys gained a reputation for behaving badly, it was difficulty to convince teachers of genuine change for the better.

CHAPTER 5. FAMILY AND HOME FACTORS THAT MAY CONTRIBUTE TO BLACK CARIBBEAN PUPILS' UNDERACHIEVEMENT

Lack of Parental Aspiration and Low Expectations

One of the notable phenomena in the field of education is the impact of pupils' home background on achievement. The home background identified influencing Black Caribbean achievement includes lack of parental support, low literacy levels, poverty, poor housing, absent fathers and single parent families. These are discussed below by people interviewed and in the focus groups:

> *'I think social background has a massive impact on achievement. Your background shapes how you feel about yourself and how you think you can attain. Breakdown in families in BME and ethnic minorities that is a factor, but successful people have come from single parent backgrounds. It can have massive impact for some but not for others. I think the problem is more to do with lack of support networks or extended families and the lack of aspiration within your circle, if you don't know anyone who is successful then you are unlikely to achieve.' (Parent B)*

> *'Mothers do try. Homework is online so it can be accessed. The general picture is I don't see much parental involvement. Only five parents contacted the school to see what is happening about homework. The interest isn't there.' (Head of Year, School E)*

> *'I believe parenting is a determinant. We tried going home to Trinidad to live in 2007. It was a shock for my daughter. She had been used to going to a Montessori Nursery but at age three she was not used to having a sleep in the afternoon. In Trinidad I think they would do well. There's a lot of pressure there though. The amount of work that they get at the Church school there … and they get lots of homework every night.' (Parent E)*

> *'My friend who was born from a Ghanaian background had problems with her son's school. A new Headteacher was involving Social Services regarding the parents' discipline of their children. Some of these parents didn't understand why this was happening. One of the things I realise is that cultural background comes into it. As a CAHMS commissioner, a lot of the cases I get are of Black children who might experience abuse, psychological/emotional abuse because of their parents' mental health or religious beliefs. There are a lot of undisclosed traumas, particularly with looked-after children and mixed-race children in care. I see that as a pattern in some places, it's a cultural thing. People not knowing what is appropriate. In my mother's day children got 'licks' if they were naughty that was*

accepted. If I had been brought up here I would have turned out very differently. My father has another family – he didn't live with us. I do not think I would have achieved so much had I lived here as a child.' (Parent E)

'I have always had a tactic when working with Black Caribbean youngsters there is always someone who is the disciplinarian focus. I have found in White working class families that seem to have gone. Say to a Black Caribbean pupil 'what would your Grandad say about this?' They would say 'hold on'… but with White working class they say 'so what'? Now the parents have values and really good values. If you are in low paid work you are working long hours and your energy is low and you haven't got the energy to deal with kids. I am in a relatively well paid position compared with other families. There is absolute lack of understanding about the circumstances in which people are living.' (Governor, School R)

'There is a big culture gap between ethics, religion and behaviour. You need to show respect to people and have good behaviour. This seems to have got lost over generations. Our third generation parents, where the matriarch is still around, Grannie can bring them back.'
(Vicar/Chair of Governors, School C)

Low Literacy Levels and Language Barriers

In his book 'Racial Disadvantage in Britain' written in 1977, David J Smith on the issue of language wrote:

'Poor spoken English may be a source of disadvantage to both Asians and West Indians. Although the mother tongue of virtually all West Indians is a variety of English, this language is significantly different from Standard English and people in this country generally find it hard to understand...'
(Smith, 1977)

He continued:

'At the time when the migration occurred there was no immigration programme and no social policies directed towards helping immigrants to settle in Britain and to learn the skills – including language skills – that they would need in order to adapt successfully. Some effort and resources are now being channelled into the provision of language training, but these programmes reach rather a small number of people. We should therefore expect to find that there is a substantial language problem remaining to be tackled.'

David Smith argued that it was the people who came to Britain after their young adulthood who tended to have the poorest English. During our interviews we learned that there is an assumption that the children of Caribbean heritage in our schools are now from the 3rd, 4th or even 5th generation, but this is not always the case, there are many children in schools who are recent arrivals, primarily from Jamaica, who lack familiarity with Standard English. The Headteacher of a LA1 school explained this phenomenon in more detail:

> *'We have taken 32 children since the beginning of the year and only six are English speakers. As far as Black Caribbean pupils are concerned we target these children in the Children's Centre. There is an assumption that they speak English, not English as an additional language and there is an assumption that they do not need support as there is an issue of language deprivation. If you are in the Black Caribbean group of pupils (we classify Black Caribbean and White Caribbean mixed together) there is not many of them who do not fall into another category, e.g. single parent, absent father, pupil premium, ASD. There is a higher incidence of social, emotional health issues and challenges of engaging parents, so we have to work them through everything, as they see it as a threat, label or a tag'…. 'Some of our Black Caribbean pupils here are 3rd, 4th or 5th generation but others aren't. Many are Visa over-stayers mainly disengaged from the system'… 'Trying to get support for these families is difficult as it takes so long to get any support from social care and this can be quite oppressive.' (Headteacher, School B)*

> *'We have found it difficult in the past to get parents to engage with the school. We are improving but it is still a challenge. Social background plays a big part in it. We have problems where pupils are struggling with literacy it is because their parents are illiterate. Sometimes where both parents are working, they are doing better. They are more aspirational….There isn't a typical attitude. We have some who are very, very aspirational for their children and for the group as a whole. There are some however, who have very poor literacy skills themselves and they cannot fill in forms or read newsletters. There are disengaged, very engaged, aspirational parents. We tend to make the wrong assumptions regarding literacy. A child had been doing wrong things on Facebook, when we spoke to the mum she couldn't read what her child had written.' (Headteacher, School B)*

> *'Some parents need basic skills in reading, writing and maths. Some parents say the way we teach is so different from the way they were taught at school and they cannot understand it. We struggle to get parents on board sometimes. I think this links back to parents own literacy skills. In a group they are fine, e.g. assemblies and events; we get a good turnout of parents, but they find 1:1 chats intimidating.' (Headteacher)*

We asked why there are such low levels of literacy amongst the Black Caribbean parents at this school – did they go to school in this country?

> *'No, the parents were born and grew up in Jamaica.' (Headteacher, School B)*

> *'As a Black Caribbean person myself (my parents came to this country in 1959) but most pupils here are of Jamaican heritage and there is a difference between those and the earlier arrivals. For example, we have a child in Year 4, he came into school in Yr. 4 barely able to read and write. He had been staying with his Gran in rural Jamaica and didn't have much schooling.' (Headteacher, School B)*

> *'Parents would say to me that they avoid school because they themselves may be dyslexic and cannot help their child or they had a bad experience at school and didn't go there. There are lots of factors at play.' (EP A)*

> *'Much depends on parents' own experience of school. They may feel that they do not understand the system or know what to do to help their children, but others might be very different. Schools can reach out to them through coffee mornings, community and family learning; the schools that do this well are unlikely to have parents with a negative attitude.' (EP C)*

> *'If you listen to groups of Black Caribbean kids talking and the language they use, people think they are arguing.' (Governor, School R)*

> *'If you could have literacy classes for parents, providing you didn't make them feel embarrassed about learning it would have a huge benefit, especially for Jamaican parents from rural areas.' (Governor, School R)*

The evidence from the focus group in general suggests that there is a lack of academic language to access national curriculum. Many also write in a colloquial way. This was given during the interview as a great barrier to achievement and a causative factor in low achievement throughout their school year for some group of Black Caribbean heritage pupils.

Absent Fathers

Black Caribbean children were more likely to have an absentee father, or live in a single parent household than many other ethnic groups. The *Millennium Cohort Study* found that age 11, about 86% of South Asian children were living with both natural parents. However the figure for Black Caribbean children was substantially lower at 30%. Black Caribbean children were most likely to be living in single parent families (61%), compared with about 25% of White children and less than 10% of Indian or Bangladeshi children (*Connelly et al 2014*).

The Runnymede Trust (2014) quotes similar figures, with 59% of Black Caribbean children growing up in single parent families, a rate nearly three times as high as the overall average of about 22% in the UK. It further noted that fathers may not be living with the mother of their children but will still continue to be involved in parenting.

Other researchers have also found that for children, the prevalence and devastating effects of father absence is nothing short of disastrous, along a number of dimensions, with regard to social and emotional well-being in particular an article in Psychology Today, *'Father absence, Father deficit, Father hunger'* written by E. Kruk, PhD reported that:

> *'Children's diminished self-concept and compromised physical and emotional security (children consistently report feeling abandoned when their fathers are not involved in their lives, struggling with their emotions and episodic bouts of self-loathing). Behavioural problems (fatherless children have more difficulties with social adjustment, and are more likely to report problems with friendships, and manifest behaviour problems; many develop a swaggering, intimidating persona in an attempt to disguise their underlying fears, resentments, anxieties and unhappiness).'*

> *'Truancy and poor academic performance (71 per cent of high school dropouts are fatherless; fatherless children have more trouble academically, scoring poorly on tests of reading, mathematics, and thinking skills; children from father absent homes are more likely to play truant from school, more likely to be excluded from school, more likely to leave school at age 16, and less likely to attain academic and professional qualifications in adulthood). (Kruk, 2012)*

Our research reveals that many of these elements applied in the lives of the Black Caribbean pupils they were involved with. A Jamaican Church Leader who grew up in Brixton commented:

> *'Today many males do not grow up with a father. They boast about how many children they have but they do not know where they are. The African home is more of a family with a father. Among the Asian community there is a family with a father. The Black Caribbean community are without fathers and that is the difference. I have heard it said it's because of slavery where the slave master could take your wife. I think it is just a selfish idea – they don't want to take the responsibility and they want to move on to the next available woman.' (Church Leader A, 1st generation)*

A Headteacher described the devastating effects of a boy's father being in prison:

> *'Some of our parents are in prison. I am now so used to it. I have one child at the moment that gets into a bit of trouble. He is so difficult I don't know*

what to do with him. His dad is in prison for three years. When we met dad he was lovely, so of course the child is upset because he hasn't seen his father and won't be seeing him for another three years.' (Headteacher, School A)

'In previous generations, communities were smaller so you couldn't get away with doing anything wrong. When I was growing up they were smaller and I used to go to a youth club. Many pupils now don't know how to socialise e.g. through playing table tennis. At boarding school one young man flipped out and head-butted his dad. He lives with his dad's parents. I communicated with my dad through talking.' (Teacher governor, School D)

A secondary school in LA1 is tackling the issue of absent fathers in the following example:

'The majority of the project work we do is with single parent households with no father present… we seek out those errant fathers. We ask mothers if we can contact father, especially if there's been a gap, or they have shown no interest in the children. We encourage them to be involved. I telephone the father as well as the mother to tell them what is going on at school. They are growing up in a predominantly female household. Mothers tend to nag a lot, whereas dads use a few words. They hear the message once from their dad and they tend to adhere to that message but when they hear it from their mum a hundred times they ignore it.' (Teacher, School D)

A Behaviour Mentor in the same school gave his observations:

'49% of families are led by women. This has a massive effect on our boys. I work with hundreds of pupils each day. The boys and girls have a particular bond with you as a man. The most predominant question is 'what do you think'? I try to give them the best opinion I can. The average pupil goes home, he doesn't eat with his family, and he eats alone. They are latch-key kids. This has been brought about by Black Caribbean culture. If the family foundation is not solid you have lots of problems.'…. He continues: 'On Saturdays I go and work with kids. Their parents have lots of problems, mental health, poverty, low paid jobs. The kids get no guidance. They all have mobile phones and are looking at all the wrong things. We tell them 1: Attitude – we don't want no street in here. 2: Correct behaviour – men and women behave differently. 3: Character of the people is important, what the women bring is nurturing – men bring in discipline. 4: Working together.' (Behaviour mentor, School E)

Another Behaviour Mentor, who was brought up in Jamaica, compared the differences between boys brought up in Jamaica and those here in Britain:

> *'Our Black boys are not prepared for the challenges of life here because of the absence of their fathers. I listen to them and I compare both systems. I have the advantage because I was brought up differently. I hear some of the parents dealing with their sons and you sense a sort of aggression. They mix up aggression with assertiveness. In Jamaica they have cadets. What do they have here to engage in as young Black men? Their fathers are involved in drugs and negative things. I tell them 'dress like a prospect, not as a suspect'! We have to teach people how to approach us. I have never been called 'boy' by a policeman. We walk the talk. I think if the system here had more disciplinary measures in place it would help them – they do it because they can get away with it'. In Jamaica there are issues there too – it's not a perfect scenario. You don't find parents disputing the school system there. There's more respect. I think this system has not helped our people, it has brainwashed them into an entitlement mentality because of the benefits system. The system in Jamaica is more rigid but if we had more earning of things… they take things for granted here so they throw things away.' (School A)*

As if to link the absence of a father with low achievement in school, a Head of Year at a LA1 secondary school, who came to the UK when he was 12 years old, contrasts his own home with a father present, with that of a friend who didn't:

> *'I came from Jamaica at aged 12 years. When I arrived in the school up the road, there was another boy who came at the same time. One of us made excellent progress and achieved well and the other didn't. I put that down to what I wanted out of school and my family's beliefs. This is the issue and the ultimate driving factor. Family attitudes and aspirations make all the difference. My father said, 'after a certain age you are going to have to leave and you need to be able to stand on your own two feet.' My mum was in Jamaica and came to live with Dad. The other boy didn't have a dad.' (Head of Year, School D)*

An Aspire to Achieve project run by a LA1 secondary school teacher, addresses the anger some boys feel about the absence of a father:

> *'A young man may have a mum who makes a lot of noise, a dad who doesn't live with him but will come down to school. One boy said 'I hate home, I hate school… everything'. When he has issues in the classroom he hits himself on the lockers, he gets so angry… he hates home.' (Aspire to Achieve Project Leader, School E)*

This teacher has successfully run a similar 'restorative approach' project in another school in Forest Hill and is passionate about the difference it makes to children. Her views about the reasons for Black Caribbean pupils' underachievement are as follows:

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'Dysfunctional families, single parents, the role of mother and the fact that mothers give sons a false sense of manhood. In an Afro-Caribbean home, if it's a single parent family, it is typical for the boy to feel supportive of mum; he is the man of the house. We have a theory that women can grow sons but they cannot teach them to be men. There seems to be a conflict. A young man said: 'I do not speak to my dad; he is not part of my life'. I am mentoring him and so I said 'clearly you are missing your dad'. He said 'I tell you what; if I saw my dad today I would thump him down'. There is a deep anger among young men and it's about dads. Anger over generations.'

'I chair a group on the achievement committee and we check the data. I wonder how much it is about background or family life. Getting parents to understand the importance of school is a big issue. Role models are very important, especially for boys. Having role models to show them are important. We try and have Dads Days. A lot of dads are not engaged with education. If they are engaged then the whole family are.'
(Governor, School L)

'Here in the UK I went into a school to support a child of a family member without a dad, to talk to them about what was going on. I took on the role that a parent would have done. The support systems here have broken down.' (Church Leader A, 1st generation Jamaican father)

'I think it is good when a child has two parents. A lot of these children do not have a father figure. Lately my son is saying he misses his dad.' (Parent H)

Single Parent Families and Teenage Pregnancy

Single parenting is a very important social issue that can have significant effects on a child's academic achievement. Children who are raised in a single family home are sometimes at risk of not reaching their full potential. They have to rely on one parent to meet most of their needs including limited finances, time and parent availability to provide adequate support for their child to perform to the best of their ability. The Runnymede Trust research (2014) shows 59% of Black Caribbean children are growing up in single parent families, a rate nearly three times as high as the overall average of about 22% in the UK.

'A lot of our parents are very young. By the time they are in their mid-twenties they have several children'... 'We see our pupils come back with their children. In one instance we have a former pupil whose own childhood was neglected. We are seeing the same pattern emerging, but in this case she is doing a better job than her parents did, but even so...'
(Headteacher, School A)

The above schools staff visit the homes of children starting school in the reception classes in order to develop a positive relationship with parents, but this often reveals the challenging home circumstances children experience:

> *'Yes members of staff make home visits and then the parents and children are invited to visit the classroom before they start school. I do not know what the family story is but there is a single parent, I have not seen dad. The visit revealed a chaotic home. These staff were ushered up to a bedroom and the discussion about the child took place sitting on a bed.'*
> *(Headteacher, School A)*

The Headteacher continued….

> *'Some of our parents do not seem to think school is important because of the issues we have discussed. It doesn't matter if the children are late for school, doesn't matter if the reading diary is signed. We have lots of single mums, baby mums. Fathers are not involved. There are issues of domestic violence, mental health and drugs. A child in Year 5's father was shot! The first time we saw the mother about lateness we had a chat and asked how can we support you? In that family it was about housing and we got the Family Support Worker involved.'* *(Headteacher, School A)*

> *'One parent has to be both mum and dad.'* *(Teacher, School A)*

> *'When the single parent is busy working and the child is looked after by someone else, then there may be less input from parents in terms of homework. They are doing their best in difficult circumstances.'* *(Teacher, School A)*

> *'Black Caribbean parents' aspiration is high despite the low income. We have lots of cases of single parent families not involved in their children's lives, families are good at rallying around but when your child gets away from you, you don't know what they are getting up to.'* *(School Governor)*

> *'Some of our strongest parents are single. It is easy to say they are an issue but in fact they are some of our most dedicated parents.'* *(Teacher, School A)*

A teacher commented on the narrow range of experiences some pupils have in their homelife, which was highlighted when she took some LA1 secondary school pupils on a team-building trip to Essex:

> *'The youngsters were mesmerised by the open land, they asked me if they were real horses in a field. They didn't get out of London. I wanted to broaden their experience. Most of these parents were born here. They were*

young girls who got pregnant and they didn't have these experiences themselves. Unless we take ourselves out of the cocoon and attune ourselves things won't change. If you ask some parents if they have been to a museum they say 'no'.' (Teacher, School A)

'I have a problem with lack of parenting skills and lack of stimulation. Some just do not have the skills. A lot of parents are bringing up friends, not children.' (Behaviour Mentor, School A)

'Parents in Jamaica tell children education is the key to success. Here girls will say the system will give me a flat if I am pregnant.' (Behaviour Mentor. School E)

'In my year group at the moment, the biggest issue is the single parent for girls and boys. At age 14 years mum doesn't have control over decisions. We have a shift of balance. Achievement for them isn't high on the agenda.' (Behaviour Mentor, School E)

'I heard a group of girls in a secondary school talking and they were saying 'get a good looking guy, get a baby, dump the man and you get the flat'. These girls used to put alcohol on the tip of their babies' mouths and put the babies together in one bed so they could go out partying. The government made it easy for girls to get flats by themselves. My son says he doesn't want a girlfriend from London because they are horrible – they dump you just like that when they are tired of you.' (Parent H)

'With regard to the Black Caribbean pupils I work with. I tend to find they have quite low aspirations. I am going to generalise, so forgive me. One of the girls didn't have the expectation of being married and having children but of having children without a husband. There is so much to say about stable home environment. It depends what you consider the norm.'
(Teacher, School D)

'There is a picture in school of single women who are not academically bright and first generation immigrants from Jamaica. Fathers are nowhere to be seen. They seek to be friends with their children. When we seek to bring order to them, we get resistance. We try to treat all children as individuals, to push them to success. We also focus on the community as a community, but within the school the children look after each other. Single mothers, who are not entitled to benefits, visa over stayers or for another reason they are below the radar, working unsocial hours, fathers not around, grandmas not around. They try to bribe their children to behave, perhaps they feel guilty.'
(Chair of Governors, School C)

'We have many single mothers and absent fathers – there are strong single mothers…..' 'When these families fall into crisis it is serious, as it is becoming much harder to operate outside the system and there are no cash in hand jobs available.' (Headteacher, School C)

In one focus group, opinions were mixed about single parent families:

'I don't want it put that if you are from a single-parent, Black Caribbean background that you will not succeed, because some of those kids have done very well and have gone on to University. What I am thinking is that we have had it instilled into us and we have done this with our children. I have told them that I want them to travel and visit other countries and get a better house than we have.' (Parent F)

'A few years ago a child came here at 4.50pm with her sister's Secondary Transfer application form; she said her mum had gone on holiday and she had been told to get the form in by that date. They have different priorities. This is why I say, it starts at home. If you cannot spend time with your child at home, why should you expect someone else to do it? Some parents are smoking weed and dressing up… they say to their kids 'I'm going out raving'…. That's what kids experience.' (Parent A)

'Why is it that you are having more Black teenage pregnancies than Whites? Why aren't you looking at what can be done to tackle the roots of the matter? You are having grandmothers at the age of 40. Working with children and parents a lot of the issues that we are talking about wouldn't want to arise, but because they want to continue stereotyping and perpetuating the problem.' (Parent A)

'We have a lot of single parents and some may have four children under the age of eight.' (Learning Mentor, School D)

'Sometimes they do not seem interested when they pick up their children, they are on their mobile phones – usually single parents in their 20s.' (Headteacher, School A)

'There is pressure on single parent families, having to go to work; some parents take on night jobs. Some are in high-powered jobs and they do not spend the time with their children. Grandparents do not seem to figure.' (Retired Headteacher, School Z)

Socio-Economic Disadvantage and Effects of Poverty

Persistent socio-economic disadvantage has a negative impact on the life outcomes of many British children. In the UK, poverty is defined as relative rather than absolute. Those people who are described as living in poverty have (in the main) the basics such as an adequate diet or somewhere to live. What these people lack is sufficient income to be able to participate fully in society. People in poverty are said to be 'socially excluded'.

Over the years research has reported noteworthy associations between low income and psychiatric disorders, social and academic functioning, and chronic physical health problems. One of the key areas influenced by family income is educational outcomes.

School readiness reflects a child's ability to succeed both academically and socially in a school environment. It requires physical well-being and appropriate motor development, emotional health and a positive approach to new experiences, age-appropriate social knowledge and competence, age-appropriate language skills and age-appropriate general knowledge and cognitive skills. It is well documented that poverty decreases a child's readiness for school through aspects of health, home life, schooling and neighbourhoods. Six poverty-related factors are known to impact child development in general and school readiness in particular. They are the incidence of poverty, the depth of poverty, the duration of poverty, the timing of poverty (e.g., age of child), community characteristics (e.g., concentration of poverty and crime in neighbourhood and school characteristics) and the impact poverty has on the child's social network (parents, relatives and neighbours). A child's home has a particularly strong impact on school readiness. Children from low-income families often do not receive the stimulation and do not learn the social skills required to prepare them for school. Typical problems are parental inconsistency (with regard to daily routines and parenting), frequent changes of primary caregivers, lack of supervision and poor role modelling. Very often, the parents of these children also lack support.

A primary school Headteacher spoke about the decades of disadvantage that some Black Caribbean families have experienced:

> *'Our Black Caribbean parents work but they are not high earners. If you look back over four or five decades and you treat someone badly at the beginning, it creates a culture. People who came over from the Caribbean were treated in such a way they have had to become tough...' 'When the first people arrived here from the Caribbean they had to live in squalid conditions and were abused by racist comments. Maybe the following generations have seen that and become hard. The poverty started way back and got handed down.' (Headteacher, School A)*

Settling into the London community was not easy, as Caribbean people could experience physical and racial abuse, and found it hard to get work. Some had to accept jobs with low wages that no one else wanted to do. London Transport and the National Health Service were the main employers of the first Caribbean immigrants who had been invited to come to

the UK to work.

When British industries did start to employ Caribbeans in larger numbers they often came into conflict with trade unionists who objected to working with Caribbean people. To keep the peace, many employers enforced a cap on the number of Caribbeans they would employ.

> *'Parents who were originally from the Caribbean have very high expectations – whether it can become a reality for them depends on a number of factors. Sometimes they are so busy fighting for housing, work and then poverty etc. Those with Caribbean heritage still do have high expectations – it's probably because society is changing, that those aspirations are changing. There are socio-economic reasons, e.g. working unsocial hours, low pay, parental education, knowing how to deal with their children, problems in partnerships, lack of knowledge, not knowing where to go to support them. If people do not have that support for themselves then they take it out on their children. If they work unsocial hours, they may not be at home when the child comes home from school.' (Governor, School S)*

> *'We have a lot of pupils here who are new arrivals of Jamaican heritage. When we were looking at lists in each year group, I wouldn't say it was a scary list … but there are examples of extreme deprivation.' (Deputy Head, School E)*

> *'There is a lot going on in this area. We send out details of Family Fun and most of it is free but it is not used by Black Caribbean families. Most of the children have very limited understanding of the world. I take six of them to horse riding lessons – they have never been up close to a horse. They don't know that horses eat grass. We were doing a project on water and eight children in the room had never seen a wave or a beach. Little things we take for granted that you think they would have done.' (Learning Mentor, School A)*

The Bishop of a Pentecostal Church, who came to the UK in 1964 from Jamaica and grew up and lived most of his life in Brixton, gave an historical perspective on this:

> *'I do not want to make a blanket statement because there are exceptions but I would think the failure is based, in my experience on parental background. If I may give you an example, when I came into this country first, most Black people were not business minded. They had no great structure or planning. Coming from Jamaica, people would say 'I am going to the UK for five years but they didn't understand the culture or economic structure. People who went before them sent money back home and they didn't realise it was sacrificial; they thought it would be easy until they arrived here and found it wasn't so.' (Church Leader A, 1st generation Jamaican)*

> *'Black Caribbean pupils are underachieving because of poverty.' (Librarian)*

'There needs to be much wider understanding about well-being. If you have children who are stressed in the classroom they are not going to do well.' (EP C)

'Are the areas where Black Caribbean pupils are living seen as deprived area – or they go to schools in deprived areas? Some of these schools might struggle to recruit high quality teachers. There are issues re high staff turnover, supply teachers, so there may be an issue of the quality of education they provide.' (EP E)

'I think the geographical area affects them. Angell Town estate has few play or green spaces. Life is tough. Not financial poverty, environmental and social poverty. A low income affects all groups.' (School governor, School S)

'So many children don't go into central London and experience the amount of history here. I find it incredible that so many children never go. We walked past Southwark Cathedral, the Golden Hind and walk down by the Thames. We make an effort to do this because they just don't go there. We take children out as much as we can, even though it can be a challenge.' (Primary School Teacher, School C)

The above views on the effect of poverty are also supported by previous research. For example, Bhattacharya et al argued that economic deprivation appear widely prevalent among Black groups. Many Black Caribbean pupils are further disadvantaged by the fact they attend under-resourced and less successful schools in inner cities (Weeks-Berand, 2007). Cassen and Kingdon (2007) also suggest that where schools have an opportunity to select children, this operates to the determinant of economically disadvantaged Black Caribbean and other Black pupils.

Poor Housing

First encounters for people from the Caribbean with London were often less than welcoming. New arrivals soon faced several hardships that they neither expected nor were prepared for. Finding a home or a room to rent was a difficult task for Caribbeans. Landlords would not rent to them and banks would not authorise their mortgage applications.

If they were to secure accommodation, then rooms were often in bad condition and they were charged extortionate rents. To overcome this, many Caribbean people started to use the 'Partner' system, as they had done in the Caribbean. This allowed them to raise the capital to buy a home as a group. As someone who arrived in LA1 during this era, a local Bishop recalled:

'In the 1960s Black people found it very hard to get accommodation. Many of them would have a shift system, just occupying one room. They were not interested in investment (those that I knew). We were more interested in the clothes we wore, the bling and the nice car. We would look down on the Asian population and criticise them and say 'they all live in one room and buy a bag of lour'. We didn't realise they came in to do great things. I don't think that the

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Black Caribbean community understood that. We had no mentors to advise us to buy a house, invest in property, you don't need a lot of furniture – save and invest!' (Church Leader A, 1st generation)

'As a young man I had no mentors and most of the young men around me were the same. We were more interested in partying than setting down a foundation. We lived in one room with a kitchen and bathroom and the landlord would not share or advise us to get ourselves a house. He would complain about how hard it was being a landlord, so it put you off. So getting a Council flat – one becomes satisfied. Most people bought houses because they were forced to because they couldn't get accommodation from the Council or they had sub-standard rented housing. There was no-one to counsel people about how you bought a house. The banks were not very favourable to Black people at that time and again that could have been lack of knowledge on the part of the Black Caribbean community. This is not a blanket statement.' (Church Leader A, 1st generation)

A retired Headteacher in LA11 who came to the UK from Guyana, aged 18 years recalled:

'At that time there were signs around in Leytonstone saying 'no Irish, no Blacks, no dogs'. It was Jewish people who helped Black people to find accommodation and to buy houses.' (Retired Headteacher, School Z)

Housing difficulties continue to affect Black Caribbean families and can impact significantly on their childrens' schooling, as one parent observed:

'Some of them have got a lot of things going on in their lives, they may be temporary housing and there might be domestic violence. Some have been moved to East London and then they are late because they are travelling to school from there, and then they move again to Peckham. Sometimes in temporary accommodation there is five in one room. They cannot do homework because they don't have any space any access to the internet. We have some families with no recourse to funds. Many have moved here from other boroughs.' (Parent A)

'There are housing problems and if your surroundings are not conducive to work, and you have to look after younger siblings… when your life is like that; education is the last thing you are thinking about'. (Parent A).

'I was in during half-term trying to find accommodation for a child with autism. The family is dossing on someone's floor. I had one family living in a car. I asked them 'why is it better living in a car than living in the Caribbean?' It is the fear of what they might face if they return.' (Headteacher, School B)

'Parents and young people do not understand how the system works. They do not know. Sometimes they live 3 or 4 to a room. They have become used to somebody else sorting things out for them.' (Learning Mentor)

CHAPTER 6. WIDER SOCIAL ISSUES AND OTHER FACTORS THAT MAY CONTRIBUTE TO BLACK CARIBBEAN PUPILS' UNDERACHIEVEMENT

Institutional Racism

Institutional racism was explained in 1967 by Kwame Ture and Charles V Hamilton in '*Black Power: Politics of Liberation*, stating that while individual racism is often identifiable because of its overt nature, institutional racism is less perceptible because of its 'less overt, far more subtle' nature. Institutional racism '*originates in the operation of established and respected forces in the society, and thus receives far less public condemnation than individual racism.*'

In our focus groups and school visits we asked, 'do you believe institutional racism is a factor in the underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils'?

> '*Absolutely! How many Black policemen have we got, or how many Black teachers have we got? You can imagine the difficulties they would face if they joined the Police force. I suspect strongly if you went back to the 1970s there would have been teachers who had one or two Black children in their class and they would be called racist names. Racism was probably rife in the 1960s and 1970s. They had an expectation that children were going to be difficult. They expected bad attitudes. It comes right back to people thinking Black people are inferior. Even now in parts of this country they think the same.*' (Headteacher, School A)

Some examples of overt racism in the 1970s and 1980s which was the experience of pupils of Caribbean heritage in London schools are given below:

> '*I went to a primary school in LA10 in the 1970s. It was blatantly racist! There were few Black children and you were definitely made to feel different. When it came to school dinners they would say 'you don't eat that kind of thing at home do you'? When it rained our hair would go curly and teachers kept touching my hair. Children would ask 'can you wash your skin colour off?' It was awful when I was in Year 6, there was a very racist teacher who said 'Black people are guttersnipes' and 'you come from the pits of the earth'. We had just got a school band and he was a classical pianist, so he used to say 'this isn't music, this is what Black people use – they play on dustbin lids'. Other teachers in the school were nice. They knew he was racist but he was nearing retirement and I think the other teachers felt sorry for us. We were prepared because we knew he was racist. He used to hit the Black boys and run their heads under the taps.*' (Deputy Head, Inclusion, School B)

'I went to a primary school in Shepherd's Bush and someone called me a 'wog' so I beat her up because I knew it wasn't right. At that time there was a lot of racism. My class teacher called me a 'savage' because I was fighting… until she met my mum! My mum told her we were not savages; we were from a civilised society. My teacher said 'I did notice that Celia speaks English' and my mum said 'what did you expect?' This teacher later announced to the class that I lived in a house… she was trying to compensate for what she had said because she was shocked that my mum was educated. Then I became the favourite student!' (Secondary school teacher, School D)

'I grew up in LA1 but started grammar school in Battersea in 1972 at a time of a lot of change. The first generation of Black Caribbean people struggled with identity. People like Muhammed Ali made them feel positive when society wasn't making you feel positive about your identity. Brixton had such a strong West Indian presence, but in my Battersea school there were only fifteen Black and Asian pupils out of several hundred Whites. Racism was overt. A practice was to round up any non-European Blacks and Asians and put them in a squash court. On one occasion I saw a lot of my friends inside this court and others throwing food at them. Thankfully I wasn't part of it but it did register with me. I remember all the racist name calling. If you are in an environment where people are encouraging then it affects your ability to prosper – in rich soil you can grow. Attitudes are conveyed. I was crying in my second year at secondary school and I didn't know why. In Year 10 there was only one Black student in that year group and he told me when he started in Year 7, he had been beaten up every single day. He would eat his food in a hiding place. He began to do every kind of martial arts and when I saw him recently he was still doing all he could to keep fit to protect himself. I found it more favourable working by myself. I didn't get it in the classroom, but there was always an undercurrent of racism even in my friends. I did well, getting 'A's until I was fifteen years, but then things began to deteriorate and by the time I was sixteen my work was non-existent. I tried to work at home. In the 6th form I didn't do well and stopped going to College. There were racial slurs around me and I only felt comfortable in Brixton – I felt safer there.' (Former Vice Principal, Church Leader B)

'In the 1980s racism and the concept that a teacher might be racist was just coming to the fore. I think there is now more fear that teachers might be deemed as racist as young people are more aware now. When I attended school there were one or two incidents where teachers' behaviour towards a pupil was deemed to be racially motivated. What teachers tend to do is label pupils. It can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. This has an impact on the Black school experience than other ethnic groups. That Black thing is becoming more of a shared experience of other ethnic groups now'… 'As a

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professional working in schools, I have seen teachers being unfair to pupils who are of darker complexion; they are singled out if a group of pupils are misbehaving. It has become an issue now in the ethnic minority community about what you name your child because of racial profiling, e.g. at the airport my friend was stopped while leaving an on arrival because he is Black with a Muslim name. I am mixed race with an English name and I didn't. It can affect your chances of getting an interview for a job if you don't have an English name.' (Parent B)

'I thought things had got a bit more equal until I moved to London in the 1990s and encountered the education system. I had never seen anything like it in my life. People of Black Caribbean background who are the same age as me and went to school in London in the 1960s and 1970s, the standards of spelling and grammar are so poor. Also there's a sense that people do not really care. I was thinking what went on in London schools at that time that raised a generation of pupils with such low standards of education?'
(Parent C)

A retired Headteacher spoke about her own experiences of institutional racism in schools in LA12 and LA11 in the 1980s and 1990s:

'I was teaching in an RC school. I was the resources co-ordinator in the 1980s and I also shared the role of Literacy co-ordinator with another teacher. The substantive post was going to be advertised. I went to see the Headteacher and spoke to her about my interest in the post. She didn't encourage me to apply. My colleague said 'why get another person to do the job when they don't know what they are doing?' I didn't say anything but I spoke to my friend who was an Inspector when she visited the school and she told me I needed to move on and get promotion elsewhere. I didn't bother to apply in view of what had happened. I heard about another Literacy Co-ordinator role in another borough and I applied and got that post. The Headteacher was really shocked when I said I was leaving'

However, this wasn't the end of the story, she continued….

'When I went to the new school the Caretaker saw me – he was speaking to the Deputy Head and I heard him say 'I see they have appointed a Nig-Nog!' I didn't say anything to anyone about it. Later when the Deputy Head was leaving the Headteacher came and invited me to apply for Deputy Headship. I said 'I've only just come' but she said 'from what I have seen you are more than capable of doing the job'. I applied for and got the job, however, the Deputy Head who was leaving tried to put up barriers towards me.' (Retired Headteacher, School Z)

'Several generations of people are told you shouldn't achieve… you cannot go to University… you have no reason to aspire. Your child is told this and their child the same. That's a bigger barrier to overcome than for a new immigrant. My hypothesis is if you have been subjected to racism over several generations then this is going to make your hopes and dreams more difficult. Black Africans tend to be first and second generation so they still have that hope. Work situations are difficult, zero hours contracts, trying to make ends meet. These are the problems our parents face.' (School Governor)

One would have hoped that institutional racism was a thing of the past, but our findings show that this is not the case. Indeed, the extent of institutional racism was highlighted by former Prime Minister David Cameron who rattled Oxford University last year when he described its low intake of Black students as 'disgraceful'. He was wrong to claim it only accepted one Black student in 2009 – it actually took one 'Black Caribbean' person out of a total of 27 Black students for undergraduate study that year. Nevertheless, everyone seemed to agree with his assertion: 'We have got to do better than that.' In January 2016, writing in the Sunday Times, about race bias in Universities, he said:

'Discrimination should shame our country and jolt us to action. I don't care whether it's overt, unconscious or institutional; we've got to stamp it out.'

A School Governor who has been involved in a College of postgraduate students said:

'There you would think there was no issue with Black Caribbean underachievement. Students from London with Black Caribbean and Asian background formed 40% of our students. The issue was not so much underachievement as they were academically successful but finding it difficult to move on to the next stage of becoming lawyers. I started to look in more detail. I was aware that there were a series of institutional barriers, i.e. being in the right place at the right time with the right people at the right time.'

'A school in Islington wanted to twin with a school in the Barbican. The parents objected and said we don't want our children mixing with them!' (Parent A)

'Racism is almost an integral part of this society. An article I read in the newspaper talked about a lady who applied for thousands of jobs and didn't get an interview and she decided to change her name and made it sound English! There is a lot of stereotyping especially of Black Caribbean boys – especially in the media. If they are showing a Black man they would just choose someone with braided hair and ear-rings and this reinforces stereotypes.' (Parent A)

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'Racism in society is still an issue. Currently it is blatant racism. My daughter works in the same school where she was a pupil and I am a governor in this Infants' school. A child came in with some sweets and said 'my mother said they are only for the Polish children, they are not for the Black children'. My daughter told her to take them back to her mother and tell her to give out the sweets outside the school gate at the end of the day. Another teaching assistant queried why she had said this and my daughter said 'this is a Roman Catholic school and there is no place for racism here.' (Retired Headteacher, School Z)

'I believe there is racism among Eastern Europeans because it is inherent in their history and culture and they lack the experience of living and working in a multi-cultural city. The majority are Catholics so Roman Catholic schools employ them.' (Retired Headteacher, School Z)

'Institutional racism is a major issue – in our own services, Paediatricians, society at large. Partly it's about not wanting to self-reflect. Often we do not do this enough as a team. When we go into schools, my supervisor who is Jamaican, our view of the school is seen very differently. I get a different conversation with SENCos – they will say things to me as a White person that they wouldn't say to her.' (EP A)

An article in 'The Independent' in January 2012 entitled 'Race in Britain 2012: Has life changed for ethnic minorities?' presented the argument that social class is as much an issue as race in the UK:

'The major dividing line in Britain today is not race but class, and that Stephen's (Stephen Lawrence) *killing captured the nation's interest only because he was from a 'nice' middle-class family and had aspirations to be an architect.*

But the statistics for ethnic minorities are bleak: Black men are 26 times more likely than their White counterparts to be stopped and searched by police, while Black men and women in their early twenties are twice as likely to be not in employment, education or training as White people. And Black and Asian defendants are still more likely to go to jail than their White counterparts when convicted of similar crimes – and they serve longer sentences. A Ministry of Justice (MoJ) analysis of tens of thousands of cases found that in 2010, 23 per cent of White defendants were sent to prison for indictable offences, compared with 27 per cent of Black counterparts and 29 per cent of Asian defendants.

The report, Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System, also found that ethnic minority defendants received longer sentences in almost every offence

group. For sexual offences, White defendants received an average of just over four years in jail, but Black defendants were sent down for more than five years. For violence against the person, the average breakdown was 16.8 months for Whites, 20 months for Blacks and almost two years for Asian defendants. The MoJ insisted that 'the identification of differences should not be equated with discrimination', claiming that the disparities between ethnic groups could be explained by the seriousness of the offences, the presence of mitigating or aggravating factors and whether or not a defendant pleaded guilty.'

With regard to the issue of race, class and employment, the same article read:

'In 1993, the British economy was emerging from the end of a recession that hit most of the population, but the ethnic communities were still suffering disproportionate levels of unemployment. A TUC survey in that year estimated that, while the jobless rate had risen to nearly 12 per cent for Whites, the figure for Black people was twice that number. A period of growth improved employment and narrowed the gap between ethnic groups – although the latest 13.3 per cent unemployment rate among non-Whites is still almost double the figure recorded for Whites.

A new recession has triggered fresh concerns that any progress could be reversed: for example, council cutbacks are likely to have a disproportionate impact on the high numbers of Black and minority ethnic (BME) workers at local authorities. Activists have complained that groups have been lagging behind in crucial areas of the labour market even during the boom years.

Black people in their early twenties are twice as likely to be not in employment, education or training (Neet) as White people; although 14 per cent of the working-age population in England are from ethnic minorities, only 7 per cent of apprenticeships were filled by BME candidates. BME workers, even many graduates, are generally paid less than White counterparts. Rates of self-employment among Black workers are significantly lower than the national average.

For some, this is compelling evidence of institutionalised racism in the labour market. But others point to an equally troubling development: self-imposed limits on aspirations.' (The Independent, January 2012)

The Headteacher of a primary school observed that:

'Racism does still exist in some parts of London, particularly on White estates in Charlton and South East London; in large White areas. My two boys are in a school with a really good mix of pupils. All their friends come around to the

house – all different colours. My sons always ask me 'who did you tell off today mum'? Then I was shocked when one day he added 'was he Black or White'? My son said the word 'blick' the other day – apparently it is a word used to describe someone whose skin is more Black than others. I wonder where they pick things like that up.' (Headteacher, School A)

'One of our longest standing 4th/5th generation Black Caribbean communities are in a unique position. The racism they faced is now less in your face, but it is harder to tackle. One school I worked with, they will talk about White children being in the minority and do they feel OK. This is White fear, but it's also racism. That is pertinent to LA1 50 years down the line.' (EP A)

'I have lived in London for twenty years. My mother reads the 'Sun' newspaper and lives in Southend. There is a large Polish community there and she will say 'they have opened all the shops'. My mum is 74 years old from a different generation but these racist attitudes come down to the next generation. Racism exists in all. Sometimes I see a bit of racism of West Indians against Africans. As far as parents are concerned I am quite racist if I tell a Black child off and not a White… as they see it.' (Headteacher, School A)

'Everyone is frightened of being called 'racist'. Girls who say to teachers 'you are only doing that because you are racist', they use the race card to get away with things. There was a boy in a secondary school who called everyone racist. He was very tall and big and when he was at primary school he was stopped by the Police. He had a bad experience of authority figures and so he perceived everyone as being racist.' (EP D).

We asked why do people fear being called racist?

'They do not have the tools or language to understand the impact of race and culture and cannot discuss it. It is unfounded fear based on a racist position. There may be some subconscious position that may be I haven't communicated with them well beforehand, or have a negative image of the child.' (EP C)

Social Class Issues

Parents' social class has a greater impact on how well their children perform at school than 'good parenting' techniques such as reading bedtime stories, researchers have shown.

A study of 11,000 seven-year-old children found that those with parents in professional and managerial jobs were at least eight months ahead of pupils from the most socially disadvantaged homes, where parents were often unemployed. The researchers, from the

University of London's Institute of Education, took into account factors such as ethnicity and family size. They found that parents' social class had a bigger influence on a child's progress between the ages of five and seven than a range of parenting techniques, including reading before bedtime.

Alice Sullivan, the main author of the study, said the research showed that *'while parenting is important, a policy focus on parenting alone is insufficient to tackle the impacts of social inequalities on children'.* (The Guardian, Dec. 2010)

With regard to ethnicity, some people from a racial minority group or a lower income family do not have a family history of higher education. If the parents or grandparents have not had access to education, the child that comes from such a family is not likely to have had anybody read to them or even have had an opportunity to be exposed to many books, or visited museums and places of interest. Teachers have to be aware of these crucial factors and ensure that children are not labelled as having special educational needs or being 'difficult' students.

A first generation Jamaican great-grandfather gave his views on how further education was viewed by his generation:

> *'In Jamaica we believed that once you are educated you get by. There were those who thought that education was not that important… once you have a piece of land to cultivate, that's all you need and then there were those who thought no, you need to be educated. Most people came here to be educated or further educated. I could be wrong but this is the way I see things'… 'One of the reasons could have been at the time, further education, I am not sure it was free at the time. If I remember rightly, most of my peers went into a trade but this is what I know. I do know of a man who was a bus conductor who sent all his children to University.'*

We asked how important education was to those people who came to the UK from other Caribbean islands.

> *'We were one of the first Caribbean countries to gain independence. It had a lot to do with Dr Eric Williams, our first Prime Minister, that education is so good in Trinidad and Tobago. He set up the foundations, 'Education, Education, Education'. There are natural resources in Trinidad, gas, oil and so the country has more money compared with some of the other islands. We have some excellent schools, Queen's Royal College, Latimer, top schools run by Orders of Priests and Nuns. My brother is an academic. He grew up in Trinidad and came here to do his first degree, his Masters and PhD. Education was stressed from the setting up of the country. Secondary education was endorsed by Eric Williams. Common Entrance still exists there.' (Parent E)*

'In the 1960s Guyana suffered a brain drain with many people emigrating to Canada and some to the UK. We were highly educated and continued our education after we left.' (Retired Headteacher, School Z)

The question of why people who came here from the Caribbean were not business minded but tended to be involved in the service sector came up in a number of our interviews:

'For the most part when it comes to Black Caribbean families coming to this country from abroad, they came here to work. They are not business minded, unlike Asian families who were successful in business at home, so they came here and did the same. What you see are low expectations of work, low paid jobs. You couldn't tell your children what other jobs are available if your social group is at that level – it's all you know. Take for example the social control through music that people listen to, most of it is negative but they want to be part of a group. Their music is a sound track to their lives 'this reflects me'.. A lot of people from inner cities like to dress like their peers, socially it means more to them to look like a person with good clothes. You want to be like them with nice trainers because they are popular. Parents buy their children £100 trainers because in their circle it carries a lot of weight. In the Black community looking good is important, it doesn't matter that you can't read.' (Parent A)

A first generation Black Caribbean Church leader recalled:

'The only business that I can remember Jamaicans having would be restaurants. I have never thought about that really but I don't remember them ever doing any great planning. There were opportunities to a point, it was more like finding a job and once you had a job that was it. Whether they were afraid of investment I don't know. You wonder whether it was the five year syndrome 'I won't be here long enough'. In my generation we had no long term plan to stay in England it was always going back home. As time went on a lot of disillusionment came in when I consider that I haven't achieved what I thought I would. You may not have paid for your winter coat or your furniture! You might have children and the situation has changed.' (Church Leader A, 1st generation)

Over the last few decades though things have moved on as more and more businesses have been established by Caribbean heritage people. Many of today's Caribbean Londoners have become business people, running their own restaurants, barbers, nightclubs, bookshops and grocers. Others have achieved high positions in big business and public life. If you check UK Black links you will find that London is home to thousands of businesses owned by people from many of the Caribbean islands. The strength of the

Black pound is so great that it can no longer be ignored and Caribbean Londoners find themselves singled out for attention by advertisers.

Whilst there are many success stories, a parent who talked about her own son's experiences, identified issues that prevent so many Black youngsters getting into successful careers:

> 'My son is very clever and was head-hunted by a Company but he said 'mum I am the only Black person in the Company'. I ask you: 'Why should he have to say that? Many youngsters say 'what's the point because I haven't got the same chance in getting a job? – even if they are clever.'

There are obstacles to even getting an interview, to be in with a chance of getting a job by some who are changing their names to sound more English:

> 'My son changed his name to his grandmother's surname which is English when he was applying for jobs because he said he would stand more chance of getting an interview with an English name.' (Parent C)

Some of those interviewed felt that the limitations imposed by the community in which they are living, hindered the aspirations of Black Caribbean children:

> 'It's about your community. When you are applying for a school, you do not want your child to go to a school in point A, even if you live there. You could have the neighbours from hell but that is not an issue for them. I noticed that in Stamford Hill the Jews have their own schools and they are self-contained. The Greek Cypriots they are the same. Where a child lives you have crime, drugs, when you go home you have no-one there, the electricity has gone off because your parent hasn't paid the bill. I believe it's the communities. If the foundation isn't conducive to improvement then you are stuck. When you have kids here and there it's not frowned upon by the community – and the music is terrible.' (Parent A)

> 'It could be a social class issue also that impacts on their achievement. We have a social system here. There are a lot of single parent families here and so if they do not have additional family, it is very difficult. A lot of it has to do with westernisation and urbanisation.' (Parent B).

> 'The language the child uses at home is rejected by the school. When you're doing phonics in school and people pronounce words differently, we would accept a Scottish or Liverpudlian background and the way they speak but not if they come from a Jamaican or working class background. It is criticised. If you lesson is about full-stops, then it would be wrong to pick up something

that is cultural. If you think within the school you are not accepted then you become ostracised and become an outcast.' (EP A)

'In Britain there's a strong class system which hasn't evolved much in the last hundred years. Social mobility is poor in Britain. Britain is still run by elites. A lot of teachers are middle class and it plays a big part.' (Parent C)

Cultural and Identity Issues

Jamaica, Trinidad, Barbados, Antigua, St. Vincent, Guyana and St Lucia are just a few of the Caribbean islands represented in London. The strength of Caribbean culture can be felt across the capital - from arts to food and language.

London would be quite different if Caribbean people had not come here. The relationship between the Caribbean and Britain has been long and sometimes troubled. The slave trade, and later the colonisation of the Caribbean by the British Empire have contributed greatly to the prosperity of Britain today. The distance between Britain and the Caribbean soon closed when Caribbean people answered the calls from British industries to help rebuild a post-war nation. It is through immigration that the real relationship between the two communities began. When people started to arrive in larger numbers form the Caribbean in the late 1940s, they left the ships with a passion and excitement for the place they considered to be the 'Mother Country'.

Over half a century since people from the Caribbean started to arrive in London in large numbers, their influence is widespread throughout London's social and cultural life. A host of actors, musicians, presenters, sportspeople and politicians who are second and third generation Caribbeans, are dynamic role-models for future generations.

Caribbean people have become one of the threads holding London together. One of the best illustrations of that is the Notting Hill Carnival with its roots firmly in the Caribbean tradition. One Trinidadian parent was concerned to ensure that her children should retain their cultural heritage with regard to food and Carnival:

'They now won't eat Pilau they want other foods – they like chips! I hardly ever try to correct them when they speak with a South East London accent. My daughter is very determined, very tech savvy. They think I am a bit slow if I am texting with one finger. They are moving up with the technology. I try to get them involved with the Carnival. My husband and a friend have a band which takes part in Carnival. We are involved in the food and the children play 'mas' and my daughter mocks me when I am dancing. I took my costume to a cultural day at their school and everyone loved it but they are becoming British. They are proud of being Trinidadian heritage but they see themselves as Londoners, British.' (Parent E)

Nevertheless could it be the troublesome history itself of slavery and colonialism that have resulted in the underachievement of so many pupils of Black Caribbean heritage in Britain?

Those we interviewed had this to say:

'There are many reasons for the underachievement… the confidence of parents engaging with society, low self-esteem, parents not getting good jobs, racism and that putting them off going forward and depending on the area where they live, not engaging with people outside their community.'

'It also depends on where in the Caribbean we are talking about. People from Guyana and Trinidad and Barbados tended to be a lot more ambitious than others, whereas countries like Jamaica were poorer islands. They came to this country to graft and work rather than get a better job.' (Deputy Head)

'In the 1960s Guyana suffered a brain drain with many people emigrating to Canada and some to the UK. We were highly educated and continued our education after we left. Jamaicans tended to work on the land. The Jamaican population was always the largest group in the UK and came from agricultural backgrounds. Many Jamaicans started allotments here. Jamaica was one of the oldest British colonies. The British pirates used Jamaica as a base. It had a huge sugar cane industry and a wide spectrum of involvement by Britain in Jamaica. Jamaicans took a leading role in standing up for the rights of Black people in this country. Jamaicans developed their own sub-culture in Brixton. They were an independent, strong force in this country. They have their own language, music food and lifestyle.' (Retired Headteacher – 1st generation, from Guyana, School Z)

'Probably in the initial stages of coming to this country they were oppressed. I could tell you stories of people whose faces are scarred as they were attacked by Teddy Boys. There is resilience inside and this leads to them maintaining their cultural differences – it's when people don't recognise them. If we are looking at youngsters as they come up – my child is five years old, he is doing very well, he is Afro-Caribbean, as he grows I am wondering what will happen, growing up round here in the neighbourhood.' (Governor, School R)

'Many of the Asians that came here also came out of a slavery thing. Britain went in and had a dominating factor. I wonder whether it comes down to family structure. How influential the family structure is in pushing children to get a good education rather than getting a job. Bus driving, working on the railway, working in London Transport, hospitals, these are the jobs that most Black Caribbean people did. All service jobs. Even the man from the African continent would come here and work on two bases – work and go to College

as well. I wonder whether it's a slave mentality. Is it slavery that caused that? For example, something happened and we didn't like it. Why didn't I try and change things for my children? Why is it that a Black man is in a top job as US President but you still have to ask why is Black Caribbean child underachieving? I would like to know the real cause but I wouldn't say it was slavery. We have had every opportunity – why don't we take advantage of all this? The Asians came and did it, the Africans came and they did it. I do not know if its cultural difference, but I know a lot of it was 'we want fun'.. 'we want to party' – in other words we do not build a foundation.' (Church leader A, 1st generation)

'I believe there are generational issues. The first wave to Black Caribbean immigrants had aspirations but no opportunity. The next generation had less aspiration and opportunity, the next generation have neither. The outcome of all this is mistrust. A fear of authority from the parents' side and fear from the staff of bolshie parents.' 'I have come through where these kids are coming from. I had difficulties at school. I had a child when I was 18 years old. Our Black Caribbean parents are loud, I call them passionate not rude or aggressive. I am a bridge in the middle of parents and school.' (Family Support Worker, School A)

'Where I came from (Trinidad) the men came home at weekends because they were working away from home during the week. This is a legacy of slavery and colonialism. When I look at the legacy of slavery and many of us have moved on but we do not all have the desire to be as good as we can be. I grew up partly in the Caribbean and partly in the UK. I came to the UK in 1964 as a six year old child with my younger brother. I had been living with my Gran in Trinidad and Tobago and when she died I came to live in Shepherd's Bush with my mother. I didn't know my father until I got here. I came on a ship called the Queen Mary with my four year old brother and we were at sea for 3-1/2 weeks. There was a woman on the ship who was supposed to look after myself and my brother but she didn't do it. I would go into the dining room on the ship and I was so small I couldn't see the food on the table; I remember baskets of bread and Tabasco sauce. I still have dreams about it. They told me you are going to England and you have to wear warm clothes so I arrived in woolly socks in August. We docked at Southampton and my mum was there to meet us.' (Secondary School Teacher)

Another concern expressed in our focus group interviews was the issue of identity. This is not helped by the various categories used by government agencies and others, to classify different ethnic groups. There seems also to be unwillingness by some in British society, to accept a person's own definition of who they are. For example:

'My husband who is from Trinidad has a range of different cultural heritage and my daughter was surprised when I told her his mother (her grandmother) had a Chinese background. I try to expose them to Trinidadian culture, we have a party at our house and put on the costumes we wear for Carnival and cook food.' (Parent E)

'I do not have problems relating to people of different races and backgrounds. The motto for Jamaica is 'Out of many – one people'. It's on our money, all the different races, Jamaicans, Jews, Indians, Chinese, Lebanese, Whites, everyone speaks Patois. It does work out in some social class in Jamaica and still a bit of colour. The Blacks there could be top lawyers in the country or own a big house there, but here you couldn't see yourself as Prime Minister because my face wouldn't fit.' (Jamaican parent)

'I am Jamaican. I am a British citizen but I have never wanted to be anything other than Jamaican. My children would say 'I am half Jamaican and half British)'. Their identity as being Jamaican would have been stronger had I been able to spend more time there'.. 'It is natural for me to speak English and at home Jamaican. I told my children that I needed to speak Patois to them. I wanted to make a statement. You cannot recover it, and so we have that joke in the house.' (Jamaican parent)

'Born in Harrow of Barbadian and Swiss parents, I didn't experience any racism at school. I left school at 16 years and played basketball at a high level and entered the 'Black' world. My identity was an issue and they told me I was Black and wouldn't accept a mixed-race identity. I became Black and affiliated with it. When I was 19 years I got a scholarship to college in Miami and I experienced extreme racism, overtly expressed by Black Americans. When I came back to England and re-evaluated things I said 'I am me and will not accept anyone else's definition.' (Parent H)

'Schools are about middle class professional ways of presenting yourself. Children are taught that the way you speak at home is not the way you get on in life. From the grassroots you are told you are not right, so children put on a different persona.' (Family Support Worker, School A)

'I think a lot of youngsters don't want to be seen as African as it is not cool.' (Parent C)

'An article I read in a newspaper talked about a lady who applied for thousands of jobs and didn't get an interview and she decided to change her name and made it sound English. There is a lot of stereotyping especially of Black Caribbean people, especially in the media.' (Parent I)

'My son changed his name to his grandmother's surname which is English when he was applying for jobs because he said he would stand more chance of getting an interview with an English name.' (Librarian)

'People ask me 'where are you from?' I say 'I was born in London'. They say, 'no, no, where was your mum from'? I would describe myself as Black British of Caribbean heritage. They do not want to accept this.' (EP D)

'In terms of society, we have taken their identities and given them a negative one and it is largely down to the media. How can you raise aspirations when you are battling against a system?' (Headteacher, School D)

'When my son applied for University on the UCAS form, where it asked which ethnic group he belonged to he put down Black Caribbean, but he was born here. I said 'Wayne why have you ticked the box as Black Caribbean? He said 'Yes mum, but no-one sees me as Black British'! Even though I was born here I tend to do the same. How many generations down does it have to be before the Government changes these categories?' (Parent I)

Media Negative Profiling

The media do not stand in isolation from the society on which they report. In fact, they are an integral part of society. They utilise the same stock of knowledge that is part of that pool of 'common sense' which informs all of our lives. It is common sense to expect punishment if one has committed a crime; it is common sense to have a system of law and order; it is common sense that some people will make more money than others. This pool of common sense knowledge is a reservoir of all our unstated, taken-for-granted assumptions about the world we live in. It is filled with historical traces of previous systems of thought and belief structures.

An inherent part of that historical legacy is the way in which the media positioned and represented peoples who were different; different from what was considered acceptable in British society. That difference covered the entire span of peoples – the Irish, Jews, Black people, etc. Any difference was constructed as a negative sign and imbued with connotations of threat, invasion, pollution and the like. People who were different were positioned as 'others.' 'They' were the criminals; 'they' were dirty, unkempt; 'they' caused trouble and disease. 'They' had to be kept out or contained in a separate area away from 'civilised' society. Critical to the media discourse of the time was the opposition between 'them' and 'us.' What 'they' were, 'we' were not and vice versa.

This is the legacy that informs the media's reservoir of images and filters regarding people of colour but the situation has not changed drastically. Media coverage pertaining to people of colour tends to cluster around particular themes - crime, deviance, exotica and

negatively valued differences. The historical legacy continues to bear influence in the ways in which particular groups are represented, as a LA1 Headteacher stated:

> 'The other massive issue and we cannot do anything about this is the power of the media. The South London Press is full of negativity and it always has articles about Black men with guns or knives. I am not saying it doesn't happen but our children are at home and see things on the news. Also, the culture of MTV of girls running around over-sexualised, guns, rappers, we are being led to believe that Black people are scary. This is what we are fed. These are role models and they are not positive. They are harmful, materialistic and negative. We want to show children that they can have a nice watch or whatever, but they have to work hard to get it.'
> (Headteacher, School A)

Stereotyping is one very common and effective way in which racism is perpetuated. Thus, there is a preponderance of representations of these groups within circumscribed categories, e.g. athletics, entertainment, crime, and so forth. Stereotypes are one-dimensional. They only highlight specific characteristics and these are often used to typify whole groups of people. Other elements, absent from the stereotypes, are similarly absent from the coverage. This leads to a situation where assumptions are made about people on the basis of stereotyping.

> 'Today's media and what people see in terms of successful Black people, it's entertainers and footballers that are pushed.' (Parent A)

> 'A lot of people who are up there in the music business are African and they come out with it. I think a lot of the music Black Caribbean pupils listen to is damaging; you think 'is that what they are saying?' (Parent A)

There are other specific ways in which the media reports on issues relating to 'race' and racism that fit the prevailing commonsensical definitions of these terms and serve to reinforce them over time:

> 'Racism is getting worse now because of the political situation. The media has a lot of influence over the average person. When they are portraying anything negative, they choose a black face, even when discussing Islamisation, to reinforce stereotypes. There has now been a change in that it has shifted more towards Europeans who are on the receiving end of racism. From my perspective, the Asian population has not been targeted as much as the Black population. This has happened in the media. I don't know where they get their information from but they seem to be bent on making sure that racial stereotyping goes on.' (Parent B)

'There's a lot of stereotyping especially of the Black Caribbean. Especially in the media. If they are showing a Black man they would just choose someone with braided hair and ear-rings and this reinforces stereotypes.' (Parent B)

'A lot of the images we see of Black Caribbean in the media are stereotypical and negative. Even Ride Along 2 which is an action comedy gives out a very violent, aggressive, negative image of Black people. It is divisive in many respects.' (Governor, School M)

'The media: Hollywood stars are boycotting the Oscars because of racism. The Masai have to kill a lion to prove they are a man but Tarzan is portrayed as White. If you only ever see success identified in White people you cannot identify with them. All these things have an impact. Britain has always been a master of social control and the class system is there which affects everybody. If you are a visible minority you cannot escape. You cannot stop peoples' prejudices but you can stop people from practising what they believe if it is negative.' (Former Vice Principal, Church leader B)

'Even in primary schools, children are quick to pick up on which jobs will bring in a lot of money. They do not want to worry about money. The media has a lot to answer for in that they are pushing get this.. get that.' (Headteacher, School E)

'The media – music and film. Our youngsters are not great readers of newspapers. Social media has a tremendous influence on youngsters.' (School H)

'I believe the media is responsible for negative images of young Black people and they believe the images of gang members.' (Governor, School H)

'The media is a huge problem.' (Governor, School H)

'Programmes like the Cosby Show used to present positive images of professional Black family life with good, high expectations. There is nothing on TV like that now. All the media present of Black people is robbers, criminals and sportsmen. Racism is insidious. The media encourage youngsters to think they can make money easily.' (Governor, School X)

'All that hip-hop and those who think they can make it in music. They are taken in by it.' (Deputy Head, School D)

'There are a lot of negative connotations attached to them by the media in order to feel important. Unfortunately there is a sense that material gain far exceeds academic gain. A nice car and trainers is more important than getting a good job.' (Deputy Head, School D)

Police Stop and Search and its Negative Impact on Race Issues

The police have the power to stop and question a person at any time. In order to be allowed to search the person they must have reasonable grounds. The Home Office provides ethnicity statistics on stop and search, with individuals self-classifying in broad groups (Black, White, Asian, Chinese or other and Mixed). These categories are not based on national census categories and are not useful providing statistical evidence on the numbers of Black Caribbean that are involved in police stop and search. Nevertheless, data from 'Metropolitan Police in London' suggests that Black people were stopped and searched at almost 4 times the rate of White people across London in 2015/16, Mixed heritage were searched at almost twice the rate of Whites, Asians were searched at marginally higher rates than Whites, and people from Chinese or Other backgrounds were searched at lower rates than Whites (see Table 10).

Table 10. Stop and Search Disproportionality Ratios by Ethnic Background

Ethnic groups	Ratio
White : Black	1 : 3.6
White : Asian	1 : 1.2
White : Mixed	1 : 1.7
White : Other	1 : 0.7

Source: Stopwatch (2015). http://www.stop-watch.org/your-area/area/metropolitan

Overall the UK Home Office lacks detailed national statistics which would be useful for trend monitoring. A more recent worrying trend is the use of Tasers by the Police and fears have been expressed by campaigners that Black youngsters living in England are more likely to be tasered compared with the rest of the population. In particular, the death of the 48-year-old Black ex-Aston Villa striker, outside his parent's house in Telford (Shropshire) in the early hours one morning, added to tensions that were already running high in the wake of last summer's 'Black Lives matter' protests. The incident has prompted calls for Prime Minister Theresa May to lead an 'urgent and fundamental' review of how police use a weapon that can deliver a 50,000-volt shock and was fired 1,921 times in England and Wales last year.

An article in *The Independent* 15th August 2016 by Lusher and Watts, reported on this incident:

> *'A leading campaigner against excessive police deployment of Tasers has now told The Independent that the way the weapons are being used generally is 'a reflection of institutional racism within the police. Matilda MacAttram, the director of the human rights campaign group Black Mental*

Health UK, said: 'If you are Black and living in England, the likelihood of you being tasered is off the scale compared to the rest of the population.'

'There is no indication that the officers who attended the incident involving Mr. Atkinson discriminated on racial grounds or acted inappropriately in any way. But Ms MacAttram said that when it came to the use of Tasers generally, an October 2013 report for the London Assembly found that Black people represented half of those subjected to Taser deployment, despite making up only 10 per cent of the capital's population.' (Lusher and Watts 2016:1)

The fact that the above incident seems to have taken place in Shropshire throws some further light on an article published in the Guardian newspaper in August 2015:

'Black people are up to 17.5 times more likely than White people to be stopped and searched by the police in certain areas of the UK. This enormous disparity is no great surprise. The issue of stop and search has dogged the police service for decades, sparking riots in Brixton in 1981 and in various parts of the country in 1985. Despite Theresa May, the then Home Secretary pledging to tackle the issue, there has been little faith that much would change. What is surprising about these figures, however, is which police forces are the worst offenders.

Police forces in large urban areas such as London, the West Midlands and Greater Manchester have received a myriad of complaints and protests over their dealings with Black communities. It is in these areas that tensions and resistance have sparked, creating uneasy relationships between the police and the community, which go beyond stop and search to include issues such as deaths in custody and harassment.

Urban police have, at times, been compared to an occupying force, overseeing Black communities. But in the latest figures, while Black people are still two to three times more likely to be stopped by police in cities, it is in rural areas that the biggest disparities are found. In Dorset, Black people were 17.5 times more likely to be stopped and searched, in Sussex 10.6 times and Norfolk 8.4 times. Given that the last response to stop and search figures by some forces was an attempt to stop collecting the data, some will suspect urban results might reflect forces being better able to massage the figures. But whatever the case, the rural numbers are illuminating.' (Andrews, 2015:1)

The following incidences of Police stopping and searching Black youngsters were described to us:

'My granddaughter has a sports car and she was pulled over by the Police. She had been wearing a cap with her hair pulled under it and they thought she was a boy. The policeman asked her to stop. When he realised she was a girl he apologised. It seems if you are driving a nice car they will stop you. They like to stop and search. Even my youngest son was stopped and they searched him – they asked him to empty out his pockets and he had a bible in his jacket pocket!' (Retired Headteacher, School Z)

'I was stopped going into my own home with my key in my hand. I had to ask my parents to verify this to say I was living there. Frequently this has happened to me. I was probably about thirteen years of age when it first happened. I was just talking to friends and plain-clothed police stopped us and asked us what we were doing. 'Is this your house?' they said. You get used to it after a while. We have been stopped in broad daylight and people look at you and you haven't done anything wrong. It is difficult to challenge that. It is sad. You would have thought that sort of thing happened back in the 1980s. There seems to be an inherent problem about colour, or gathering in the street by people of colour. It seems to be a problem for the Police.'….
'Where I used to live there was a wall outside our house. A number of times Police challenged us just because we were sitting in that locality – it was ridiculous. Random stop and search after the London bombings. The Police stopped every ethnic minority person coming off the Tube carrying a ruck sack. No White people were stopped. I asked 'what is random about this?' (Parent B).

'When I was 17 working in a shop in Atlantic Road, four Black Caribbean youths, one carrying a gun and a truncheon came in to rob and they fired two shots as they were leaving. They ran into Railton road… the front line. All we shop assistants had to go to Brixton Police Station to try to identify the robbers. What struck me was a high percentage of people that I knew were already in the Police 'mug books'. I just wonder what happened to them over the years and what caused them to go down that path.' (Former Vice Principal, Church leader B)

'On the few occasions that he goes out in the evening, I tend to pick him up. Any Black boy walking on the streets late at night, the chances are he will get stopped. He's been stopped four times in the last year. The first time it was during the day when he had been to the cinema. He was 13 years old but 6'2'. On another occasion he came home with a grazed face. He told me the Police had made him lie down and pushed his face on the ground. He didn't tell me for a few weeks as he got embarrassed because I went to the Police Station the first time it happened and complained.' (Parent H)

'The Police 'stop and search'. A lot of the time they may have had this experience on their way to school. There is nowhere to go with this…' (Deputy Head, School D)

'There is a need for education on both sides; education on the young peoples' side; on how they should try to have different facets to their personality and make that process easier for themselves if they get stopped by the Police. Some Black boys and women think they have been targeted and so they have to act in a particular way. In some of the conversations I have had with them, I explain that when I have been stopped by the Police, I do not get out of the car aggressively or swear at them for stopping me. I present them with my driving licence before I am asked for it. Early in the conversation I tell them what I do for a living. If you can have a different facet in your reactions then the interaction hopefully will be different. I try to tell the boys you have to have a certain way about you; it doesn't take away from you as an individual. The Police need educating too.' (Deputy Head, School D)

'Our most difficult pupil says he has been stopped and searched by the Police 70-80 times almost on a daily basis. He is 15 years old.' (Headteacher, School D)

Overall available evidence from the study interviews reported here showed that ethnic minorities are still being disproportionately targeted 16 years after the Macpherson report into the investigation of Stephen Lawrence's murder denounced "institutional racism" in the Met and other police forces. The evidence from our research confirms that such racial bias continues. This is further supported by Andrews (2015:1) Guardian article which suggests that '*the disproportionate rates of stop and search for Black communities continue to demonstrate institutional racism in British policing.*'

The Pressure of Government School Standards Agenda

The standards agenda, is an approach to educational reforms which seeks to 'drive up' standards of attainment, including workforce skill levels and ultimately national competitiveness in a globalised economy. The force with which this agenda has been pursued has led some commentators to describe England as a 'laboratory' for educational reform (Finkelstein & Grubb, 2000).

'Whilst in principle higher standards of attainment are entirely compatible with inclusive school and educational system development, the standards agenda has concentrated on a narrow view of attainment as evidenced by national literacy, numeracy and science tests. Further this agenda is intimately linked to other aspects of policy: the marketization of education; a directive relationship between government and schools that potentially bypasses the participation of teachers in their own work and disengages schools from their local communities; and a regime of target setting and inspection to force up standards.' (Ainscow et al, 2006)

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Since schools are held to account for the attainments of their pupils and are required to make themselves attractive to families who can exercise choice of school for their children, low-attaining pupils, pupils who demand high levels of attention and resource and students who are seen not to conform to school and classroom behavioural norms become unattractive to many schools. This may go some way to explaining why levels of disciplinary exclusion remain problematic (National Statistics, 2005).

The Deputy Head of a large south London secondary school explained the challenges their school faced with regard to local academies 'cherry picking' students:

> *'You now have a situation where people are selecting intakes. We have a good, comprehensive list in our intake but schools are cherry picking and are offering parents promises of bursaries or 1:1 tuition in maths or music. The academisation of schools has caused this. A school down the road has put on their website that they are taking 370 pupils. A parent is not going to turn down these inducements if they send their child to that school. It is a concern for us, it is not right. The system is very much 'every man and woman for him/herself' now and it would be worth people looking at a balance regarding ethnicity of pupils. They have done away with catchment areas and it's a free for all.' (Deputy Head, Inclusion, School E)*

> *'Schools are not looking at the underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils because they are looking at the statistics and the need to improve all the outcomes. I think Headteachers are bogged down with Ofsted and examination results.' (SENCo, School E)*

Recruitment and Training Issues of Teachers, Educational Psychologists and SENCos

Institutional culture has a clear impact on the equality and diversity expertise of academic teaching staff who teach or support learning, with leadership, teaching and learning strategy, and student engagement as strong enablers. Schools and Universities in Britain are becoming globalised, diverse and multicultural and it is important that teaching staff be adequately prepared to handle the challenges that come with this in order to ensure that all students receive fair treatment and do not feel that they have somehow been treated differently because of who they are.

A retired Headteacher expressed her concerns that some school leaders do not appear to be aware of the need to induct new staff with regard to equality issues. She commented:

> *'Teachers and staff need an induction course to show them how to relate to children from other ethnic groups. In Catholic schools you get children from every background. You need to make them feel valued and build their self-esteem not make them feel inferior. Anyone employed in a school, who is not White British, Black British or African but is from Eastern Europe and South*

Africa needs to be inducted if they are to be employed to work in a diverse community.' (Retired Headteacher, School Z)

Teachers' understanding of diversity varied according to where they did their initial teacher training:

'I did my PGCE in Manchester last year. There was no focus on inclusion or of teaching in a diverse community. My first placement was in a school with mainly Bangladeshi pupils and the other was all White. One of the reasons I came to London to teach was because I wanted to teach in a diverse community. I was nervous when I first started in case I couldn't do it.' (Teacher, School D)

'I have come across teachers from all over the country who came to work in LA10. It was such a culture shock they didn't even last a year.' (EP D)

'I speak to teachers who remember doing half a day on inclusion in their training.' (EP D)

'I trained at the Metropolitan University in London and I was sent off to schools all over the place, East, South and West London! My friends in Northern Ireland are quite impressed and amazed at the diversity in our schools.' (Secondary HOD, School D)

'People think that you can pick up a successful Headteacher from here and put them there, but it doesn't work that way, it's contextual. I was in a school near Heathrow and the racism was rife! The degree of racism I experienced in a School in Eltham was awful. You cannot go anywhere and teach in a school. You have to understand the community you are working and they have to accept you. I would hire anyone who had a love for children. Children will generally respond to those teachers. When schools are successful it's because there are leaders who are aspirational and want everyone to do well.' (Former Vice Principal, Church Leader B)

Educational Psychologists commented on their own professional training with regard to inclusion/diversity:

'Anyone trained after 2006 would have a Doctorate. Training prior to that was at Masters Level. On our training it was largely White women training and we had one day on diversity at IOE which was presented by a Black man.' (EP A)

'At UCL they were quite strong on inclusion and equality issues and the use of appropriate resources for testing.' (EP C).

There is also a question about whether the ethnic composition of the Educational Psychology Service reflects the general population as one Educational Psychologist noted;

'There are bigger issues within educational psychology – they did a survey on the demographics in the UK, but only on age and gender, but nothing on ethnicity. I do not think Educational Psychologists represent the general population. People want to see a connection.' (EP A)

'If we had a more diverse profession would the problems go away? Is there institutional racism? I believe there is in individuals, so yes definitely. Styles of speaking are more valued by our institutions and universities are no different.' (EP A)

'Educational Psychologists tend to be women and have been in teaching, who have had their babies and re-train to become Educational Psychologists; White, middle-class women. Their experience of Black people is limited so when they see a Black Caribbean child they think that's how Black people are. In the 1960s they were viewed as ESN – Educationally Sub-normal. But now a lot of Black families resist having a label for their child and refuse an Educational Psychologist's assessment.' (SENCo, School Q)

'Inclusion is a whole school issue. As teachers we don't get time with the Educational Psychologist. It's about what we say – the Educational Psychologist is probably acting on information that they are given. We could say they need an assessment or a referral. ADHD, ADD in terms of mental health, a lot of the time it is developing in the parents and passed down to the students because it's behavioural and a pattern of thinking. As West Indians we have had trauma and brutality over generations. It has not got better. We need justice. If you focus on equality you do not acknowledge.' (SENCo, School Q)

We asked are there institutional barriers which prevent Black Caribbean applicants from becoming Educational Psychologists.

'A Black Caribbean girl couldn't get on to any of the Educational Psychology courses at any of the Universities despite having exactly the same qualifications as me. On my course there was one Black Caribbean man and a Black African girl among 15 White women. They saw themselves as 'the quota'. (EP A).

'If you are in a position to study for a doctorate, you have to be in a position to provide the social capital. There are things that restrict you, not least finance. As a profession since the sixties, it is to promote equality. It was present in everything we did. I did clinical training, a systemic model with emphasis on culture and diversity. The Educational Psychology Service reflects the wider education service in that it is female dominated.' (EP B)

'I had seven years teaching experience (prior to becoming an Educational Psychologist) and I applied four times to get on the course… every year for four years. I am a determined person.' (EP B)

We asked about the selection process using by one institution, for training Educational Psychologists:

> '*Since 2009 I have seen a reasonably diverse group emerge. It is not fully proportional though as yet. Wherever we have a local teacher who expresses an interest in becoming an EP we will talk to them and encourage them and help them to prepare. We do our best to encourage. There are gender issues as well. Most of the EPs are women*'…. '*One of the issues at … Is that we shortlist with the applicants names on the forms. I do not think this is helpful. There are also other factors, such as applicants needing to have had teaching experience. They may be competing against people who have the money or the family are able to provide the financial support during training. Those who come from less affluent backgrounds or family commitment, they are at a disadvantage. We know that …… is not perfect. We have a responsibility to challenge the section processes however.*' (EP C)

Efforts should be directed towards the recruitment of more Black Caribbean Social Workers and Educational Psychologists to train in these professions with added incentives as outlined to encourage them to work in inner city schools. The training of all those entering these professions should include knowledge and understanding of the cultural context in which Black Caribbean pupils are living. Currently there appears to be an issue about the lack of understanding some have:

> '*I am not happy with social work – it is not their fault it is the system. They are not ready to take on the challenge of young people. It doesn't matter where you come from but you do need an understanding of the people you are dealing with. There is a complete disjointing, expectations do not fit, understanding of the system and education in general, no knowledge of how schools operate. You just can't take a child out of class because you have five minutes visiting time.*' (Learning Mentor).

> '*Educational Psychology is a White middle class, female dominated profession. It is unusual in LA1 that we have Black Educational Psychologists. We have more than other places. You understand the families you are going to work with. Assessment of pupils from the West Indies was wrong in the early days and often this is the case now.*' (EP C).

Lack of Positive Role Models

The is a general agreement among researchers and practitioners that Black Caribbean children do not have enough male role models (Demie 2003,2005,2016; Blair et al 1998). There is also an argument that Black children are underachieving in schools because they feel that the curriculum doesn't relate to them. For example, the author of '*The Problem of Black Men'* Lee Pinkerton wrote:

'The first role model for a boy should be his father; but what if you are growing up without a father, as too many Black boys are? Then you have to find someone else to fulfil that role. It is this vacuum that leads so many of our young to turn to gangs – looking for a father figure – a phenomenon called 'father hunger'….. He continued.. *'There is an argument that Black children are underachieving in schools because they don't have enough role models there either. Not enough Black male teachers and not enough Black people on the curriculum. Black educational underachievement, they argue, is partly because Black children feel that the curriculum doesn't relate to them. However, I would ask, 'How come Indian and Chinese children do not have the same problems, when they are equally ignored by the curriculum?' Chinese children in fact have the best educational outcomes from the UK school system, despite there being very few Chinese teachers, or Chinese historical figures on the curriculum. Could it be that Chinese and Indian children are not relying on the UK school system for their sense of self?*

We can see many examples of more recent immigrants to both the UK and US, who after only one or two generations leave the indigenous Blacks far behind, strangely unencumbered by the racism and discrimination that indigenous Blacks complain prevent them from progressing. The real reason why we, as a community, are doing less well than our Asian brethren is because they are not relying on the host community to define them or to give them a job/success.' (Pinkerton 2013:1)

A parent who was born and went schools in LA2 and now lives in LA1, supported this view:

'The trouble is for boys there are no men as good role models. Your big brother may be into crime and so you want to do it. If the role model is poor or non-existent then it just continues. Positive role models around you can influence you even if you do not have them at home; it depends on your circle of friends and the role models they have in their household or community. For example, if you friend's family ask you how you are doing at school and they have a lawyer in their circle; it makes you think about what you are doing.' (Parent A)

'I wonder if some of our children see their parents not working and don't realise that there is more out there and know what they could achieve. Where there are positive role models at home they can see where it's going. Those on Benefits cannot see it.' (Phase Leader, School B)

'If you listen to groups of Black Caribbean kids talking and the language they use, people think they are arguing. The way they talk about girls and women, so we are bringing people in to talk about how you treat women. You have 16-18 year olds on the fringes of petty crime and kids are drawn to these things and will claim affiliation. These things seem to be glorified by them. If you imagine that

spread among the culture there are negative effects. What can we do to stop them? Why are they heading in that direction?' (Governor, School R)

'Poor role models, gang culture (people want to feel they belong, if not at school, then in a gang), older siblings who failed at school, lack of self-worth, at school they are told they are not good enough and grow up angry and resentful. Money factors, low income, mental illness, depression, this filters down to the child. The media telling them that they have to have this thing or that thing.' (Deputy Head, School E)

'I chair a group on the Governors Achievement Committee and we check the data. I wonder how much it is about background or family life. Getting parents to understand the importance of school is a big issue. Role models are very important, especially for boys. Having role models to show them are important. We try and have Dads days. A lot of dads are not engaged with education. If they are engaged then the whole family are.' (Governor, School L)

'I have worked in London schools and they don't see Black male role models reflected in the teaching staff nor in society. They cannot see the purpose of what they are trying to achieve at the end of all that.' (Governor, School D)

'As a boy growing up in the Caribbean you would know that Gary Sobers was batting and everybody wanted to be Gary Sobers or Brian Lara. Someone you want to emulate. Here in the UK there are not enough people to emulate. I do not see it. Successful Black Caribbean people are not known. Who are the successful West Indians that I know here in England?' (Church Leader A, 1st generation)

'This school hasn't judged me on my colour, as I have been given a place on the leadership team and I am studying for a postgraduate course, despite not doing a first degree. I am now a role model to our pupils. I grew up on an estate and did not have any positive role models. Children wouldn't take it seriously if they are in a school with Black role models. There is no point in saying you should be a teacher, doctor, or whatever, if they do not see themselves reflected in those professions.' (Parent-Partnership Co-ordinator, School A)

'If I say to children 'picture God – who do they see'? It is social conditioning. That's why I took my children to Gambia, so they would see positid7ve role models. This education system is not suitable for children of this generation.' (Teacher-Governor, School H)

'I think back to my own Primary education in LA10. My Headteacher was a Black Caribbean female. As a child seeing a Black woman in authority was not unusual for me. She is someone I will always remember though.' (EP D)

'When my daughter was in Year 1 in a school in LA3 and she said to me 'Mummy can I be a teacher?' She said, 'Well there are no Black teachers in my school'. I was shocked! To me you can do anything. I told my friend who teaches 'A' Levels in LA4 and I found myself having to give examples of Black people achieving. At home in Trinidad you can see all Black people achieving. I think I over-dosed on 'Aunty … is a Vet, Uncle…. Is a doctor' to try to make up!' (Parent E)

'My daughter's school had to do a project on a successful Black person and she came up with a pop star that had died and I had a go at her, I said 'what about Rosa Parks or Martin Luther-King'? I ranted on at her because I thought she was putting forward something that made Black people seem stupid.' (Parent C)

'Children need to see famous role models like Rosa Parks. I think its key for them to see people of colour achieving. The amount of Black authors I meet who are not getting through to produce the right materials that can get used in schools, it's such a shame.' (Librarian)

'I went to Tulse Hill boys' school in the 1980s. There was just an understanding of the difficulties of being young and Black. We had a Black Headteacher. I think it made a difference. The person running the ship was a Black person. I thought 'wow he's running the ship'. The Deputy Head was White. I am still friends with him so the relationship still exists. He was an example of how teachers had an understanding. Whether it came from the school or the staff I do not know. I cannot remember ever hearing a teacher being negative about my achievement and what I could or couldn't do. I was fortunate in that respect. At the time we had someone running the show that was Black and I could relate to that and all the teachers sang from the same song sheet. I didn't have teachers saying you cannot, I got a sense of just do your best.' (Deputy Head, School D)

'I went into teaching because I wanted to make a difference. I have always taught in LA1 schools although I live in Ealing, because I like to teach in a multi-cultural school as a Black role model. A lot of the parents feel comfortable about talking to me about personal matters.' (Deputy Head).

'I try to project myself as a role model. I tell them without qualifications you won't be going anywhere. Guidance from home is lacking. Parents are working when they go home from school and no-one is there.' (Head of Year, School E)

'Let children know that things are possible. If you can instil a dream in a child, it is difficult to remove it. Role models should be Black, White, Asian – someone at the top of their profession so that each child will not only feel identified but part of a bigger picture. It's important to them all.' (Admissions Officer)

CHAPTER 7: HEADTEACHER, TEACHER, GOVERNOR AND PARENT VIEWS ABOUT BLACK CARIBBEAN PUPILS' UNDERACHIEVEMENT: FOCUS GROUP EVIDENCE

Focus group discussions were carried out with parents, community groups, Headteachers and school staff, governors, Educational Psychologists and SENCos. The main aim of the focus groups was to understand why Black Caribbean pupils are underachieving in British schools and to ascertain their views about the barriers to learning and to identify what practical steps need to be taken in order to raise achievement. Focus groups were run separately to encourage open discussion. Group discussions were centred on the following four questions:

- What might be the reasons for Black Caribbean underachievement in schools?

- What are the reasons for over the representation of Black Caribbean pupils in exclusions?

- To what extent do you believe lack of parental support is one of the major reasons for the underachievement?

- What can be done to narrow the achievement gaps of Black Caribbean pupils?

The main findings are summarised below.

Headteachers' and Staff Views

Five serving Headteachers in the case study schools and two retired Headteachers who are now governors were interviewed, offering a range of perspectives from community, Church of England and Catholic schools in LA1 and LA11. Deputy Headteachers with responsibility for inclusion and phase leaders were also interviewed. We found that the Headteachers we interviewed were mainly White British, with only one being from the Caribbean. One Headteacher was married to a partner from the Caribbean. Only one Deputy Head was of Caribbean heritage. Their answers illustrated a secure understanding of the issues facing Black Caribbean children and families and their schools demonstrate exemplary practice in raising the achievement of Caribbean pupils. For example, they were aware of the historical trials experienced by previous generations school in England, whose children were labelled as Educationally Sub-Normal (ESN) and sent off to special schools, because schools did not understand differences in behavior and culture.

Other issues of deprivation, poor housing, absent fathers and single mothers and the lack of trust that parents have in the school system were raised by Headteachers in answer to the question 'what might be the reason for Black Caribbean underachievement in British schools?' Individual Headteachers and Deputy Heads commented:

'There are many reasons, the confidence of parents engaging with society, low self-esteem, parents not getting good jobs, racism and that putting them off going forward, and depending on the area where they live, not engaging with people outside their community. It also depends on where in the Caribbean we are talking about. People from Guyana, Trinidad and Barbados tended to be a lot more ambitious than others, whereas countries like Jamaica, was a poorer island. They came to this country to graft and work rather than get a better job.' (Deputy Head, School B)

A Headteacher echoed the challenges faced by previous generations of Black Caribbean parents when they came to Britain:

'When the first people arrived from the Caribbean they had to live in squalid conditions and hard. The poverty started way back and got handed down'… she continued.. *'If you look back over four or five decades and you treat someone badly at the beginning, it creates a culture. People who came over from the Caribbean were treated in such a way they have had to become tough. Authority has proved itself to not being a good thing. Our families have not had a good experience themselves. From the perspective of a child, the school didn't know anything about him and therefore negative attitudes towards school started to develop because of this and it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. For example, there is a five year old child in Reception, who is collected by an older brother. He comes into school with chicken and chips, with his friend and is rude to everyone. Mum doesn't come in; she drops the five year old at the gate in the morning. I wrote mum a nice letter and she's coming to see me tomorrow. I can already detect an attitude there. Sadly there's nothing good coming on for that child. She is a lovely little vessel but all that negativity coming in.'* (Headteacher, School A)

After five decades, the legacy of discrimination and racism in the education system still continues to affect relationships between schools and parents as another Headteacher explained:

*'When I came to this school two years ago, I felt that there was a tension between the school and Black Caribbean families. It took me a little while to sort out the issues. A lot of it was about staff being scared of talking to parents. Lots of things. There have been a few incidents, parents and staff and parents and the Headteacher. Significantly there is a high number of Black teaching staff. It didn't appear to be anything to do with the ethnicity of the staff. I think there are a number of social and economic issues that Black Caribbean families face'…*He continued, *'my view about Black Caribbean boys in particular is that they like to know what the boundaries are and firm structures. The idea that you can 'love them into learning' – that's fine, but the love is when they get good examination results and are moving on, but*

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we are here to equip them to do something better. We are the sling shot into the wider world.' (Headteacher, School D)

Racism in society as experienced by a retired Headteacher from Guyana is suggested as a reason for Black Caribbean pupils' underachievement:

'Racism in society is still an issue. Currently it is blatant racism. My daughter works in the same school where she was a pupil and I am a governor in this Infants' school. A child came in with some sweets and said 'my mother said they are only for the Polish children, they are not for the Black children'… She continued. '*I believe there is racism amongst Eastern Europeans because it is inherent in their history and culture and they lack the experience of living and working in a multi-cultural city. The majority are Catholics so Catholic schools employ them.' (Former Headteacher, School Z)*

An area of great concern is the issue of the over-representation of Black Caribbean pupils being excluded from school. We heard of children as young as five years of age being excluded from primary schools, without any involvement of an Educational Psychologist. We also heard from Educational Psychologists that some of the reasons for pupils being excluded were because their learning needs had not been addressed and this had affected their behaviour. Labelling of young children as having difficult behaviour at a very early age, was leading to self-fulfilling prophecies as they grew older.

There appears to be a tendency for some schools to suggest to parents that they should move their children to another school or they would be excluded. We asked whether this was one of the main reasons for Black Caribbean underachievement. Headteachers commented:

'Parents chop and change schools and children are increasingly moved sometimes to up to seven primaries. Some are told to just go and they have home schooling. It's an indictment of the system.' (Headteacher, School E)

'Older pupils have more of a sense of injustice, what is right for them and they rebel. Little ones tend to accept a situation.' (Retired Headteacher, School Z)

'You always felt guilty after you excluded a Black Caribbean child, but you have a behaviour policy and you have to follow it. You have to ask why this is happening to a particular child, so you unpick the behaviour. Sometimes parents do not have enough influence to want to work with you. Sometimes the child's attitude has developed to such an extent that it's almost impossible to change. This happens early in primary, so goodness knows what happens at secondary school.' (Retired Headteacher, School Z)

We asked Headteachers to what extent do you believe lack of parental support is one of the major reasons for the underachievement?

> *'The social background and the area are significant. We recognise that in particular we do have an issue with parenting. Early on this was a Girls' school, nine years ago. It is now a mixed school. We were going to take in boys and we saw that the representation of staff did not reflect the intake. We thought we needed to recruit TAs and Specialist Assistants who were young males. However, we soon realised we should recruit older staff and this has helped not only pupils but parents also. Absentee fathers and single mothers struggling perhaps never had a male around or one that comes and goes and is a disruptive force. By recruiting this large team of parent advisers with a mentoring role for pupils and parents, parents appreciate that. They work with them. There is consistency of message however; it's no low expectations, firm boundaries, messages of consistency. We have a lot of pupils here who are new arrivals of Jamaican heritage… there are examples of extreme deprivation. But then some parents are professionals and are smart and articulate but they still have a mistrust of the school and they are suspicious. That makes relationship a difficult one you almost have to defend what you do. When you are a White woman in charge of a school like this, or a White male, for some parents it's difficult to get that message across, despite the fact that you may have worked in schools like this for 30/40 years. It is important to have support staff to tell it like it is.' (Headteacher, School E)*

Another Headteacher felt that parents taking children on extended holidays to the Caribbean was a contributory factor in their underachievement:

> *'The biggest issue for me is parents taking their children out of school to go back to the Caribbean – umpteen funerals! I say 'didn't that granny die last year'? Yet they cannot afford the dinner money. These families are not visa over-stayers. They leave in November and return at the end of January or June until the end of term. They will go anyway and just pay the fine.' (Headteacher, School B)*

> *'We have found it difficult in the past to get parents to engage with school. We are improving but it is still a challenge. Social background plays a big part in it. We have problems where pupils are struggling with literacy and it is because the parents are illiterate.' (Headteacher, School B)*

The reasons for the low levels of literacy among some parents we were told was because they were recent arrivals from rural parts of Jamaica, where their own schooling had been erratic. Therefore there is a lot schools have to do to support parents, for example filling out forms and secondary school applications. Also some parents are very young.

'A lot of our parents are very young. By the time they are in their mid-20s, they have several children.' (Headteacher, School A)

'A lot of our young people are in the estates and that is a real challenge for kids and parents, to keep them away from gang culture. We are finding pupils are getting involved younger and younger and the age range is 11-15 year olds in these gangs.' (School A)

On the question of 'how gaps in achievement could be narrowed for Black Caribbean pupils, Headteachers have focussed on developing positive relationships with parents and have gone the extra mile to enlist their support :

'I have a Family Support Worker and a Parent Partnership worker on my senior leadership team. They can talk with the parents more effectively than I can because I represent authority as a Headteacher. They do very well in building relationships with parents. Usually problems do not reach me unless it gets to the stage that the situation needs a bit more weight. For example, a year 1 child who was quite needy and had a young mum who gets very angry because the child's jumper was lost – our Parent Partnership Worker has done wonders with this parent, she got her involved in the Christmas Fair doing hotdogs. This is because we took the time to build a relationship. If you cannot get your child to school on time, what can we do to help? So many good things in place…. the professional development of staff brings lots of knowledge, highly trained TAs, don't just turn up at 9a.m. and they are involved in the discussions about individual pupils. They might come to pupil progress meetings. We are up for trying anything new. I don't mind change so for example we did a literacy programme here, it worked for us to raise levels of literacy but then it was time to leave it and move on. We are not afraid of change.' (Headteacher, School A)

A further example of a Headteacher actively seeking parental engagement is detailed below:

'We had a massive attainment gap of 20% between Black Caribbean pupils and White pupils. Black Caribbean achievement in maths was 19%. The gap this year was only 5% and progress this year is good. What did we do differently? We did a number of tiny things. I did see a lot of the Black Caribbean Year 11 students' parents on a 1:1 basis. I am doing that again this year with a broader remit with other parents. I asked them 'how have you found your experience here'? I give them a chance to give out. We started Target Tuesdays with Year 11, these de-personalised the reasons why you were coming into school. To look at specific things. This made it more open. I have always said to parents 'whenever you want to come and talk I will speak to you'. That has created a positive relationship.' (Headteacher, School A)

Parents' Views

All the parents interviewed (including a great-grandfather) were either of Black Caribbean, African, or mixed Black Caribbean/White, or African/Caribbean heritage. Black Caribbean parents referred to themselves as 'Black Caribbean' or from their country of birth i.e. Jamaican, Trinidadian but with British citizenship. Their children on the other hand would refer to themselves as 'Black Caribbean' even though they were born in this country, as they thought this was how others defined them.

Every parent interviewed felt that it was important for their children to get a good education but many felt there were many barriers to learning that made this a challenge. Frustration was expressed by those parents and grandparents who had been educated in the Caribbean at what they saw happening to their children and grandchildren in British society. Almost all the parents who were born and went to school in this country suffered overt racism from teachers and pupils in their schools. They were not expected to achieve and even when they expressed the desire to go to University, some teachers actively discouraged them. The underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils over five decades was a cause for concern for them all.

The most common reasons for underachievement identified by parents were:

- The low expectations that schools have of the achievement and the behaviour of Black Caribbean children
- Institutional racism within British society which impacts so significantly on Black people by presenting a glass ceiling to their aspirations
- The labelling of Black boys in particular as being difficult behaviourally, which can lead to their exclusion from school at a very young age
- Schools' lack of understanding of the historical, social and cultural context of the Black Caribbean community in Britain and parental mistrust of schools.

The Black Caribbean parents we interviewed compared expectations of teachers in their children's schools unfavourably with their own experiences of attending schools in the Caribbean. For example, a Trinidadian parent who is a Senior CAMHS Commissioner in a London borough explained how teachers' expectations are lower here for her own children than in Trinidad:

> *'My son was in Year 2 doing some spellings. I came from a school where you learned tables by rote. We were learning ten spellings with him. He got to a tricky word and he said 'Mum, I don't need to get it right because I will get a sticker if I get one or two wrong'. In his mind that was good enough. That got me worried because back home in Trinidad you'd never do that you would be aiming to get 10/10!' (Parent C)*

Despite her children attending what she regarded as the best schools in their local authority, LA3, she arranged for privation tuition for them both:

> 'I got a tutor for my daughter in Year 5 and my son has had a tutor from Year 3, for English, Maths and reasoning. He is a child who has to be told every day to do his homework. He plays football but my thing is you need to study. When we talk about careers he says he wants to be a footballer. I say, 'Fine, but you need to be able to read to be able to check your contract'! I suggested he become a Sports Doctor! Back in Trinidad I do not think I would have to struggle so much to get his homework done because they would push him more at school.' (Parent C)

A parent, who was born in the UK but sent to live with an aunt in Jamaica when she was nine years old, felt she was better off having being educated in Jamaica:

> 'If I am thinking of myself at school in LA1 in 1969 and in the early 70s, I went to live in Jamaica when I was nine years old. My mother died and my father couldn't cope with four children so my sister and I were sent over to Jamaica to live with an aunt. I was living in a small rural place. I adapted. Looking back as an adult, I wasn't properly prepared. My aunt had been widowed after 25 years of marriage and she also fostered children. I was just one of the family and you just get on. I stayed in Jamaica until after my 'A' levels and came back to the UK for my tertiary education, to my father and siblings. Looking at what I saw among Black Caribbean in the UK, their aspirations seemed low, people didn't think they were able or capable. In Jamaica if you want to be Prime Minister then you could, whereas here there was a ceiling. In Jamaica I developed confidence and a 'can do' attitude because expectations were high. Here is a stark contrast as my cousins didn't even think of going to University.' (Governor, School B)

A father, who was educated in Jamaica, contrasted his own schooling in Jamaica (where he said his teachers had the highest expectations of pupils) with his own experience with his son at school in London:

> 'The first time I realised how ingrained these low expectations are here with teachers, I had to face this with my own son. He had an operation when he was three years old and this affected his attendance at school. He had 50% attendance because he wasn't well and the school was contemplating taking legal action. An intervention was made but as this played itself out so many things came out. At secondary school, although my son was only attending 50% of the time he was still getting 'A's and 'B's but the school suggested that my son attend a school for excluded pupils. Why on earth would you put a child like this with excluded pupils?' (Parent F and 1st generation parent from Jamaica).

'Looking at the situation here in the UK I wonder could it be the subtle messages that pupils get here that cause them to give up? I have considered this. I remember an incident at my high school with a teacher who insulted us by saying 'you cannot do it'. I took her to task by getting 100% - she didn't last long at the school either. I think probably there was such a strength of feeling in our class that we were expecting to learn, to do well, that if someone came in who didn't expect us to do well, and wasn't up to the mark themselves, then we wouldn't take it.' (Parent F and 1st generation parent from Jamaica).

'By the time I found out about the issue it was too late for me to do anything about it. Low expectations and poor communication failed by child. I believe low expectations are institutional.' (Parent F, 1st generation parent from Jamaica)

The parent of a child in primary school whose son had been put on a table with all Black children when he was in Year 1 commented:

'In Year 2 my son had a Black female teacher. She just had high expectations for all the children and he blossomed for the next two years. Then in Year 4 he had a White teacher who was disinterested.' (Parent H)

One would have hoped that institutional racism was a thing of the past, but our findings show that this is not the case. Indeed, the extent of institutional racism was highlighted by parents in the following comments about racism in schools, by the police, by employers and by universities.

'I thought things had got a bit more equal until I moved to London in the 1990s and encountered the education system. I had never seen anything like it in my life. People of Black Caribbean background who are the same age as me and went to school in London in the 1960s and 1970s, the standards of spelling and grammar are so poor. Also there's a sense that people do not really care. I was thinking what went on in London schools at that time that raised a generation of pupils with such low standards of education? '

There was a recent example of a LA Headteacher not being mindful of her own stereotyping which caused offence to a Black Caribbean parent, as the following example illustrates:

'When I went to the school, the teacher was there with the Headteacher and caretaker. The Headteacher asked me to come to her office for a chat. She asked me 'what Council Estate do you live in?' 'Are you a single mother'? She said: 'sometimes when children come from single parent families and live on an estate they are a lot rougher. I told her that you are extremely racist in what you are saying. I am in education myself and am educated. I asked why

all the Black children were sitting on one table and being given different homework. My son's teacher was White, from outside London and was totally unable to relate to Black children.' (Parent H)

In an attempt to overcome obstacles of even getting an interview, to be in with a chance of getting a job, some Black Caribbean youngsters, are changing their names to sound more English.

'Racism is almost an integral part of this society. An article I read in a newspaper talked about a lady who applied for thousands of jobs and didn't get an interview and she decided to change her name and made it sound English. There is a lot of stereotyping especially of Black Caribbean people, especially in the media.'

'My son changed his name to his grandmother's surname which is English when he was applying for jobs because he said he would stand more chance of getting an interview with an English name'. (Parent C)

'When my son applied for University on the UCAS form, where it asked which ethnic group he belonged to he put down Black Caribbean, but he was born here. I said 'Wayne why have you ticked the box as Black Caribbean? He said 'Yes mum, but no-one sees me as Black British'! Even though I was born here I tend to do the same. How many generations down does it have to be before the Government changes these categories?' (Parent I)

The following incidence of institutional racism by the Police in stopping and searching Black youngsters is described by a grandmother:

'My granddaughter has a sports car and she was pulled over by the Police. She had been wearing a cap with her hair pulled under it and they thought she was a boy. The policeman asked her to stop. When he realised she was a girl he apologised. It seems if you are driving a nice car they will stop you. They like to stop and search. Even my youngest son was stopped and they searched him – they asked him to empty out his pockets and he had a bible in his jacket pocket!' (Former Headteacher, School Z)

Parents expressed their concerns at the way Black Caribbean boys were being labelled as troublemakers:

'It seems to me that Black males, both Black African and Black Caribbean are a bit more penalised on issues compared with their counterparts from other countries. When children are naughty, the Black African and Black Caribbean boys get into trouble, while their counterparts who do the same thing, they wouldn't get the same penalty. With under-fives there are a lot more Black Caribbean and an increasing number of Black African underachieving. The distinction is getting more blurred.

Another parent described a very worrying example of her son's school labelling her son from a very young age calling him violent and rough:

'My son has always been bigger than the average child. From Year 1 onwards he got labelled, stereotyped from Year 1. They put all the Black children on the same table in his class. From then on I felt I needed to fight. There was a particular incident where my son told me his teacher kept calling him 'Violet'. At Nursery they called him 'Orange'. For a long time it didn't click until one day I went into school and they said he was rough and needed to watch his behaviour. I once told him to become careful because he was so big. Then I had a telephone call to say he was traumatising a child by locking him in the toilets (he was only five years old). I asked him explain what had happened and he said the boy had kicked him and called him a 'black monkey' and because he had been told not to fight he pushed him into the toilets. It turned out his teacher called him a 'violent' liar.' (Parent H)

The following comment illustrates how undiagnosed special educational needs are interpreted as behavioural difficulties, which can lead to a pupil's exclusion. One parent noted:

'Black people are seen as violent, they are seen as physically stronger, whereas they have poorer health than Whites. They are thought of as being strong. It translates down into school. A Black Caribbean pupil would be excluded rather than a White child. Now that schools have to write down how many days pupils are excluded, schools find another way, so they have to stay in a classroom on their own and officially it's called internal exclusion. I advised a friend whose son had been excluded to ask to see the official school figures for exclusions. He was never excluded again. He was autistic.' (EP A)

Some parents felt that schools did not always understand the historical, social and cultural context of some Caribbean families and the different expectations with regard to discipline:

'A new Headteacher was involving Social Services regarding the parents' discipline of their children. Some of these parents didn't understand why this was happening. One of the things I realise is that cultural background comes into it. As a CAHMS commissioner, a lot of the cases I get are of Black children who might experience abuse, psychological/emotional abuse because of their parents' mental health or religious beliefs. There are a lot of undisclosed traumas, particularly with looked-after children and mixed-race children in care. I see that as a pattern in some places, it's a cultural thing. People not knowing what is appropriate. In my mother's day children got 'licks' if they were naughty that was accepted. If I had been brought up here I would have turned out very differently. My father has another family – he

didn't live with us. I do not think I would have achieved so much had I lived here as a child.' (Parent E)

Lack of understanding about the social and cultural background of pupils was mentioned by another parent:

'I think social background has a massive impact on achievement. Your background shapes how you feel about yourself and how you think you can attain. Breakdown in families in BME and ethnic minorities that is a factor, but successful people have come from single parent backgrounds. It can have massive impact for some but not for others. I think the problem is more to do with lack of support networks or extended families and the lack of aspiration within your circle, if you don't know anyone who is successful then you are unlikely to achieve.'

Another parent voiced her concerns about the over-emphasis on slavery in the History curriculum:

'Black History Month – I always raise this with schools; I ask them what they do. They said 'I am doing slavery' and I said I don't want this, I want something with positive role models. I said you don't have any Black positive role models here! So they employed a Black teacher in my child's class. I said they need Black teachers in other classes too.'(Parent I)

Governors' Views

We interviewed eighteen school governors, these included parent, foundation, and teacher governors. Interviews took place in the case study schools and in focus groups. With regard to the question of 'what might be the reason for Black Caribbean pupils' underachievement?' they responded as follows:

'From a governor's perspective its Black Caribbean boys, particularly in writing that underachieve. Whilst all the other things do have an impact. Teachers do use a range of teaching styles but they are still underachieving.' (Governor, School S)

'Is it a boy's issue? Boys are an issue generally – or is it a socio-economic issue? Working class children are an issue. The same could be said for socio-economic status, e.g. pupil premium pupils. What about cultural issues? How much does the new curriculum reflect Black Caribbean pupils, but what about other cultures too? Teaching styles? Do Black Caribbean pupils respond to particular teaching styles? Is it the best approach? Parental involvement – the role of parents and getting them involved in schools more. Having time to be involved though because of time.' (Governor)

'There is not a lot of support from fathers. The problem is gangs, older siblings who influence. They see that as more important than a good education. It's cool to be in a gang than to be educated. We wonder whether it's being disengaged with learning, definitely not expectations. Great teachers do have more strategies.' (Teacher-Governor)

Another governor, felt that institutional racism and the historical 'glass ceiling' imposed on Black Caribbean pupils, were important aspects of their underachievement:

'My hypothesis is if you have been subjected to racism over several generations, then this is going to make your hopes and dreams more difficult. Black Africans tend to be first and second generation. They still have hope. Work situations are difficulty, zero hours contracts, trying to make ends meet. These are the problems our parents have'… He continued.. 'Several generations are told you shouldn't achieve and you cannot go to university; you have no reason to aspire. Your child is told this and their child the same. That's a bigger barrier to overcome than for a new immigrant.' (Governor, School S)

We asked 'why are there high numbers of Black Caribbean pupils excluded from school?' Many felt that schools' hands are tied as there are very limited deterrents they can use, which makes exclusion the only answer. A governor who is a retired Headteacher commented:

'You always felt guilty after you excluded a Black Caribbean child. But you have a behaviour policy and you have to follow it. You have to ask why this is happening to a particular child, so you unpick the behaviour. Sometimes parents do not have enough influence to want to work with you. Sometimes the child's attitude has developed to such an extent that it's almost impossible to change. This happens early in primary, so goodness knows what happens at secondary school.' (Governor, School S)

The cultural differences in terms of discipline were raised by some governors. The parents of children in Caribbean and African families would adhere to corporal punishment as a biblical context, for example 'spare the rod and the spoil the child'. They find it difficult to understand why schools in the UK are prevented from disciplining children in this way but then impose drastic measures such as exclusion. One governor commented:

'Parents say 'we will send them back to Jamaica – they will sort them out!' Corporal punishment has been abolished. African children are beaten at home. At school we wouldn't/can't hit them. They do not think we have authority.' (Governor, School S)

A teacher governor agreed:

> 'We had an incident where a father started to beat his son in front of us. We had to call social care. It was heart-breaking. It's an awkward thing. The law changed about corporal punishment but it wasn't explained what the new expectations are.

Another governor commented:

> 'When the government took away corporal punishment there was nothing there to use instead. They have taken away youth clubs too. We have focused on the rights of pupils but not their responsibilities. They say 'you can't touch me.'

In response to the question 'To what extent do you believe lack of parental support is one of the major reasons for the underachievement?' One governor said:

> 'The school gets blamed for everything, particularly around behaviour. I do not feel the government has really accepted that parents struggle with their children's behaviour, whatever colour they are. Many cannot manage their 3, 4 or ten year old. The government doesn't recognise it; they say schools need to do something about it. The school only has the children for five hours a day. All the other factors influence the child. The government does not understand how families work in London. Because they live in their lovely houses away from all the nastiness.'
> (Governor, School S)

A teacher-governor contrasted his own experience growing up with that of the pupils he teaches at a boarding-school in Sussex:

> 'There is a huge difference in terms of the expectations my parents had for me and the parents now have for their children. I had to go and study myself, independently, as my parents expected this of me. I have passed this on to my own children and they are doing very well. Much depends on what your parents have instilled into you. A number of Black Caribbean parents do not maintain this, so when they have children it isn't there. Children are not supported. This might be because the system isn't set up for Black Caribbean children to achieve. As a teacher we find it hard to see. To know who they are as a person. What is going on for them emotionally? They do not understand why they need to do x, y, and z in order to get where they need to get.' (Teacher-governor, School H)

Governors recommended a range of measures to narrow the achievement gaps of Black Caribbean pupils such as literacy classes for parents, and to reintroduce Sure Start. One said:

> *'You can have all the support in school you need but if you are going to make an equivalent intervention in the home through Sure Start, then it won't work.' Governor, School S)*

Another governor felt that teachers and staff need an induction course to show them how to relate to children from other ethnic groups. She said:

> '*In Catholic schools you get children from every background. You need to make them feel valued and build their self-esteem not make them feel inferior. Anyone in a school who is not White British, Black British or African but is from Eastern Europe or South Africa, needs to be inducted if they are to be employed to work in a diverse community.' (Teacher Governor, School Z)*

With regard to teacher recruitment and retention so that Black Caribbean pupils get the best teachers, another governor recommended higher rates of pay for teachers to teach in London schools or affordable housing, as they were *'losing some great teachers who cannot afford accommodation*.' Governors also felt that there was a need to recruit teachers who have either been raised in London or have had experience of teaching in London schools, because of the need to understand the children and expect a lot of them.

Educational Psychologists' and SENCOs' Views

Five Educational Psychologists and two SENCos were interviewed in focus groups. The Educational Psychology Service, like the wider education service is represented predominantly by White, middle class females. The Education Psychology Workforce Survey by NAPEP in 2013, records that 84% of EPs are female. No data is collected on ethnic background. As all training for Educational Psychologists is at Doctorate level, one has to be in a position to provide the financial and social capital to gain entry to the profession. As a profession it is designed to promote equality, but it would seem that there are examples of inequality when it comes to the selection process and the training of Educational Psychologists and the tools they would use to assess pupils. The following comments made by individual Educational Psychologists provide some examples of the equality/diversity issues mentioned:

> *'Anyone trained after 2006 would have a Doctorate and training prior to that was at Masters Level. On our training it was largely White women training and we had one day on diversity which was presented by a Black man.' (EPS A)*

A psychologist involved in the selection of suitable candidates for entry to University Educational Psychology courses described some examples of the obstacles BME applicants might face:

'We shortlist with the applicants names on the forms. I do not think this is helpful. There are also other factors, such as applicants needing to have had teaching experience. They may be competing against people who have the money or the family are able to provide the financial support during training. Those would come from less affluent backgrounds or family commitment, they are at a disadvantage.'

'Now to train as an EP it is very costly to train over three years. Now it's a three year doctorate and you no longer have to have teaching experience but it excludes many people because of the costs. It's becoming less equal as many cannot afford it.' (EP A)

Many Educational Psychologists find themselves in a difficult position because they are aware of the need to challenge schools where they see disproportionality in terms of the pupils referred to them, at the same time, as a traded-service, they aware that schools could refuse to buy in their service if they were too challenging. A Senior Educational Psychologist observed:

'An inexperienced Educational Psychologist might find it daunting.'

'Schools seem to like our service and they do buy back but there have been schools where they do not welcome the challenge.' (EP C)

On the question of the over representation of Black Caribbean pupils being excluded from school, Educational Psychologists suggested the following reasons:

'It is an issue and the differences started appearing in the EYFS. Clearly it's a combination of lots of different factors. You cannot take for granted stereotypes that go unchallenged, 'they are going to be like that'. It's how African Caribbean pupils are seen by African families in terms of different perceptions. There is Black on Black discrimination that has come into play. In one school now parents from the Caribbean, are saying that TAs of African background are discriminating against them. There is that kind of interface and the interface of how young people are portrayed in the media. There is also the massive socio-economic issue a lot of the families are not living in good accommodation and may be in low economic jobs.' (EP D)

'The African-Caribbeans have been here the longest and their experiences are slightly different. You cannot help but see what is going on in America and what's happening there, with what's going on in terms of mental health and prisons.'

The current situation where the Local Authorities have no longer any remit with regard to the exclusion of pupils in academies and free schools and the non-involvement of LA Educational Psychologists in these schools is a cause for concern:

> 'The exclusion process in LA schools is a bit of a mess and schools are excluding pupils without the involvement of the EP. It is no longer the responsibility of the LA because of academies and free schools. For us we think there needs to be something done as the most vulnerable groups are being excluded. The LA no longer has the power to stop schools from doing this. There is no longer any funding available. We do not have the mechanism to stop it. As a service we are 'buy-back' so we don't have the capacity to provide something that schools will not buy into. We get so bound up in statutory work, converting statements into EHCs. We do not have the capacity to deal with the ten-fold increase in our work. We do not have the time to do preventative work which really is what is needed.' (EP A)

> 'It is important to question when your referrals are coming from a particular group and you should be asking why this is. For me, I think there are Black Caribbean boys who are excluded because of their needs which haven't been assessed. There are illegal exclusions, say for half a day, or parents are advised to take the child to another school or they will be permanently excluded'. (EP A)

> 'I would say that racism is a factor in this. A school is not in isolation of community and racism existing in our society at large….' 'It's what is described as 'challenging behaviour'; the attributions teachers might have for Black pupils might be seen more negatively. It could be about perceptions. The school feels powerless. They do not want to exclude but they have reached a point where they cannot do anything with the child. There seems to be less tolerance now in schools, perhaps because of the demands on teachers'. (EP E)

We were given examples from Educational Psychologists of institutional racism in schools, for example, a SENCo describing a parent as 'very traditionally Jamaican'. When she asked what that meant the SENCo replied: 'there's a lot of violence in the family and mother wears a lot of different wigs every day'.

We asked why do SENCos categorise Black Caribbean pupils and were they being stereotyped? Another Educational Psychologist commented:

'Disproportionality we are aware of, we have the data but have not been able to use it. I imagine if you started having the questions with schools and get them to reflect on this, I believe you would have some interesting conversations. In some of my schools there is institutional racism. They have particular expectations of certain groups and this comes out. There are other schools where that is taken out of the SENCos hands. I have a number of cases where the SLT do not even discuss things with the SENCo; they just make those decisions about behaviour on their own. The problem is always located in the child and the family, never in the school. Schools are good at saying 'that family is like that…' (EP D)

We asked whether having more Black Headteachers or SENCos would make a difference:

'I think it would in some respects. I have been an EP in schools where the Headteacher was from a Black African background and a lot of the staff from a Black Caribbean background. If you are in a school where you are a Black teacher in a largely White school, you could be accused of being biased in favour of Black Caribbean pupils. It shouldn't fall into the hands of one Black teacher to do this. It is important for the school to reflect and ask what is happening with particular groups.' (EP A)

On the topic of whether there should be more Black Educational Psychologists, a SENCo commented:

'Educational Psychologists tend to be women and have been in teaching, who have had their babies and re-train to become Educational Psychologists. White middle-class women. Their experience of Black people is limited so when they see a Black Caribbean child they think that's how Black people are. In the 1960s they were viewed as ESN – educationally subnormal! But now a lot of Black families resist having a label for their child and refuse educational psychologists assessment.'

In our discussions with SENCos we asked for their views on why the numbers of permanent exclusions of Black Caribbean pupils was so high?

'A lot of people find Black Caribbean pupils threatening. History is being brought to bear on this. Black children mature earlier they look bigger so they present as a threat. Everybody thinks that. Very few people can see them as a child. A teacher can see a White child and a Black child both misbehaving but it's the Black one that gets into trouble. It's not just a White thing, I know Black teachers who are the same. I grew up in a house

of women, so my first experience of a man was my husband. When I had a son I thought what am I going to do with a boy? Seeing him as a baby and then as a child I know more. A lot of people don't see them like that.'
(SENco, School R)

The issue of undiagnosed special educational needs was frequently referred to by Educational Psychologists and SENCos. It seems that sometimes primary schools neglect to raise the question of a child's special needs with Black Caribbean parents. Consequently children are being excluded from primary school or they are moving from school to school, as a SENCo who works in a Pupil Referral Unit and advises schools on behavioural issues explains:

'A Black Headteacher has arranged a managed move for a Year 8 ASD child. The numbers of Black Caribbean students who come in to us have undiagnosed SEND, ADHD, MLD, SLD, a disproportionate number. The question is when our Black children with SEN act up they are excluded. Some children have been to 3 or 4 different primary schools because parents are told to remove them so this is how they have been undiagnosed. The additional needs are seen as behavioural problems rather than special needs.'

An Educational Psychologist commented on how the word 'psychologist' can be a terrifying word to parents:

'It's about how you engage parents in the process of getting a child assessed. I go to parents meetings now and when I meet them I say 'Hi, I am 'J' and they will sign the form.' (EP A)

One of her main concerns however, is when she is asked to do an assessment on a child and the next week the school excludes them, just to provide the evidence needed of Educational Psychologist involvement:

'We are asked to do an assessment on a child and the next week the school excludes them – in some cases permanently. I have had this five times personally. I have just had a Black Caribbean child excluded in Year 2. His learning needs were not addressed and he had emotional needs.'
(EP A)

CHAPTER 8. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATION FOR SCHOOLS AND POLICY MAKERS

Conclusions

The English school system has produced dismal academic results for a high percentage of Black Caribbean pupils over the last 60 years. Over the past four decades, national research has shown that their achievements persistently lag behind the average achievement of their peers and the gap is growing at the end of primary and secondary education. This research was an ethnographic study of Black Caribbean underachievement in English schools. Three complementary methodological approaches were adopted, comprising of detailed statistical analyses, case studies and focus group interviews. A total of 124 people participated in the interviews and focus groups, consisting of a range of school staff, pupils, parents, governors, educational psychologists and church leaders. The majority of the staff interviewed were White, while almost all the parents and pupils were Black or mixed White and Black. Seven schools took part in the case studies, and twenty two participated in the focus groups. A key finding from the analysis was that, at GCSE, 46% of Black Caribbean pupils achieved 5+A*-C including English and maths compared with 54% of pupils nationally. The KS2 data also showed a similar pattern, with Black Caribbean pupils having the lowest levels of achievement of any ethnic group. Overall, the data shows that Black Caribbean underachievement is real and persistent with consistently low levels of attainment, and the difference between their performance and that reported nationally is the largest of any ethnic group.

The reasons for the underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils are wide-ranging and complex. The following factors were identified as main reasons for underachievement in English schools:-

1.   Headteachers' poor leadership on equality issues
2.   Institutional racism
3.   Stereotyping
4.   Teachers' low expectations
5.   Curriculum relevance and barriers
6.   Lack of diversity in the work force
7.   Lack of targeted support

Other underachievement factors include:

8.   Exclusions issues and racial equality
9.   Lack of parental aspiration
10.   Low literacy levels and language barriers
11.   Absent fathers
12.   Single parent families

13.   Socio-economic disadvantage
14.   Poor housing
15.   Social class issues
16.   Lack of role models and peer pressure
17.   Negative peer pressure
18.   Cultural clashes and behavior
19.   Schools ability grouping and lower tier entry issues
20.   Cultural and identity issues
21.   Media negative picture and stereotyping
22.   Police stop and search and its negative impact on race issues
23.   The pressure of the government's school standards agenda
24.   Recruitment and training issues of teachers, Educational Psychologists and SENCOs

All of these factors can perpetuate low attainment and disengagement from learning for Black Caribbean pupils. Each of the above factors were explored in detail in the report to reveal exactly how it contributed to Black Caribbean pupils' underachievement in English schools.

Implications for Policy Makers and Schools to Improve Educational Attainment

The challenge from this research for national policy makers is that the government needs to recognise that the underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils is an important part of raising standards in schools. Although there is now greater recognition of the underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils in schools, there is less intervention work on the ground to support this group. It is now rare to find nationally these days a project relevant to the needs of pupils of Black Caribbean heritage. To tackle underachievement the DfE and schools need to develop targeted initiatives to identify and address the needs of pupils of Black Caribbean heritage.

We would argue that the government has not been effective in using evidence from previous research, London Challenge and Black Achievement Projects to tackle equality issues (Tickly et al 2006). Lessons from previous audits and enquiries into race issues and underachievement, suggest that successive governments have had a track record of ordering audits, research and enquiries when they do not want to do something (see Rampton 1981, Swann 1985, Macpherson, 1999; *Gillborn and Mirza 2000, Gillborn and Gipps 1996,* Parekh, 2000, EHRC 2015). Recently the Prime Minister (2016) has also launched another '*unprecedented audit of public services to reveal racial disparities and help end the burning injustices many people experience across Britain'* instead of acting on the previous evidence. Previous evaluation of some of these enquiries and audits confirms that within 2 or 3 years every single one of these is forgotten without any action taken by the government to tackle inequality and race issues.

We have now research evidence to tackle inequality and there is no need for more audits and research. We have also evidence to show that the performance of Black Caribbean pupils consistently lags behind that of their peers. This should not be allowed to continue. Our research shows the reasons for underachievement. We need to take action to tackle the problem. The recommendations for the DfE, for schools with ethnically diverse population, LAs and Multi Academy Trusts emerging from this study are given below:

Recommendations:

Department for Education (DfE)

Establishing Raising Achievement Projects

Building on the lessons learnt from what works research on raising achievement of Black Caribbean pupils, London Challenge and National Raising the Achievement of Black Caribbean pupils project 2003-2010 (Demie and McLean 2016; Tickly et al 2006; Mayor et al 2009; Demie 2005;DfES 2003; McKenley et al 2002; Ofsted 2002; EHRC 2016), the DfE needs to establish a national Black Caribbean Raising Achievement project where there is the highest concentration of Black Caribbean pupils to support schools and LAs to address underachievement of Black Caribbean children. Elements of the strategy should include:

1.   The provision of national strategic officer posts within the DfE or regions to support delivery of the work of raising the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils at national level.
2.   Ensuring there is adequate advisory staff provision such as Black Caribbean achievement consultants or EMA advisory teachers to support schools.
3.   Ofsted monitoring and evaluation of the above programmes and during inspections.
4.   The provision of community led Black mentoring projects in order to ensure an adequate level of appropriately trained and ethnically matched mentors to serve in different regions where there are high numbers of Black Caribbean pupils.
5.   Targets should be set by the DfE for recruitment and retention and of Black teachers, Black Headteachers, middle and senior managers and support staff and in schools.
6.   The government should reintroduce Sure Start in areas where there are significant numbers of Black Caribbean families.

Establishing Ring-Fenced Funding

7.   The DfE should introduce ring fenced targeted funding to schools where Black Caribbean pupils are underachieving and where schools are able to demonstrate the capacity for effectively leading the work, carrying out an audit and developing

and delivering an action plan to redress any inequality and narrowing the achievement gap.

8.   The provision of funding delivered by schools and community groups which is focused on raising the attainment of Black Caribbean pupils, including training on parental rights and responsibilities, understanding exclusions and working in partnership with class teachers.

Addressing Black Caribbean Exclusion Issues

9.   The DfE should review its guidance to schools on exclusions. Headteachers should be advised that pupils should not be excluded in the first instance unless there are instances of serious offences such as the use of knives and guns.

10.   Headteachers should be required to demonstrate that they have made adequate attempts to meet the pupil's pastoral and learning needs in the year prior to the proposed permanent exclusion.

11.   Headteachers should provide details of pastoral and academic achievement support plan and records of activities provided to improve unacceptable behaviour and raise levels of attainment.

12.   The DfE should set national and regional targets for reducing Black Caribbean permanent and fixed term exclusions.

13.   The DfE should review the provision in pupil referral units with particular focus on quality of provision and overrepresentation of Black Caribbean pupils and developing a strategy to address the issues.

Tackling Racism and Addressing Diversity Issues

Many of the people we interviewed in the focus groups reported that they had experienced racism in varying forms and that institutional racism is one of the factors that hindered the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils. Many pointed out the forms of racism which have contributed to this underachievement and which manifested itself most harshly in the form of: being overlooked for answering questions; verbal aggression from teachers; harsher reprimands for Black Caribbean pupils compared to other ethnic groups and White British pupils for the same misdemeanour; racist stereotyping; low ability grouping; racial harassment and exclusions. To tackle these issues:

14.   The government should provide leadership and guidance to tackle institutional racism in public service and schools

15.   The government needs to take a stance against racism in the public and private sectors and in schools

16.   The government should lead in community cohesion and provide guidance to schools on the importance of valuing all communities and celebrating the background experiences of every child.

17.   The government needs a curriculum that reflects this nation's rich cultural diversity. We need more teachers from ethnic minorities in our classrooms, and we need them to be more than role models. We need to recognise that certain groups of students will need extra support and that the schools teaching them will require increased funding as a result.

Local Authority (LA) and Multi Academy Trusts (MAT)

18.   Local Authorities and Multi Academy Trusts should audit the current workforce and pursue strong diversification at all levels including senior management and ensure that it reflects the community served by the LAs and MATs. Diversity in the workforce is particularly important for those LAs where there are high numbers of Black children.

19.   LAs should continue to use data effectively to identify underachieving groups and to improve teachers and management awareness in understanding the roots of Black history in general and in particular Black Caribbean culture. This should aim to improve teachers understanding of Black children as learners, how and why some underachieve and what teachers can do to target these issues.

20.   LAs and the Multi Academy Trusts should ensure that they provide schools with programmes of centrally based training to share good practice to raise attainment and narrow the achievement gap.

Schools

To help raise the achievement of Black Caribbean children, schools should:

21.   Conduct an audit to determine their capacity for implementing whole school change to raise the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils. The audit should cover the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils in comparison with other groups; awareness of Black Caribbean achievement issues and of a race equality framework amongst senior managers, teachers, parents, pupils and governors; perceptions of behaviour management policy and practices; staff - pupil relationships; staff training needs and involvement of Black Caribbean parents.

22.   Audit current workforce and pursue strong diversification at all levels and ensure that it reflects the community served by the school.

23.   All teachers should have access to robust and quality training to meet the educational needs of Black Caribbean pupils and on race equality.

24.   Discuss openly race issues and ethnic diversity within lessons and as an integral part of the whole school staff professional development

25.   Celebrate cultural diversity through assemblies, Black History month and International days.

26.   Gather and debate the views of staff, pupils and the community about the barriers to achievement and encourage the active involvement of parents.

27.   Schools should develop strong recruitment, retention and promotion strategies for Black staff and set annual targets. Diversity in the school workforce is particularly important for those schools where there are high numbers of Black children.

Black Caribbean Parents and Communities

28.   Black Caribbean parents and communities should substantially increase levels of involvement in their children's education. This should be through active involvement as a member of the governing body, parents' associations, and local churches and through networking with other parents to make good sense of what is happening in schools.

Teacher Development Agency (TDA), School Teaching Alliance (STA) and Universities

29.   The TDA and STA should develop mandatory training and guidance for trainee teachers concerning the barriers to achievement facing Black Caribbean pupils in particular and Black pupils in general on effective classroom strategies for overcoming these as part of a whole school approach.

30.   Explicit reference needs to be made as part of the professional standards framework to the need for teachers and leaders to be aware of the barriers to achievement facing Black Caribbean learners and strategies for overcoming these.

31.   Universities do not train enough Educational Psychologists from BME communities and need to set targets to recruit more Educational Psychologists from the Black Caribbean community.

32.   Universities, the TDA, and schools should offer inducements to attract more Black Caribbean males to enter the teaching profession and the Educational Psychology service.

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Glossary- A guide to acronyms

ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CAMHS	Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services
DfE	Department for Education
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families
EAL	English as an Additional language
EP	Educational Psychologists
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
FSM	Free school meals
FSP	Foundation Stage Profile
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
HLTA	Higher Level Teaching Assistant
ICT	Information Communication Technology
INSET	In Service Educational Training
KS1	Key Stage 1
KS2	Key Stage 2
KS3	Key Stage 3
KS4	Key Stage 4
LA	Local Authority
LM	Learning Mentors
MLD	Manual Lymphatic Drainage
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
PP	Pupil Premium
PSHE	Personal, Social and Health Education
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
SLD	Severe Learning Difficulties
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
SMT	Senior Management Team
TA	Teaching Assistant

The Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils

Good Practice

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The Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils: Good Practice

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.   Background

This research aims to explore the success factors behind raising achievement of Black Caribbean heritage pupils in schools. Over the last three decades considerable attention has been devoted to the issue of underachievement of Black pupils in British schools. There is now much research to show that Black Caribbean pupils are underachieving within the education system and that they are less likely to achieve their full potential at school (Gillborn and Gipps, 1996; Gillborn and Mirza, 2000; Blair, 2001; Demie, 2001; OFSTED, 2002).

The relative under-achievement of Black Caribbean pupils has also been a major issue in national education policy formulation. An inquiry committee reported on the issue twice during the 1980s. The first official recognition of the problem was *The Rampton Report* (Rampton 1981), which was the interim report of the Committee of Inquiry into Education of Children of Ethnic Minority Groups. This report dealt in detail specifically with the under-achievement of pupils of Caribbean backgrounds and concluded, *‘West Indian Children as a group are underachieving in our education system’* (Rampton 1981:80*).* The report identified serious concerns about the extent to which schools were meeting the needs of Black Caribbean pupils. The concerns still persist. *The Swann report* (Swann, 1985) also gives a good deal of attention of the under-achievement of pupils of Caribbean backgrounds, and confirms the finding of the Rampton report. Thus the Swann report concluded:

‘There is no doubt that Black Caribbean children, as a group, and on average, are underachieving, both by comparison with their school fellows in the White majority, as well as in terms of their potential. Notwithstanding that some are doing well.’ (Swann 1985: 81).

Research in the 1980s gave a good deal of attention to the underachievement of pupils of Black Caribbean backgrounds and confirmed that *‘they are underachieving as a group within the education system’* (Rampton 1981, Swann 1985). Other research in the 1990s and 2000s also reflected earlier findings with Black Caribbean and African pupils continuing to make less progress on average than other pupils (Gillborn and Gipps 1996; Gillborn and Mirza 2000, Demie 2001; 2003; 2005; GLA 2004). Each of these studies appeared to show considerable underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils in comparison with the achievement of White and Asian pupils.

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Figure 1. GCSE Black Caribbean and White British Achievement in England (5+A*-C including English and Maths)
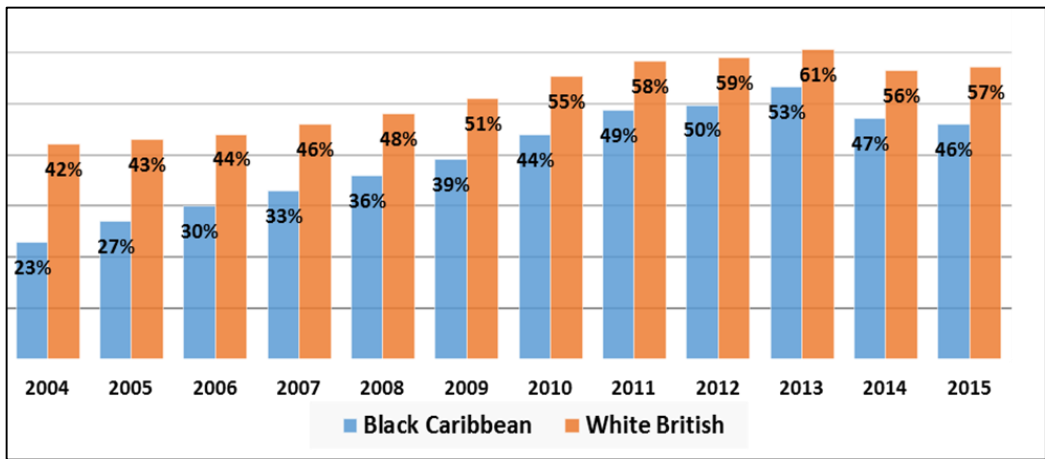
The national data in England also confirms that Black Caribbean underachievement in education is real and persistent and they are consistently the lowest performing group in the country, and the difference between their educational performance and others is larger than for any other ethnic group (see Figure 1). Recent empirical evidence suggests that amongst those ending their compulsory education in UK, Black Caribbean and Pakistani pupils were least successful academically with only 47% of Black Caribbean and 51% of Pakistani pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grade A* to C including English and Maths. In contrast, around 75% of Chinese, 73% of Indian, 61% of Bangladeshi, 57% of Black African and 56% of White British pupils achieved 5 or more A* to C grades at GCSE (Figure 2). All the main ethnic groups achieved better than Black Caribbean pupils.
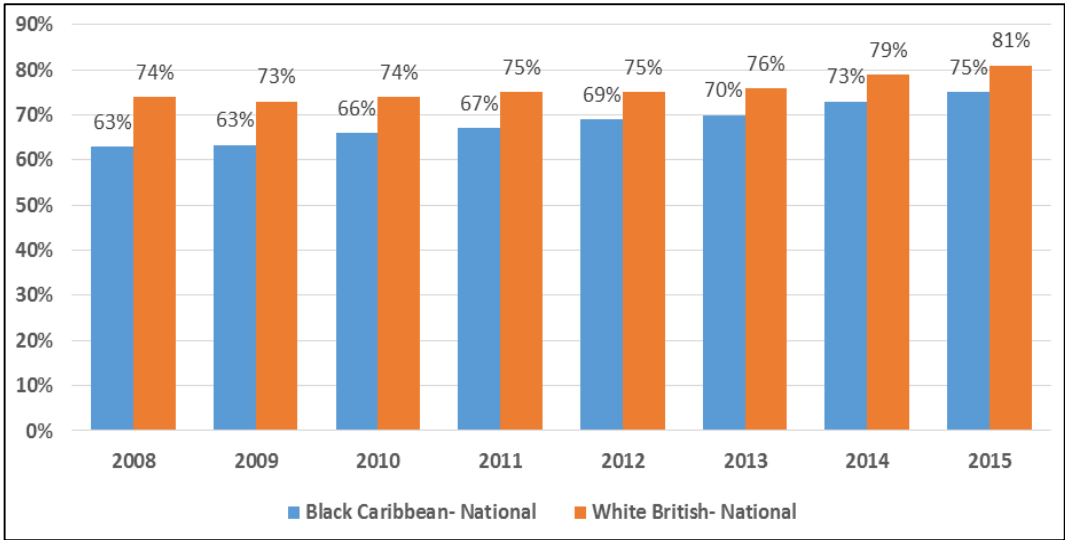
Figure 2. Black Caribbean Achievement in England (5+A*-C including English and Maths)
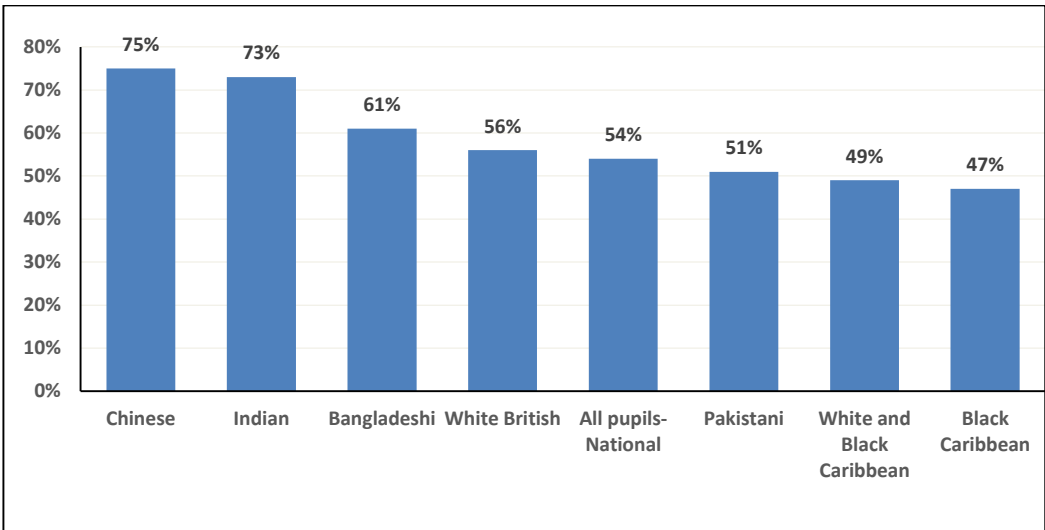
Source: DfE (2015). The Statistical First Release: National Curriculum Assessment and GCSE/GNVQ attainment by pupil characteristics, in England, 20125 at http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000448/index.shtml

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Figure 3 also indicates that there is a marked difference in KS2 performance between Black Caribbean pupils and White British pupils. At the end of primary education in 2015, 75% of Black Caribbean pupils achieved level 4+ (the national standard), whereas 81% of White British pupils achieved at this level. The gap in performance was narrowed from 11 percentage points in 2008 to 6 points in 2015. Overall, the findings from national data confirm that Black Caribbean pupils perform considerably below their peers nationally at both KS2 and GCSE.

Figure 3. KS2 Black Caribbean and White British Achievement in England (Level 4+)

The underachievement of Black Caribbean heritage pupils has been a persistent problem facing national policy makers in British schools for many years. Over the past four decades, national research has shown that Black Caribbean heritage pupils' achievements persistently lag behind the average achievement of their peers, and the gap is growing at the end of primary and secondary education. This underachievement issue is a question that has stirred emotions from as early as the 1950s when the Black Caribbean community grew concerned about their children's education. Coard (1971) argued that they encountered widespread lack of understanding about the needs of Black Caribbean pupils, '*fuelling the widely-held belief that Black children were somehow educationally subnormal.*' He explained how the low expectations of teachers damaged pupils' motivation and confidence thus dooming them to a life of underachievement.

The reasons for underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils are wide-ranging and complex. '*Within education literature recently four main schools related factors has emerged: stereotyping; teachers' low expectations; exclusions and Headteachers poor leadership on equality issues. All of these can perpetuate low attainment and disengagement from learning by Black Caribbean pupils.' (Demie 2003:243).* Other researchers also noted that the lack of adequate support to schools from parents, economic deprivation, poor housing and home circumstances (Rampton 1981; Swann 1985), institutional racism and the failure of the national curriculum to reflect adequately

the needs of a diverse and multi-ethnic society (MacPherson, 1999; Gillborn 2002). Concerns persist, and there is now a need for a detailed case study of successful schools in raising the achievement of Black Caribbean heritage pupils, as a means of increasing our understanding of the ways in which schools can enhance pupils' academic achievement.

Overall the body of available research suggests that most previous studies have focussed on the reasons why Black or ethnic minority children are underachieving. However, in recent years a number of previous research projects looked at examples of schools that provide an environment in which Black Caribbean pupils flourish, and identified key characteristics of successful schools in raising achievement. These include strong leadership, high expectation, effective teaching and learning, ethos of respect with a clear stand on racism and parental involvement (see for details Demie 2005, DfES 2003b, McKenley et al 2003, OFSTED 2002, Blair and Bourne 1998). Demie (2005) and DfES (2003) argued there is no 'pick and mix' option. An effective school will seek to develop all these characteristics underpinned by the practical use of data to monitor the achievement of particular groups of pupils to pinpoint and tackle underperformance. Much of the previous British research in this area again is on Black Caribbean pupils' underachievement, and there is a lack of research into the factors which contribute to educational success and high attainment of Black Caribbean heritage pupils in schools.

2.   The Aims and Research Methods

Research questions

This research is a qualitative study of schools in Lambeth Local Authority, and examines the success factors behind driving school improvement and raising achievement for all groups of pupils. It is similar to other studies that have looked at examples of schools who provide an environment in which underachieving groups flourish, but reflects the perspective of the pupils, using detailed case studies to illustrate how policy and practice help to raise achievement of pupils with a strong emphasis on what works (Demie and Mclean 2007, 2014; Demie and Lewis 2010; Mongon and Chapman 2008, Ofsted 2009). Three overarching research questions guided this research:

- What does the data tell us about raising achievement?
- What are the success factors in driving school improvement?
- What are the implications for policy and practice?

It provides evidence based answers to these questions, drawing on the practice, experience and ambitions of schools in challenging circumstances. The case study schools in this research, which serve disadvantaged communities in Lambeth were all at some point in their past, identified by Ofsted as requiring special measures or had serious weaknesses. However, they have all been graded as 'outstanding' in recent inspections, and have consistently high levels of achievement. They were selected according to the following criteria:

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- an above-average proportion of students who are eligible for free school meals
- outstanding grades in their most recent Ofsted inspection
- exceptionally good results, high standards and sustained KS2 and GCSE improvement

Research methods

This research is an ethnographic study of outstanding schools. Two complementary methodological approaches were therefore adopted, each contributing a particular set of data to the study.

The methodological approach of the research comprised case studies of selected schools and focus group interviews. The case studies were supported by a qualitative study of the school strategies used to raise achievement. Details of the methodological framework are summarised below:

Focus groups: Parent, pupil, governor and Headteacher focus groups were carried out to ascertain their views on strategies that worked to raise achievement and to identify whether their views mirrored those of the participants in the case study interviews.

Case studies: A detailed case study research was carried out to study the strategies used to raise achievement and narrow the gap. A structured questionnaire was used to interview Headteachers, teachers, parents and pupils to gather evidence on what worked in raising the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils. The aim was to triangulate the voices of the various stakeholders in their education. Topics explored the school curriculum, the quality of teaching and learning, how the school monitors pupils performance, how it supports and guides pupils, school links with parents, parents' and pupils' views about the school and its support systems, race and ethnicity in the curriculum, quality of school leadership and management, competence and materials to use the existing flexibility within the curriculum to make subjects more relevant to pupils' own experiences and to reflect their cultural heritage. The latest visit focused mainly on gathering more evidence on the case study schools parental engagement and diversity in the school workforce.

Eight primary and six secondary schools were selected for case studies. The schools were chosen to reflect schools of different types in the Local Authority which have relatively high numbers of pupils on free school meals. The key criteria for the selection of schools were those with a very high proportion of pupils with Black Caribbean heritage, good KS2 and GCSE results and outstanding Ofsted inspection reports.

As part of the research a variety of members of school staff and parents were interviewed in order to get a range of perspectives on the main practices in schools over a four-year period. These included Headteachers and Deputy Headteachers; class teachers; EAL (English as an additional language) teachers and special educational needs co-ordinators; teaching assistants and learning support teachers; family support workers, governors and pupils. Each of the case study schools were visited every year as part of the research between 2010 and 2015.

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SECTION 2: ACHIEVEMENT IN THE CASE STUDY SCHOOLS

This section explores the achievement in the case study schools. The case study schools studied in this research defy the association of poverty and low outcomes and they enable pupils to succeed against the odds. The selected case study schools serve some of the most deprived wards in the Local Authority (LA). Many pupils come from disadvantaged home circumstances. The number of pupils taking up free school meals is about 26% and ranges from 13% to 32% for all schools. There is a high proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school at other than usual times. Over half the pupils are from homes where English is not the first language. The majorities of the pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic groups and speak more than fifty different languages. The most common being Yoruba, Portuguese, Spanish, Twi, French, Ibo, Ga, Krio, Tagalog, Somali and Luganda. The school population mirrors the community in which the school sits. Most pupils come from African, Caribbean, Portuguese and White British backgrounds. A significant proportion of pupils are of a mixed heritage.

Table 1. Background to the Selected Case Study Schools

Primary Schools

Case Study Schools	Background				KS2 Level 4+ RWM	
	Ethnic Minorities (BME)	Black Caribbean	Free School Meals	English as an Additional Language	Black Caribbean	All Pupils
School A	91%	25%	28%	40%	100%	93%
School B	90%	23%	28%	49%	78%	85%
School C	89%	25%	23%	49%	89%	93%
School JE	87%	21%	26%	41%	86%	85%
School SJ	67%	17%	11%	20%	78%	80%
School SS	57%	13%	7%	25%	80%	90%
School Y	72%	11%	21%	42%	88%	93%
School V	94%	13%	50%	70%	100%	83%
Case Study	**85%**	**15%**	**26%**	**49%**	**84**%	**88**%
Lambeth	**84%**	**14%**	**25%**	**52%**	**77**%	**86**%
National	**31%**	**1%**	**17%**	**19%**	**75**%	**80**%

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Secondary Schools

Case Study Schools	Background				5+ A*-C including English and Maths	
	Ethnic Minorities (BME)	Black Caribbean	Free School Meals	English as an Additional Language	Black Caribbean	All Pupils
School G	81%	14%	17%	27%	50%	62%
School D	78%	23%	32%	33%	49%	51%
School E	87%	24%	24%	42%	63%	57%
School I	97%	32%	23%	45%	69%	68%
School O	96%	19%	32%	65%	55%	57%
School RE	96%	13%	13%	58%	53%	80%
Case Study	**88%**	**20%**	**22%**	**44%**	**61%**	**65%**
Lambeth	**88%**	**18%**	**26%**	**38%**	**48%**	**56%**
National	**28%**	**1%**	**14%**	**15%**	**47%**	**53%**

Despite challenges in terms of the level of deprivation in the area, the overwhelming impression the schools create is of confidence and cohesiveness. The schools are exceptionally inclusive. The schools promote community cohesion and ensure pupils understand and appreciate others from different backgrounds with a sense of shared vision, fulfilling their potential and feeling part of the community. Through the school curriculum, pupils explore the representation of different cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious groups in the UK and in the Local Authority.

Table 2 shows that the attainment of all pupils has been exceptionally high. Of the pupils in the case study schools 88% achieved level 4 or above at KS2 in 2015. From 2008, the case study schools are consistently scoring high results. The improvement rate of pupils in the case study schools is similar to the national and LA average, however the starting position of the case study schools is much higher. Between 2008 and 2015, pupils in the case study schools improved from 64% to 88%. This is an improvement rate of 24 percentage points compared to 7 points in all schools at national level.

Table 2. KS2 Attainment in the Case Study Schools (Level 4 or above*)

	2008	2015	Improvement
Case Study Schools	64%	88%	+24
Black Caribbean -LA	62%	77%	+15
Black Caribbean- National	63%	75%	+12
All pupils- National	73%	80%	+7
White British	74%	81%	+7

*2008 data is % of pupils getting level 4 + in both English and Maths and 2015 is % of pupils getting level 4+ in Reading, Writing and Maths (RWM)

At Key Stage 4, 61% of the case study schools' Black Caribbean pupils achieved 5+A*-C including English and Maths compared to 47% in England. The data also shows that the case study schools were on an upward trend from 2010 to 2015 and the gap with LA is 4 percentage points compared to 14 percentage points with the national average. (Figure 4)

Figure 4. GCSE Performance of Black Caribbean in the Case Study Schools and in England (5+A*-C including English and Maths 2006-2014)
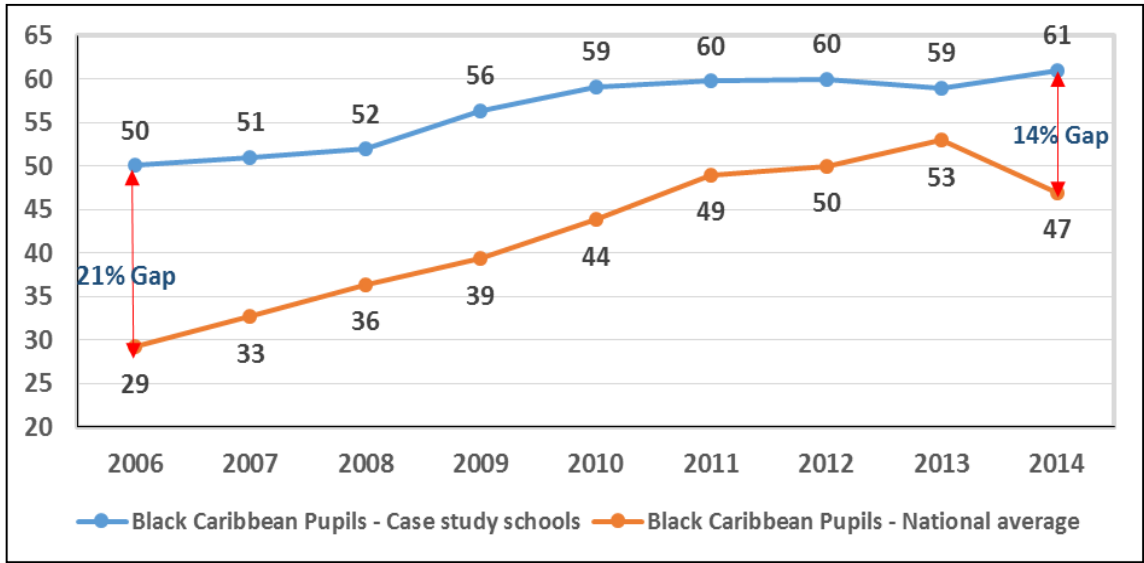
SECTION 3: RAISING ACHIEVEMENT OF BLACK CARIBBEAN PUPILS – SUCCESS FACTORS

The above section covered the attainment of Black Caribbean pupils in the case study schools in the context of their overall performance in the Local Authority and England and suggests that the case study schools buck the national trends. There are a number of reasons for the high achievement of Black Caribbean pupils in the case study schools compared to the Local Authority and nationally in England. Therefore the key question for research is, '*what is the reason for such successful achievement in the case study schools*? As part of the interviews Headteachers and teachers were asked, '*what strategies does your school use to raise the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils?'* The research identified the following success factors in raising achievement and narrowing the gap including outstanding visionary school leadership, effective teaching and learning, effective use of data, an inclusive curriculum, targeted support and interventions, diversity in the school workforce, valuing and celebrating cultural diversity, a clear stand on racism. These good practices are explored below:-

Excellent Leadership and Black Caribbean Achievement

The single factor that links all the case study schools' success in raising the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils is the excellence of their leadership. Headteachers have a very strong vision of the kind of school they want to lead and they have the leadership skills to create them. Universally, they focus on high standards and high achievement. They devote time and resources to staff appointments and to continuing professional development. They build strong, cohesive teams and have the confidence to delegate responsibility to others. They lead by example. A few are themselves of Black Caribbean heritage and some are Church-goers, as are the families they serve. All have the gift of creating the ethos and relationships with pupils, parents and staff that have developed a real sense of community. The case study schools serve some of the most disadvantaged communities in the country, but they have worked with those communities to raise their hopes and aspirations along with the achievements of their young people. The leaders of these schools refuse to accept a challenging context as a barrier to success; indeed, it gives them additional motivation and purpose.

School I is a comprehensive girls' school that has a majority of its pupils from Christian backgrounds and where a third of the pupils are of Black Caribbean heritage. Leadership to raise the achievement of all pupils is excellent. The strong mission of the school is powerfully transmitted through the tools and processes adopted by the school to monitor the performance of pupils in the school. Strategies to overcome the barriers to learning and access to the curriculum have been reframed within an overall commitment to building an inclusive, godly learning community. All members of the workforce play their role in monitoring the academic and emotional wellbeing of pupils in this school and a strong sense of common purpose pervades the school.

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One of the strategies for successful leadership is building a vision of success and setting clear direction. At **School Y** the Headteacher has adopted a strategy for closing the attainment gaps of children of Black Caribbean heritage and those who are eligible for pupil premium funding, which has required this leadership quality. He explains the strategy as follows:

> *'I took my strongest teachers out of class in each of the phase teams EYFS, Year 1 and 2, Year 3 and 4, Year 5 and 6 and each is picking up intervention groups. I have spent quite a lot of money upgrading small rooms, making them enticing for children by decorating, putting in spotlights, whiteboards – these rooms are even more enticing than the classrooms. Our Pupil Premium children are not seen as second class citizens being shunted off. They also have the best teachers and are envied rather than looked down on. Everybody knows why they are taken out of class and what for but now they are being taken out with a special teacher who everyone universally loves and going into an attractive environment.' **(Headteacher, School Y)***

Making the decision to give the best teachers and provision to disadvantaged children reflects the leadership's concern that all pupils, despite their starting points, will achieve the best they possibly can. By an expert teacher taking out groups of pupils who need more help, it frees the class teacher to accelerate the learning of pupils of higher capability. The following case study illustrates the effectiveness of this strategy:

> ***Case Study:*** *Case study pupil is a Black Caribbean boy who is currently in Year 6 and joined School Y in Year 2. There was a history of lack of parental involvement, including sending him to school with no breakfast, unclean uniform, no show at parents evening, mother taking extended holidays without child in term time, playing inappropriately aged computer games, staying up extremely late, and so on. Child has displayed immature behaviour including tantrums, lengthy sulking periods, stamping of feet, crying, hiding, refusing to do work or engage in discussion. He finds it difficult to use his words to express how he is feeling or what is upsetting him. His SEN needs include communication and interaction and social, emotional and mental health.*
>
> *Interventions put in place included weekly sessions with learning mentor/counsellor, as well as daily maths and literacy intervention with experienced teacher out of class. Reward systems to motivate with a clear sanction system. Focus on using words to express feelings. Use of 'learning line' to express when struggling during the lesson and how best to find a way to move forward with learning. Regular contact with mother where possible. A clear impact has been shown, as the child is increasingly focused in both maths and literacy lessons. He can concentrate on a task for longer periods of time and shows growing levels of resilience when stuck on a problem; however this remains a target for him. He can still tantrum, however is able*

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to compose himself much more quickly than previously. He is beginning to express himself more readily by using his words. He is motivated by rewards and praise. His levels demonstrate that he is making steady progress in all areas of his learning and is on task to achieve his predicted SATs levels 3A/4C at the end of Year 6 in Maths.

Leaders, staff, and governors at **School V** are also fully committed to attaining the highest levels of achievement and personal development for every pupil. Teamwork is particularly strong. Everyone's contribution is valued and morale is high. The Head of School is determined to ensure that every child succeeds and for the past three years he has achieved his goal which has been to ensure that by Year 2 *every* child is able to read, write independently and have a mastery of number appropriate to their age, with a significant proportion exceeding this. This continues to be an ambitious target when attainment on entry to the Nursery is well below average. The implementation of the rigorous phonics and number programmes are a consequence of his innovatory leadership.

School V is at the forefront of leading edge practice through researched based learning and development as part of 'The Oval Learning Cluster' of schools. There is an ongoing commitment by the leadership to the dissemination of practice locally, nationally and internationally and this now extends to making commercially available some of its latest 'masters' curriculum and assessment programmes.

The Executive Headteacher of **School C** maintained that the school's ethos of valuing every child is one of the main reasons that Black Caribbean pupils succeed:

'Every child is a unique child and we meet an individual need which explains why all the children do well and Black Caribbean pupils do well. But of course, we pay attention to all groups in the school, Black Caribbean, Black African and mixed heritage.'…. We ensure that there is effective leadership and management, quality of teaching and learning, personal development and well-being. All adults have one goal in mind and that is to raise the achievement of the children together with the high aspirations for all… and the possibility of giving children the opportunity to experience things beyond the school gates, visits to places of interest and visitors to the school'… 'Our priorities are to raise the aspiration of families in our school, school improvement, CPD learning from each other as well as giving children opportunities of developing their learning.'
(Executive Headteacher, School C)

Another remarkable feature of the effective leadership of the case study schools is that the Headteacher and/or the Deputy Headteacher live in the Borough of Lambeth and often have many decades experience teaching at the school or in other local schools. They consider that a detailed knowledge of and commitment to the local community is a crucial factor for a successful teaching career in London schools, as one Head of School made clear:

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'I have always lived in this area. I have been used to being in this area and having Black people around me all the time and as I have got older the number of Black people in this area has increased'… 'I go to a Baptist Church and I have Black friends.' 'When I was little, education was always the way to improve yourself and I just always wanted to do the best I could for the children in this area. A lot of people, who teach in Lambeth, live in Lambeth and have been here all their lives. I think you get a real commitment to the people who live here, I think you understand the people and the children and the parents and the ways of life, the houses and facilities. It is just something else that makes you close.' **(Head of School, School C)**

Coming from a White working class family the Head of School, describes her father's family as being 'disadvantaged'. She says that the reason why the school's Black Caribbean pupils achieve success is because the school 'expects everything of everybody', she continued:

'Education can offer you the world. I have grown up in this community and am part of this community. I have given 27 years to this school and to the Church community. I was teaching the children of the children I first taught when I came here. You don't have to fight for credibility. I now see myself as a grandparent of the children. I am moving into the matriarchal role. I feel that I am 120% invested in it. Trends come and go, but what remains the same is a heart for the community and the children. As a practising Christian being in a Church school this has been important to me. I would never have chosen to work in a non-Church school. There is the distinctiveness of being a part of a Christian family which is strong here.' **(Head of School, School C)**

At **School E**, the Deputy Head with responsibility for Inclusion considers it vital to build close links between the community and the school. The school has worked hard to develop a partnership with the community and looks for every opportunity to strengthen it. He is another example of unswerving commitment to making a difference to the life chances of young people. He described his motivation for pursuing a career in teaching in inner city schools:

'I grew up in London, New Cross. The school I went to in 1984 had a mixed intake. My dad was Headteacher of Deptford Park School'…'I was going to be a teacher from 13 years of age. I left school, went to University and started teaching at 22 years. We moved to Maidstone but I always knew I would come back to London. I have two children growing up in London as I want my own children to experience difference and all the things that London offers. I taught in Deptford Green under Sir Keith Ajegbo and have taught for eighteen years in London schools. I have a heart for children in inner-city schools, I feel comfortable, I feel at home, and I make a difference. I do a lot with families, I have a pastoral role. I say to the young Black students, 'people are judging you, what you are wearing, where you are in a group. It's important how people perceive you.' **(Deputy Head, Inclusion, School E)**

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A knowledge and understanding of the Black Caribbean community which has been strengthened through his wife's family who come from Monserrat has enabled the White Headteacher of **School D** to establish an effective rapport with pupils and parents. He explains how because he grew up in a Council house his own social and cultural mobility have been essential elements required in leading the school which he describes as having *'a clear middle class cohort and a working class cohort'*:

> *'I am from a Council house background but I can talk about what was on Radio 4 yesterday. There are massive amounts of people who cannot have those conversations. For example my Black Caribbean wife had never heard of Abba's "Dancing Queen" until she went to University.'* **(Headteacher, School D)**

Having taken up the post of Headteacher two years ago, he talked about some of the things that made a difference in addressing a huge attainment gap of 20% between Black Caribbean pupils and White pupils:

> *'Black Caribbean pupils' achievement in maths was 19%, the gap this year was only 5% and progress this year is good. What did we do differently? We did a number of tiny things. I did see a lot of the Black Caribbean Year 11 students' parents on a 1:1 basis. I am doing that again this year with a broader remit with other parents. I asked them "how have you found your experience here? I give them a chance to give out. We started "Target Tuesday" targeted at Year 11, these de-personalised the reasons why you were coming into school. To look at specific things. This made it more open. I have always said to parents, "whenever you want to come and talk I will speak to you". That has created a positive relationship'….. 'The rise is exam results last year has meant that you can see Black Caribbean students, boys who are in the sixth form and they have done well. Then the kids below who are disenfranchised can see a thread of achievement of children above. It's not rocket science'…..'This year we have started a programme called "Aspire to Achieve" for KS3 disengaged pupils, it is very much geared to pupils at risk of exclusion.'* **(Headteacher, School D)**.

The case study school leaders' views that an in-depth knowledge of the local community and the urban context is a pre-requisite for successful teaching is supported by research carried out in US on the difficulties experienced by student teachers who have grown up in largely White neighbourhoods, who then go on to teach in urban multi-cultural schools: '*Students come to College with little knowledge of one another's backgrounds, beyond the stereotypes so pervasive in our society. The residential segregation patterns currently in place do not serve our children well. The average White person lives in a neighbourhood that is more than 80% White.'* (America Becoming: racial trends and their consequences, 2001).

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Lack of exposure to urban environments makes teachers very susceptible to behaviour patterns which are rooted in well-internalised but incorrect cultural notions and assumptions. For this reason, in our case study schools, the leadership's recruitment practices are thorough (although all were concerned about the lack of Black teachers entering the profession) and they are careful to induct new teachers into their schools.

There is a thorough understanding of the challenges that parents and children face in the communities they serve, so they are able to find ways of engaging even the most elusive parents. The Headteacher of **School A** described some of the issues parents face:

> *'There are huge problems socially in this area, poverty, mental health, unemployment or low paid employment, poor housing.' (School A)*

She goes on to describe what the leadership are doing to support the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils who are the predominant group in the school:

> *'I have a Family Support Worker and a Parent Partnership Worker on my senior leadership team. They can talk with the parents more effectively than I can because I represent authority as a Headteacher. They do very well at building relationships with parents. Usually problems do not reach me unless it gets to the stage that the situation needs a bit more weight. For example, a Year 1 child who was quite needy and had a young mum who gets very angry because the child's jumper was lost and our Parent Partnership Worker has done wonders with this parent, she got her involved in the Christmas Fair doing hotdogs. This is because we took the time to build a relationship. If you cannot get your child to school on time we say 'what can we do to help?' So many good things in place.' (Headteacher, School A)*

The Headteacher of this school expressed concern at the lack of Black teachers applying for posts in Lambeth's schools, she commented:

> *'I am a White Headteacher and most of the teachers are White. We only have one Black teacher but we have a mixed staff. Although I interview teachers for Lambeth schools, I have not interviewed any Black teachers and there are fewer Black Headteachers now in Lambeth than there used to be.' (Headteacher, School A)*

The professional development of staff in this school has been one of the keys to its success as potential is recognised early leading to an opportunity to further develop knowledge and skills and contribute to the strength of the staff team:

> *'Professional development of staff brings lots of knowledge, highly trained teaching assistants, who don't just turn up at 9 am and they are involved in the discussions about individual pupils. They might come to pupil progress meetings. We are up for trying anything new.' (Headteacher, School A)*

The success of the school's CPD is expressed in the following quote from the Family Support Worker, who is a man of Black Caribbean heritage:

> *'This school hasn't judged me on my colour, as I have been given a place on the leadership team and I am studying for a postgraduate course, despite not having a first degree. I am now a role model to our pupils. I grew up on an estate and did not have any positive role models. Children wouldn't take it seriously if they are not in a school with Black role models. There is no point in saying you should be a teacher, doctor or whatever, if they do not see themselves reflected in those professions.' (School A)*

The case study school leaders understand the importance of inclusion, and are attuned to the local community with its ethnic diversity. They are adept at listening without judgment to those whose life experiences might have been very different to their own. They are aware that each family has its own story to tell, and they want to be heard, and they attend to all of those stories, including the ones that seem quite unfamiliar to them. This takes practice and effort which is what these leaders do effectively and wisely. There is a recognition that those who would lead need to do so with wisdom unless they inadvertently become oppressive to others. There are seeds of oppression within everyone, not because there is an intention to be exclusionary or mean-spirited but because models of oppression have been internalised by society. It is visible sometimes in the language used, in the assumptions made about others, in the way we treat those we define as different from ourselves. As new models of leadership for the 21st century emerge it is important for all school leaders to work to develop the habits of mind that will help to uproot those seeds of internalised oppression and to identify and challenge them when they see them in their staff.

Effective Teaching and Learning

It will not come as a surprise to hear that all the schools in this study regard the continual improvement of teaching, learning and pedagogy as their most important activity. Senior leaders acknowledge the importance of leading by example. It is seen as very important that senior staff teach, that they are seen to teach well, and that they are included in the usual arrangements for lesson observation, monitoring and evaluation. These schools focus very hard on ensuring (as a minimum) that all, or at least almost all, lessons continue to be at least good. The monitoring of lessons is extensive and rigorous, and leaders can identify very accurately how good individual teachers are and what they need to do to improve further. All new teachers are observed from a very early stage and, where their teaching is not at least good, focused additional support is quickly put in place. Most of the schools provide structured professional development for teachers during the early stages of their careers.

Time is given for teachers to work in pairs or teams engaging in productive discussion about pedagogy, planning lessons that inspire students to become independent and

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effective learners, and being reflective rather than simply dealing with administration. Teachers and teaching assistants are expected to make good practice visits to other schools within the School Cluster arrangements and disseminate their findings on their return. They undertake peer observations across year groups so that good practice is widely shared and collaboration fostered.

Lessons at **School A** demonstrate consistent good practice, evidence of continuing professional development and rigorous performance management. The rapport between teachers and pupils is very positive; teachers have very high aspirations for Black Caribbean and all pupils, the pace of lessons is brisk and activities varied; and pupils respond promptly and confidently to opportunities to collaborate, solve problems and present ideas to their peers. There are clear and non-negotiable expectations about appropriate behaviour, which are calmly and firmly insisted upon as a teacher of Caribbean heritage explained:

> *'My high expectations of myself came from my home. In my background it has been embedded within myself. I am determined to do my best. I am quite strict as a teacher. It is important that children know that we are here to learn, you have to work hard for what you want.'* **(School A)**

At **School Y** there is a belief that the most vulnerable pupils need the strongest teachers, which runs counter to the practice in some schools of taking children with additional needs out of the class to work with a teaching assistant. An experienced, outstanding teacher who is now a non-class based Phase Leader and maths specialist, and teaches small groups of pupils explained why this practice works well at **School Y**:

> *'It just doesn't work with a TA. It's the experience of teachers and their knowledge of how to motivate a wide range of pupils with a wide range of needs that makes a difference. The TAs are extremely strong but they are not trained teachers. Teachers know how to break things down and how to change tack if it's not working, having a host of strategies and experience of what works. These children need to feel they are on a par with their friends. I make them know they are doing hard stuff – as hard as what is going on in the classes. It makes them feel equal which is what we want.'*
> **(Phase Leader, School Y)**

We asked whether this approach would work with inexperienced teachers and she responded:

> *'If you started taking people out of class after only one or two years teaching they may not feel they have the range of teaching strategies to be able to carry out the interventions. You have to choose the people wisely and you need experienced teachers – you also need to have the right space to use as an attractive teaching base.'* **(Phase Leader, School Y)**

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We observed this outstanding teacher with a group of seven Black Caribbean Year 6 pupils. There was an air of excitement during the lesson, which moved at a rapid place with the teacher drawing on pupils' responses to gauge their understanding. This was assessed by the teacher who displayed their work on the whiteboard via a camera and she invited them to explain how they had arrived at their answers, marking any errors which were then used as teaching points. The school is using 'Learning Lines' which facilitates pupils' evaluation of their own learning, as they place themselves at some point on a line and identify any difficulties or 'pit experiences.' The teacher encourages pupils to reflect on the strategies they could use to get out of the pit. Trust between teacher and pupils, and between pupils has been built up to the extent that there is no fear or shame in revealing the depth of their misunderstanding. As the lesson draws to an end the teacher encourages the pupils and gives them feedback, making explicit how well they are achieving, as follows:

> *'Our aim is to try and get you to Level 4. We are roughly about the same. The questions you are working on were Level 4. If I came last September and asked you this question, you never could have done it, so you are making great progress'* **(Phase Leader, School Y)**

At **School V** support for teaching is very effective, with excellent systems in place to check on the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress. Able middle leaders contribute very well to this process both through lesson observations and very regular analysis of pupils' work and through sharing the best practice with colleagues. All of this has ensured that teaching is outstanding. Additional funding to support the learning of disadvantaged pupils and of vulnerable pupils has been used wisely, as shown by their remarkable achievement. This illustrates the school's great success in promoting equal opportunities for all of its pupils.

Teachers' willingness to discuss challenging subjects such as racism, social justice and their encouragement for children to debate these topics is an excellent feature of teaching and learning at **School C**.   Pupils are equipped with the twin tools of transformation: the capacity for critical thinking and the capacity for caring connection.

During a visit to **School C**, 22 children in the EYFS of Black Caribbean, African and dual White and Black Caribbean/African heritage sit on the carpet and are very focused and involved in identifying the steps to making bread (which they had made the previous day). There is great participation and they understand that it is yeast that makes bread rise. The teacher uses visual prompts to remind the children to use punctuation in their writing, e.g. she pats her head for capital letters, wags a finger for a space between letters and a punch in the air for a full stop!   There are many multi- cultural images around the classroom which demonstrates to the children that the school values them.

A teacher from Year 6 in the same school gave her views about the teaching and learning strategies that seem to work best for encouraging Black Caribbean boys in their writing:

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> *'We target Black Caribbean boys if they are reluctant writers. Most of the teachers find working with mixed ability groups beneficial because the children respond positively. That group of boys can withdraw if there is any sense of stigma being applied. The pace of lessons has to be lively. If you don't get the children interested in the beginning you can lose them. Enthusiasm is everything. I have chosen the 'Iron Man' because it appeals to boys – short, sharp chunks! Making sure there are a lot of opportunities for discussion and drama. Their ability to magpie has improved.'*
> *(Year 6 teacher, School C)*

A mathematics lesson in Year 4 was also observed, where an excellent lead teacher for mathematics was teaching the inverse properties of multiplication and division and the value of three digit numbers to her class, which largely comprised Black Caribbean and African heritage pupils. The lesson began with a 'Big Maths' song and the pupils joined in enthusiastically. The teacher used rapid questioning to gauge their understanding, e.g. *'what's the difference between these calculations? What did I switch, what did I change? What column is this? She commented: 'I like mistakes because you learn from them – it gets boring if everyone gets it right'! Group work activities on problem solving posed the question can you use the information on the cards to draw the one shape which is being described.'* This teacher recognised that pupils need to be challenged appropriately for their ages and abilities, giving them the chance to work in pairs and groups. She later commented:

> *'We don't have English and maths tables. Every couple of weeks we have a shift around so children don't relax into where they are. There is a danger where you get the child who thinks I do not need to listen because there will be an adult there, or near a child who always listens, we vary it all the time.'*
> *(Year 4 teacher, School C)*

In **School B** we observed another outstanding Year 6 mathematics lesson where twenty eight pupils of mainly Caribbean and African heritage were being confronted with formal written methods of multiplication. The teacher posed the question: *'if I asked you to formally write out 24 x 6 on your whiteboards, how would you do it, show me your answers?'* She checks their understanding thoroughly and uses their responses as further teaching points. The majority of pupils show a clear understanding but the teacher uses one or two wrong answers to illustrate possible errors in calculation. One confident child was not unwilling to show how she got the wrong answer and how, when she realised it, went back to correct it. The teacher's very high expectations, secure subject knowledge, and the involvement of pupils all contributed to a very successful lesson.

In all the case study schools, teachers are effectively in an environment of diverse learners and they facilitate the learning process of pupils with a variety of backgrounds and needs. They treat all pupils as individuals with unique strengths, weaknesses, and needs rather than as generalised representatives of particular racial, ethnic or cultural groups. They

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employ a variety of teaching styles to respond to the needs of diverse learners and create an open classroom that values the experiences and perspectives of all pupils.

These schools also actively promote and foster discussion about teaching and learning. Involvement in initial teacher training is seen as vital in giving teachers the skills to talk about and analyse their teaching. There is also a strong culture of developmental lesson observation across the schools, with teachers routinely observing each other, often informally.

School JE the Executive Headteacher acknowledges that the most significant factor in the schools success has been the rigour with which they monitor the quality of teaching:

> *'When we observe lessons we always give teachers steps to improve, even if they are outstanding. We still observe all our outstanding teachers.'……* She concluded: *'I have seen the potential in our NQTS who have to be at least good first of all and then we build on that.'*

The Head of School at **School JE** concurred with this view:

> *'We have a cohort of outstanding teachers here. The support and induction that we provide for our new teachers and NQTs ensures that they also become outstanding teachers. We are a team and we support each other to provide the best possible education for our children.'*

Observation of an excellent drama class in Year 11 at **School D** which was led by a teacher who was of Caribbean heritage. Students were required to go through scripts in detail and rehearse sketches in groups. It was apparent that pupils were collaborating very effectively in these diverse groups comprising girls, and a high proportion of Black Caribbean boys. They related very well to their teacher and to each other. They expressed their ideas articulately and put them into practice in the rehearsals. Some changed character frequently as the roles required.

Their teacher noted afterwards:

> *'Sometimes I see them misbehaving in another class and I say 'what's going on?' 'It doesn't suit all pupils to be sitting behind a desk and listening – they like to be actively involved in learning.'*

This view was supported by the Head of Year 9 at **School E** who is of Jamaican heritage, who commented:

> *'I teach photography here and because students are moving about and they are out and about they are fully engaged.'*

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He has the view that the EYFS is the time when a passion for learning can be established but the focus on standards and testing in primary schools is hindering this process for some children, he argues:

> *'The early years are the years when a child takes in most of its learning if children don't get that early, they become closed. In primary schools the focus is now so narrow on maths and English, they only do a bit of art. Because they have not been exposed to a broad range of subjects and no PE, they are way behind. In Year 6 last year all they did was prepare for SATs. By Year 7 they have forgotten what school is about.'* **(Head of Year 9, Visual Arts Teacher, School E)**

A learning walk through Years 7-11 at **School E** where inspirational teaching of English, maths, science, PE, French and Drama was in progress, provided evidence of Black Caribbean pupils in top sets, having high aspirations for achieving 'A's and 'B's at GCSE.

Likewise at **School G** pupils have the highest aspirations which are inculcated by teachers and parents. School G was judged by Ofsted to be outstanding in all areas as the inspection report stated:

> *'Excellent teaching and tailored support for pupils enable them to learn exceptionally well in all subjects… School leaders have placed a strong emphasis on raising the quality of teaching in all areas of the school and are passionate about involving the pupils in their learning. This is one of the main reasons why the quality of teaching has improved and is now outstanding.'* **(Ofsted 2014)**

The talented and committed teaching staff at **School G** are willing to share their expertise and have developed a culture and learning environment where there is skilled and deep questioning which draws out and promotes pupils' understanding.   Pupils frequently lead parts of lessons, present their work and question each other and their teachers, as inspectors observed:

> *'Classrooms provide a safe and secure place where pupils are not afraid to speak out, or to learn by getting it wrong before they get it right. They check their ideas with a mark scheme, before their own work is returned and self-reviewed with increased skill and proficiency.'* **(Ofsted 2014)**

Teachers and other adults working with pupils encourage, support and express very high expectations for every pupil, and the pupils correspondingly expect the very best of themselves. Excellent support for pupils who have special educational needs is provided in class and within the resource base.

At **School O** the Principal and 50% of the teaching staff are of Black Caribbean heritage. The school has been transformed under the current leadership which took the school from

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requiring special measures to becoming outstanding when inspected in 2014. The teaching at **School O** continues to provide outstanding outcomes for students as Ofsted reported:

> *'Teachers and teaching assistants have very high expectations of all students. This leads to teachers planning learning activities which ensure students are enthusiastic about their learning. Teachers gauge the quality of students' work very well and set appropriate, but challenging academic targets.'* ***(Ofsted 2014)***

According to Ofsted inspectors, the school has gone from strength to strength over the recent past:

> *'The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the school became an academy. A significant feature of the outstanding teaching in the school is the excellent relationship that has been established between staff and students. Students collaborate exceptionally well in lessons to improve their learning. In a Year 11 lesson, for example, students were encouraged to support each other when comparing solutions to mathematical problems. This ensured they were not reliant on the teacher for their learning, and led to excellent progress in their knowledge and understanding. Teachers make very clear the standard of work and behaviour expected from all students. As a result, students participate very willingly in all their learning tasks and make outstanding progress.'* ***(Ofsted 2014)***

Use of a Relevant Inclusive Curriculum

Whatever the curriculum model, every school emphasises the importance of the core curriculum   and standards in the core subjects. Each has a clear rationale for why their school's curriculum is as it is. This is based on a thorough understanding of what kind of school it is and what the students need. These outstanding schools are always looking for ways to improve their curriculum. They consider and plan proposed changes very carefully and only pursue them if there is a clear indication that they will support further gains in pupils' learning, motivation, enjoyment or achievement. These schools typically offer an impressive range of enrichment opportunities, trips and visits. This is usually a deliberate strategy as firstly, it provides cultural, artistic and sporting experiences that students are unlikely to encounter at home or in the community, widening horizons and heightening their aspirations and expectations and giving them access to opportunities that they may take up later in life. Secondly, it provides opportunities for students to develop greater self-confidence.

Pupil premium funding has usually provided the means for schools to provide enrichment opportunities and it is used to demonstrate excellence, raising pupils' sights. Many pupils don't experience excellence in their daily lives and there is the recognition by schools that if everything is mediocre, pupils will never aspire.

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The Deputy Head (Inclusion) at **School E** pointed out that some Black Caribbean pupils have very limited experiences of life outside their immediate area and so the school organises a residential trip out of London for pupils in Year 7:

> *'We had a residential fairly early on at Down. Lots of them have not had that kind of experience. We have kids who haven't even been on escalators.'(School E)*

The Deputy Head with responsibility for the curriculum at **School E** explains the process of change when the school went from an all girls' school to becoming co-educational and the impact this had on the curriculum on offer:

> **'***When we moved to co-ed we had to re-think the curriculum. The new national curriculum is narrowing, especially in English and history; you have got to be more creative now to make it relevant to our pupils. We have lead practitioners in a range of subjects. Our specialism in Performing and Visual Arts complements and enriches the curriculum which has been described by Ofsted as "innovative and engaging". The curriculum offers extensive opportunities for students including established links with world class organisations e.g. the Young Vic, Ballet Rambert and Laban and educational trips, visits and workshops with artists in residence. Collaboration is strong and I am keen that faculties do not stick to their own areas.'*

> *'With regard to enrichment: we have specialist staff and keen learners who are generally interested in their subject. There is no question of aspiration or challenge. No question that pupils have gone on to Drama Colleges, e.g. the Guildhall.' (Deputy Head, Curriculum)*

The school is offering many opportunities for pupils of Black Caribbean heritage to succeed while not always supported by parents, as the Deputy Head with responsibility for Inclusion explained:

> *'When we look at the way we work with students finding an interest that engages them, gets them being part of a team or a club….. A lot of parents, even those more professional, do not spend the time to develop children's hobbies and interests – it's just not there. We have had a lot of kids who are good footballers and they are offered great opportunities but parents won't accompany them to West Ham or Fulham. You see their hopes disappointed and their interest wanes because parents do not support them. This is not only single mums. It's the importance that is not placed on it. If you compare this with our basketball programme there is full participation because the full-time Coach takes them, so they don't need anyone to accompany them and they practice before and after school.'*

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We asked the Citizenship coordinator, how the school's effective teaching had contributed to the achievement of Black Caribbean students:

'We were one of the earliest schools to take part in Debate Mate. We open it up to all students. I facilitate two undergraduate students from LSE and they teach them how to debate. We had a Year 9 boy who was a problem – very sporty, bright boy and very involved with the Debate Club, he went to the Oxford Union Debate – he was one of only two students from state schools. He went on to study Politics and Law at Liverpool University.

We discuss things such as discrimination, reasoning and weighing up both sides of the argument. It offers students a voice and we can channel them and some of their frustrations and give them an opportunity to talk about things that affect them both inside and outside school. It broadens their horizons. There are a good number that do not travel out very far from here. We go to the House of Commons and we have workshops and they get to meet their local MP. They take part in Young Peoples' Question Time in the Houses of Parliament with a panel of MPs. We walk along the South Bank to make it a day out. They don't always know what is available.'
(Citizenship Co-ordinator, School E)

Case study primary schools also offer a very rich curriculum, drawing on inspiring Black role models whenever possible, to encourage pupils to aim high. One of the great strengths of **School C** is its excellent, enriched curriculum which very positively supports the aims and ethos of the school. The Executive Headteacher described the school's approach:

*'When the new National Curriculum came out in 2014, we looked at our curriculum and assessment and said they need to be based on our children. Our four key drivers are spirituality, possibilities, excellence and diversity, that the staff parents and governing body thought we wanted to preserve and develop. So when the National Curriculum came along we still use these four drivers, so we make sure that those four elements are covered. Alongside all of that, when we got together with another school (which is a partner school in the Federation), we formulated our seven values. Although diversity isn't one of them, it is threaded in. We decided to look at what our core values would look like. Everything we have done has stemmed from these strong core values, articulated not only by staff and children but also by parents. It is clear in our environment communication and that has really helped us in our journey to support our children to feel unique, to feel comfortable with whom they are and to feel comfortable with what they want to achieve.'….*she stresses that: *'It's valuing each child as an individual and to be able to offer each child possibilities to broaden their experiences and motivations.'*
(Executive Headteacher, School C)

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Teachers in Years 4 and 6 talk with enthusiasm about how they ensure that the curriculum takes account of the diverse range of pupils and represents them:

> *'Our key drivers of spirituality, possibilities, excellence and diversity are threaded through our curriculum. Year 5 has just been doing a project on space and last Year when we were doing it, we taught about Mae C Jemison, the first Black woman in space. We are very much aware of who our children are and we also understand what motivates them and it makes our job easier if they are motivated, so we try to weave it in. Severus, the Black Roman Emperor was a moor. We try every way we can to link it to the pupils and to London. We visited the Windmill Project at the Black Cultural Archives and are involved in a drama project with City Heights Academy on Hiroshima. We went along the Thames when we were visiting the Globe Theatre. So many children don't go into Central London and experience the amount of history here. I find it incredible that so many children never go. We walked past Southwark Cathedral, the Golden Hind and walked down by the Thames. We make an effort to do this because they just don't go there. We take children out as much as we can, even though it can be a challenge.'*

Likewise at **School A**, teachers draw on the local history of the area to develop Black Caribbean pupils' understanding of their own cultural heritage as teachers describe:

> *'We have to do a lot to the curriculum to diversify it.' **(Year 6 teacher,** School A**)***

> *'I try to make things interesting and relevant to them. My enthusiasms I bring into the classroom. For example, I showed the children photos of my holiday in Rome and they commented "you have a Black friend!" **(Year 3 teacher, School A)***

> *'I took my class last year to the Black Cultural Archives. I was amazed that the Black Caribbean children had no knowledge of their history. The imagery of Black cultural history in Britain, Windrush and the signs which said "no dogs, no Irish, no Blacks", I tried to stand in front of the sign as it could upset young children.' **(Year 3 teacher, School A).***

Teachers at **School JE**, where 24% of pupils are of Black Caribbean heritage, have continued to develop a rich and diverse, creative curriculum as the Head of School described:

> *'One of the first things we did to improve the curriculum was to work hard to develop our subject leaders….' 'We bring the whole school together with a particular theme or topic. We teach Maths, English, Science and ICT separately but use the themes to support those subjects too. As much as possible, we link the teaching and learning of subjects together through a common theme or topic. We look at our children and we ask what do our children need to learn about?' How can we encourage girls and boys? Our*

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creative curriculum changes each year because we evaluate and see how effective our curriculum is. This way of working allows teachers to become more creative. We also link our homework to the whole school theme so families become involved.'

Teachers are enthusiastic about its impact on the children:

'The curriculum offers so much flexibility in what I can do in the classroom. I can ask the children what we could do and because they are involved they take so much enjoyment from it. I can see evidence of their achievement.'

The school's website states that *'the aim of all those at School JE is to ensure that the curriculum offered to the children is not only fun and enjoyable but also leads to children achieving their full academic potential*.' The school logo says '*Excellence together with our community'* in the belief that it is with the 'partnership between parents and staff' that the children will be able to develop into 'well rounded individuals'. Parents can access 'curriculum guides' each term for each class from EYFS to Year 6, which outline the creative curriculum and homework projects. The school's innovative and exciting partnership with London Music Masters, through The Bridge Project (which has spanned six years) has contributed to the excellence of the school's curriculum. The Bridge Project is an educational initiative which identifies and nurtures young children who might not otherwise have the opportunity to engage in classical music. The Project encourages children, their families and communities to develop a life-long appreciation for classical music in all its varied forms. Pupils at **School JE** have therefore had a range of unique opportunities and experiences including performing at the Royal Festival Hall. They receive music tuition and participate in various musical workshops and performances throughout the school year.

The rich and diverse curriculum provides many memorable experiences and brings learning to life by linking topic themes creatively between subjects. Boys' writing has greatly improved by developing their skills in contexts they find engaging. Whole school topics cover EYFS to Year 6 which the EYFS team leader views as being a very positive feature. She says: *'The EYFS in many schools are in their own little bubble… here we feel more included in the whole school and so do the children. It motivates them. From my point of view it really makes a difference.'*

The creative curriculum was praised in the school's Ofsted report:

'The creative curriculum offers a very broad range of themed activities which are developed extremely well with contributions from pupils. Consequently, the school provides rich and memorable experiences for pupils that prepare them exceptionally well for their next steps in learning. There are many excellent opportunities through the curriculum and in assemblies to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The diversity of the school is celebrated and pupils are encouraged to consider other faiths and cultures

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through projects such as Our Heritage…. A very wide range of well-attended after- school clubs provides many opportunities for sports, arts and music activities.'

Black History Month is built reflectively into the curriculum in the autumn term and covers influential people and groups, e.g. in Nursery there are Stories from Africa, Reception: Stories from America – the Obamas, Year 1: Ride to Freedom - Rosa Parks, Year 2: Amazing Adventures of Mary Seacole, Year 3: Blast from the Past WW2 (children's viewpoints), Year 4: Aboriginal Australia - Artists, Year 5: Windrush - Influential People and Year 6: From Apartheid to Peace – Nelson Mandela.

There is an exhibition of children's work twice per year to which parents are invited. Classes are timetabled to view each year group's work in the exhibition and this helps them to understand what is expected of them as they progress through the school. Homework is also included in the exhibition which later goes on display at the local Library.

School V Primary teachers have developed a broad, balanced and imaginative curriculum and a curriculum map identifies foundation subjects to be taught through topics presenting a well- structured learning journey for pupils from Year 1-Year 6. The Humanities coordinator has taken a leading role in curriculum development and has produced exciting materials for Black History Month which feature local and National 'heroes' or role models, people from the West Indies and Africa who have made a significant contribution to life in Britain.

Core subjects are taught systematically and the school has pioneered its own approach to the teaching of phonics and numeracy. Phonics teaching is rigorous and is taught for 25 minutes per day to children in Years 1 and 2. Because of the success of this programme (taught by teachers and instructional leaders) the school has introduced Number Masters, targeting the same pupils, who are taught in small groups for 15 minutes every day to ensure that their engagement with numbers is intensive and consistent.

Teachers talk with enthusiasm about their approach to the curriculum and try to make lessons exciting and relevant to the children.. *'We used to use the Creative Learning Journey so people could become imaginative – especially in maths as it starts to make sense to children when you use real-life situations … we did a great maths shop last Year… each class came up with things they could make and sell, sandwiches, fruit shops, each class had a stall. The rest of the school came around and bought things!'* Making the connections between subjects is another strength and examples of how drama was incorporated into work on food-chains in science e.g. children played the part of bees pollinating flowers.

Children benefit from an extensive range of extra-curricular activities and visits to places of interest. Because of the location of the school and the excellent range of partnerships which have been established, pupils are able to perform at the Royal Festival Hall and the Young Vic and capitalise on visits to Tate Modern and events at the South Bank.

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Parental Engagement

Black Caribbean parents face numerous barriers to engagement, including costs, time and transportation, some having low levels of literacy and numeracy, and a lack of confidence in supporting children's learning or engaging with a school. All these schools see the importance of very good relationships between staff, students and parent the most important factor in their continued success. These schools place a premium on knowing all students as individuals. If you ask students why their schools are so good, they will commonly reply 'because teachers really care'. Again, the powerful 'norming' effect of a school's culture is important in ensuring that all staff relate to students in similar ways.

Pupils at these schools often find it difficult to study at home and many parents are not in a position to support them. The schools overcome this barrier by investing additional time in teaching and learning. Staff are generous with their time, typically running sessions at lunchtime, after school, during weekends and in their holidays. One Headteacher said: 'It's a relentless struggle.' These students receive a significant amount of individual help and attention. This also reinforces the positive relationships that exist between students and staff, because students see that teachers 'really care'. There is no doubt that this approach is extremely demanding of teachers' time and goodwill. Some schools are creative in harnessing and using members of the local community to offer expertise to support pupils and their families. **School E's** 'Greenhouse Project' is geared to working with parents and the wider community in supporting the education of Black Caribbean pupils, as the project leader explained:

> *'The majority of the project work is with single parent households with no father present. King, Ferron and Deane they work with specific children and agree targets, kids set targets for themselves that they think are attainable. We seek out those errant fathers. We ask mothers if we can contact father, especially if there's been a gap, or they have shown no interest in the children. We encourage them to be involved. I telephone father as well as mother to tell them what is going on at school. They are growing up in a predominantly female household. Mothers tend to nag a lot, whereas dads use a few words. They hear the message once from their dad and they tend to adhere to that message but when they hear it from their mum a hundred times they ignore it.'*

> *'I have run a parenting class for three years and I am part of the child protection team. Through attendance and punctuality I get to meet with parents about the issues. Parents can feel overwhelmed with the behaviour. A grandmother who was at my parenting class this morning with her daughter. The son was really ruling the roost not only in his mum's home but also at his gran's home. If need be I will visit the home and speak with the child and get him dressed and into school!' I reinforce the parents' boundaries and let them know they are not alone. At this school we make sure parents*

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are not alone. A lot of our parents are single parents and they feel isolated. They are worried about their many issues. The parents realise that when you come into school with an issue or concern, there is always someone in school that will assist or will signpost them to where they can go for help.'
(Greenhouse Project leader, School E)

In many schools staff often lack experience and training in working with parents to support their children's learning. Training ought to be included in the context of initial teacher education, or continuing professional development. On the basis of a clear understanding of the value and nature of parental engagement, teachers need to receive training in teaching and learning in a family learning setting, working with adults and children.

School D 'Aspire to Achieve' project leader describes the challenges that lone parents experience and the stress that they are under. The relationship with their child's school can provide much needed help and guidance on how to be an effective parent. She described a typical scenario:

> *'A young man may have a mum who makes a lot of noise, a dad who doesn't live with him but will come down to the school. One boy said 'I hate home, I hate school… everything.'* *'When he has issues in the classroom he hits himself on the lockers he gets so angry'…* *'He hates home. His mum came to me after she had seen several teachers and she was in tears after the parents' evening. I couldn't tell her that her son had said he hates home. I gave her some strategies like not barking at him. She called me another day and she said 'Miss, he has had a really good week" she said she is hopeful. His dad doesn't live at home'…*She comments.' *Parents get stressed when we call them and tell them what has happened because many of them don't know what to do with their children, they don't have the coping strategies to deal with them. They don't know what to do.'*

The schools' staff were aware that they had to draw parents in for positive reasons as a counter balance for the negative experiences that many had at school themselves. We asked 'what was a key factor in the successful and positive relationships which exist between staff and parents at School D. The senior teacher responded:

> *'I think it is down to the personal touch. Parents are invited – there is a partnership ethos. It's very warm. I know some of the parents by their first names. I care about their offspring as if they were my own and then they feel it. Building trust is important, parents appreciate someone with understands children.'* **(School D)**

These schools who want to raise the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils will go the extra mile to establish a trusting relationship with parents. This relationship needs to be based on knowledge and understanding of the community who in previous generations suffered racial discrimination and low aspirations by schools, as a Deputy Head from **School D** explained:

> *'Our relationships with parents are definitely key. If you have built good relationships you are half way there with the young people. If parents are on board with a plan of action, you will have success. We have got a lot of young parents in our school. A majority would see that they can relate better to Black staff. Some parents think you don't know me because you don't know what I've been through, so you don't get me. A lot of parents take on what their parents went through. It pours down through generations'….. 'A student said "don't you think it's true that more Black kids in our school get sent to "Ready to Learn"? I had to remind him that there are more Black kids in our school. I think he was just saying what his mum or maybe his gran said and he's just seeing that. I had to point out particular White pupils who are sent. A lot of Black Caribbean pupils do see White authority figures as a problem – it's a cross between fear and anger at the injustice.'* **(Deputy Headteacher)**

School A aspires to support families in overcoming the multiplicity of challenges some face, so that children can thrive and reach their full potential. The Parent-Partnership Leader plays a key role in this respect; arranging parent workshops on, for example, 'understanding tax credits', 'eating on a budget' and 'back to work' strategies. She monitors attendance and punctuality and explains the process:

> *'We have panels where we go through the report and see anyone with attendance falling below 95%. I chat with parents about it and if it gets worse I'll arrange a more formal meeting with the Chair of the Governing Body, the Headteacher and the Pupil Guidance and Support Leader. As a small school we know families very well. Sometimes the FSW is involved if we know there are family problems. I grew up with the same background as our parents on the same multi-cultural estate. They see teachers as formal, they might feel they do not want to cross the line, I help them get their foot in the door…. bridging the gap. The next generation of parents coming up, some are very scared of school. I had to take one young parent by the hand and lead her into the school to deal with her issues she was in such a state.'* **(Parent Partnership Worker, School A)**

A group of parents from **School C** reflected on the excellent links that have been made by the school for many years with parents and the local Black Caribbean community:

> *'My Grandma and Grandad came here in the 1950s from Jamaica. My daughter struggled with reading but she gets more attention with phonics and she gets taken out to focus groups* (Parent Group).' **(Parent A)**

'As the parent of a child with ADHD and anger problems, the school supports him by getting someone in every other week. I find it helpful getting him 1:1. I went to my GP for help. My son came to this school in Year 1. He used to go to another local school. *I attend the Church so I said let me move him here because I am familiar with the staff here.'* **(Parent B)**

A parent governor commented:

'They have a lot of school trips here if there are children who don't get out with families then these trips are essential. I was reading the KS1 NC requirements and it is clear they are looking for British English (Standard English) in compensation for children with other dialects. Therefore the school needs to offer more opportunities for them to learn the type of English that is required.

The school does encourage diversity to expose them to other faiths and other values. Last year we had a multi-cultural party. People dressed up in their national costumes. A lot of the children in other schools they do not know their backgrounds. When they come to the after-school club, there are children who are lighter (skinned) and they think they are mixed race. They do not always know the backgrounds of the parents. A lot of parents do not discuss certain things with their children or they do not know.

The school has a 'diversity month' where pupils look at their family trees. There is also Black history month. In Year 5 someone came in to do drama about Caribbean history and there were visits from the Black Cultural Archives. Parents come in to talk to the children about their own heroes during Black history month. In Year 3 the children got to dress up as their heroes. There are African arts and cultural displays everywhere in the school.' **(Parent Governor, School C)**

The Executive Headteacher at **School C** described the schools' work with parents in supporting the achievement of pupils:

'There is a lot of engagement with parents. We do home visits, the inclusion manager and teacher or teacher and TA would meet with the family. We try to get children into Reception within the first two weeks of the autumn term. The first week is home visits and the second week they enter on a staggered basis. When they leave Reception and go into Year 1 there is a similar process. The EY Lead manages the transition period from YR to Year 1. We have lots of workshops for parents, showing what we can do and how they can support. We have targeted projects for hard to reach parents, ringing, seeing them in the playground by being very friendly. It has been invaluable to have interventions where the adults work alongside the child and parent together.

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The EY Lead runs coffee mornings, speech and language sessions, or 'how to help your child with homework.'

We have a Behavioural Support Consultant who sees any parent experiencing difficulty with trauma or a child going through a wobbly patch. The progress is between those parties, we do not intervene, and she feeds back to us though.

Most of our pupil premium funding goes on additional adults of some form or another. A small part of it we use for visits for children who wouldn't otherwise be able to go, to build social and cultural capital. It is easier to build these relationships when children come in to school and the knack is to hang on to these relationships with parents. Many parents bring in their own difficulties and they are increasing for example, mental health, housing issues, domestic abuse, things they aren't coping with on their own. They need guidance on where to go for support. The inclusion manager is doing more to signpost them. She is now doing more about EAL courses, housing benefit etc.'

The Headteacher of **School A** when asked what would be the consequence if the school did not engage effectively with Black Caribbean parents responded:

'It would be them and us. It's a defence. You have to break down the barriers. In my previous school we went about things the wrong way, we were on at the parents the whole time about all the things that were wrong. Communication was poor. You have got to be brave, if you do it little by little and have lots of positive things to say about children too, rather than just focusing on when the child is naughty. We have lots of events but it's not about having parents events. At our last even two Black Caribbean mothers ended up fighting. Afterwards one of them came into the reception area and said "I'm going to tear down this school brick by brick". It doesn't matter who the parent is, I sit them down and let them have a go. It might be serious. You have to investigate. You don't dismiss it. You need to value their opinion. When you see parents uptight, all you need to say is 'are you alright'? 'Is there anything we can do?'

Some of the ideas suggested by schools to engage parents are for example, arranging meetings at times that are convenient for parents, low-cost means of bringing home learning into school and school learning into home, international evenings where parents bring food from their country of origin; making use of parents already engaged with the school as ambassadors for other members of the community. Home visits by teachers or other members of staff are particularly important in building home school links and offering staff an insight into the background a child is coming from as a Headteacher's comment illustrated:

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'Members of staff make home visits and then the parents and children are invited to visit the classroom before they start school. I do not know what the family story is but there is a single parent, I have not seen Dad. The visit revealed a chaotic home. The staff were ushered up to a bedroom and the discussion about the child took place sitting on a bed.' **(Headteacher, School A)**

Links with the Black Caribbean Community

For schools the heart of community engagement is the development of relationships, open and clear communication, networking, listening, and learning to understand the diverse range of people and places that they are working with. They always make sure they communicate clearly and they recognise community engagement can be hard. What may work in one area with certain people may not work as well down the road with a different set of people. There are no absolutes, no one answer to every situation and often no way that it can be done quickly, if a meaningful result is the desired outcome.

Equality and diversity are two main principles of community engagement. Good equality and diversity means appreciating and understanding differences and enabling each individual in school to fully participate. Diversity is about recognising that we are all unique with our own talents, needs, ambitions and priorities. It can include invisible characteristics.

School V with 73% of pupils speaking English as an additional language has gone the extra mile to make links with the community which will benefit pupils. The most recent Ofsted inspection graded the school as outstanding in all areas (see Ofsted 2012). In addition to the importance of academic achievement:

'The school seeks to provide many opportunities, often in partnership with other organisations, for the children to develop talents and interests in the arts, sports and environmental education. Pupils and staff commented on the distinct 'family feel' and every member of its community refers to their 'School V family.'

To fully explore the socio-economic background of children and families at **School V**, the school has examined pupils' postcode areas and plotted them against the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). IMD is based on the idea of distinct dimensions of deprivations experienced by individuals living in an area. Seven main types of deprivation are considered in the IMD 2010 – income, employment, health, education, housing and services, living environment and crime and these are combined to form a measure of multiple deprivation. As a consequence of the findings, the school set up a breakfast club as a starting point, targeting pupils who were always late for school. Getting pupils in for breakfast impacted positively on attendance and punctuality rates and currently over 70 pupils attend the breakfast club.

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Another aspect of deprivation in the local population is the level of skills and training which is among the lowest in the UK. This confirms **School V**'s baseline assessment of pupils. Attainment on entry to the school is below typical national average. The level of home support that the school can expect is low, not because of lack of parental aspiration, but because many parents do not have the ability to help. Therefore the school puts a focus on the development of basic skills.

Improving pupils' health has led the leadership to successfully bid for **School V** to become one of the four pilot schools with high numbers of pupils who have FSM to receive sponsorship from Nike's 'Move it' programme which provides physical activities (with sports coaches) for all pupils in Years 5 and 6.

School A is part of the same cluster of schools as **School V** and they share expertise and best practice with other schools. The fact that they have a desire to work together with other schools is a significant factor in **School A** leading role in school improvement, not only as part of the Oval Cluster of Schools, but also with other Lambeth Church of England Schools. The Headteacher has initiated ways of working together within the latter group, where the Headteachers of Church of England schools meet termly to discuss current issues of educational change, sharing and celebrating successes, school issues and showcasing opportunities. Reflecting on why some schools successfully manage to work together, while others struggle, the Headteacher said:

> *'To avoid the issue of people not working together, we change 'triads' (*groups of three schools working together within a larger cluster) *we change them round every year – we just pull names out of a hat!'*

As the Church School Cluster (Lambeth CE Headteachers Working Together) is fairly new, the Headteacher commented:

> *'With the Church Schools, there are similar issues, there is more work to do but it is very much about trust. I am quite open and honest. If things are not going well I ask for help but some might not want others to know.'*

Successful bids for funding through the Cluster resulted in **School A** having the services of a Family Support Worker. In addition the school was successful in a bid for funds (to supplement pupil premium funding) for the employment of a Speech and Language Therapist and a psychotherapist to work with children and families.

There are other ways the case study schools seek to reach out to other schools working in an entirely different context. **School C** has a well-established link with a small rural school which has provided benefits to both parties:

*'We have made a link with a tiny, all White school in Petworth. Years 5 & 6. We met up with them on the beach at Littlehampton. It was amazing. We went crabbing. When they visited us we took them to Brixton Market. We met them at Victoria and walked down to Buckingham Palace, had lunch in the park, down through Parliament Square. They were fascinated. We celebrate diversity – have multi-cultural picnics. We ask all the children to bring in food reflective of their heritage. We have days of national costume. To begin with they were nervous - you might not want to eat Ackee and Saltfish – but it's about celebration. We had a countryside day. The children did fly-fishing, forestry work, husbandry, holding a lamb. It is four years since it started. It needs to have a Headteacher who wants it to work.' **(Teacher, School C)***

The case study schools are alert to the fact that parents and pupils from the diverse range of countries, languages and backgrounds they serve, may have little understanding of the education system here in the UK. An Assistant Headteacher at **School E** described some of the ways the school raises their aspirations:

'I took a group of 70 parents and pupils to Cambridge. Years 7, 8 and 9. As well as the focus being on Cambridge University, the parents got more out of it than the pupils! Someone from Oxford and the University of East Sussex came to speak to pupils and every child brought a parent. We did this on a Saturday.'

This comment illustrates the high levels of commitment teachers have and their desire to ensure that no pupil is excluded from taking part in activities, either because parents do not understand the significance of it, or for financial reasons, as he explains:

'For the Year 7 residential trip, I contacted all the parents to make sure no-one was left behind because of lack of finance. We organise payment plans.' **(Assistant Headteacher, School E)**

School D held an event to introduce the "Aspire to Achieve" project to parents and the community and a senior teacher described how successful this was:

'The Aspire to Achieve evening was fantastic. It was really positive and powerful. All staff were invited and there were key speakers from the Black Caribbean community such as doctors, academics, lawyers and teachers. I have been here since 2009 and it was the most powerful event we have held. The whole hall was in tears when one of the speakers spoke, it is the fact that you are promoting it, working with targeted groups, families are onside, and we tend to sit with parents on these occasions.'

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At **School O** the school's excellent links with the business world give pupils opportunities to meet and talk with business and professional people. Briefly, Business and Enterprise at **School O** is delivered through a four step plan where pupils become aware of business and enterprise through everything they do at school including all subjects and activities. Everything has a work-related dimension. They have plenty of opportunity to gain hands-on experience by putting their learning into practice and during their time at school pupils record their business and enterprise experience in a Portfolio for Life, a valuable tool which they can take with them when they leave school and which leads to an ASDAN qualification.

The Leadership Development programme provides pupils with an introduction to management, developing their competence in a wide range of management-orientated tasks, building their confidence and acceptance of responsibility. Through the Business and Enterprise Status the school has developed pupil involvement to a very high standard. They enable pupils to experience Leadership Development within and beyond the curriculum.

Presidents and Vice Presidents are elected by their peers. They have detailed job descriptions, consult their year groups and form the School Council. They also organise the CHABOP Days.

The Trainee Leaders' programme in Year 10 is a development of the Presidents and Vice Presidents system in Key Stage 3. Trainee Leaders help to run the school, mentor and coach younger pupils.

They lead significant programmes on higher education, college links, behaviour management and business and enterprise. Prefects and head boys/head girls in Year 11 are a further development of the Trainee Leaders Programme. This layer of pupil management will often represent the school. All the above offices have detailed job descriptions, self-reviews and reviews.

Ofsted (2014) commented:

> *'The school provides all students with the opportunity to visit universities and colleges including Cambridge, Imperial College and University College, London. This encourages high aspirations for their future education. Students take on leadership roles very effectively, for example as members of the anti-bullying committee, which is run by the students themselves. This helps to build a very strong school community, which thrives on its diversity.'*

School I for girls has developed links with the international community through its "Triangle Project" which links **School I** with schools in Jamaica and Ghana. The school also offers a number of very innovative activities that strengthen local community links. These include the Gospel Choir where parents and the community play a key role in the singing.

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The school has a strong link with St Martin-in-the Fields Church in Trafalgar Square and the whole school go there once every year to sing. This is an important tradition which started when the school was first established and has been kept going. *'It is a beautiful finish to the end of the year by singing at* **School I.'** *(School Chaplin, School I)*

The displays in the school celebrate pupils' achievement and acknowledge the diversity of its pupil population. One staff member commented 'displays are the reflection of our community. They are part of the community dialogue. They reflect what is going on in the school. They are part of the ethos of high expectations'. Displays celebrating events such as Christian Aid, the Triangle Project and poppy days are shown around the school: One pupil commented in a previous research project featuring the school:

> *'The pictures on the walls mean a lot to me. I am in one of the choirs and I see my face.'* **(McKenley et al 2003)**

The Work of Learning Mentors in Supporting Black Caribbean Families

The main aim of the learning mentor is to break down barriers to pupils' learning. Examples of barriers might be; lack of self-esteem or confidence, difficulties at home, poor behaviour, moving school often and poor erratic or intermittent attendance.

At some schools the work of the learning mentors was imperative to family engagement and raising achievement. Mentors know their communities very well. In one school the Headteacher talked about the *common sense, empathetic* approach which has worked with engaging some of the Black Caribbean families in the community, to the extent that now some families will refer themselves to the mentors for support. For this reason the Headteacher of **School A** recruited two members of the local community as learning mentors to work with parents and families. So successful was their work that they took on specific roles as Parent Partnership Worker and Family Support Worker and have now become part of the senior leadership team. She explained why it works:

> *'I have a Family Support Worker and a Parent Partnership Worker on my senior leadership team. They can talk with the parents more effectively than I can because I represent authority as a Headteacher. They do very well at building relationships with parents. Usually problems do not reach me unless it gets to the stage that the situation needs a bit more weight….'*

The Family Support Worker gave her side of the story:

> *'I have come through where these kids are coming from. I had difficulties at school. I had a child when I was 18 Years old. Our Black Caribbean parents are loud. I call them passionate not rude or aggressive. I am a bridge in the middle of parents and school.'* **(School A)**

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She explained that the expectations schools have of pupils and their lives at home can be poles apart:

> *'Schools are about middle class professional ways of presenting yourself. Children are taught that the way you speak at home is not the way you get on in life. From the grassroots you are told you are not right, so children put on a different persona.'*

Having an in-depth understanding of the young people and local community is the reason why **School E** has recruited mature Black Caribbean male behaviour mentors. They talked about the challenges Black Caribbean pupils face because of their life circumstances and how they work with them first thing in the morning when they arrive at school, and at various times of the day to keep them on track:

> *'49% of families is led by women. This has a massive effect on our boys. I work with hundreds of pupils each day. The boys and girls have a particular bond with you as a man. The most predominant question is "what do you think"? I try to give them the best opinion I can. The average pupil goes home, he doesn't eat with his family – he eats alone. They are latch-key kids. This has been brought about by Black Caribbean culture. If the family foundation is not solid you have lots of problems.*
>
> *On Saturdays I go and work with kids. Their parents have lots of problems, mental health, poverty, low paid jobs. The kids get no guidance. They all have mobile phones and are looking at all the wrong things. We tell them 1) Attitude – we don't want no street in here. 2) Correct behaviour – men and women behave differently. 3) Character of the people is important, what the women bring is nurturing, men bring in disciplining. 4) Working together.'* **(Behaviour Mentor B – School E)**

Another behaviour mentor contrasted the system here in Britain with his experiences of working in Schools in Jamaica, he commented:

> **'***I have had experience in the Caribbean system for 15 years and am also learning the system here. I find the young men ask me what is the system like in Jamaica? In schools in Jamaica you have uniform inspection. There you have parents who are more supportive of the school system. They trust the system to manage their child. Yes you do have those that rebel against the system. Many pupils get my accent and interview me and they are intrigued by the system in Jamaica. They will decide that they would not want to go into a Jamaican school because they are too strict!'…..* He continues: *'I have sat down and had a heart to heart with them and I say to them straight, you wouldn't do this in a Jamaican system – you wouldn't get away with what you get away with here. Their self-esteem is a problem – our Black boys are not prepared for the challenges of life here because of the absence of their*

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fathers. I listen to them and I compare both systems. I have the advantage because I was brought up differently. I hear some of the parents dealing with their sons and you sense a sort of aggression. They mix up aggression with assertiveness.

In Jamaica they have cadets. What do they have here to engage in as young Black men? Their fathers are involved in drugs and negative things. I tell them "dress like a prospect, not as a suspect"! We have to teach people how to approach us. I have never been called 'boy' by a police man. We walk the talk. I think if the system here had more disciplinary measures in place it would help them – they do it because they can get away with it!

In Jamaica there are issues there too - it's not a perfect scenario. You don't find parents disputing the school system there. There's more respect. I think this system has not helped our people, it has brainwashed them into an entitlement mentality because of the benefits system. The system in Jamaica is more rigid but if we had more earning of things… they take things for granted here so they throw things away. Parents in Jamaica tell children education is the key to success. Here girls will say the system will give me a flat if I am pregnant!'
(Behaviour mentor C, School E)

'*Racism is experienced on a daily basis. The Police are a problem. One positive thing about the Police is they do work with the school*.'
(Behaviour mentor A, School E)

School JE has two skilled and experienced learning mentors that support pupils learning in the classroom and at playtimes. Through pupil progress meetings with class teachers, pupils who are not progressing and have a barrier to learning are identified. The inclusion manager then detects the barrier and a learning mentor is assigned to support the child and family to overcome their learning barriers. A big part of the learning mentor's work to support families is their liaison with and signposting of parents to other services. Learning mentors have a key role in getting other agencies involved.

An intervention programme is then arranged for a minimum of six weeks. One of the learning mentors specialises in sports, providing support for pupils with low self-esteem and behavioural problems. The school works closely to support these pupils in many ways, including support for payment of breakfast club and after school clubs. The learning mentors co-ordinate the peer mediators, friendship buddies and prefects.

The attendance learning mentor also works closely with the attendance officer to support parents and families with punctuality concerns. Families are offered an inclusive approach to meet their individual needs including a 'wake up' phone call in the morning, to a collection reminder at the end of the day. This solidifies the

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connections between home and school to get pupils to school on time. Rigorous and stringent procedures are in place to secure above average attendance and punctuality as explained by the attendance learning mentor:

> *'I look at registers weekly and if I see a child has been late on more than one occasion I send out a letter to parents. We do not allow parents to take children out on holiday. There are special discretionary reasons but this happens rarely. It is very clear what our expectations are as a school.'*
> **(Attendance Learning Mentor, School JE)**

The learning mentors play an invaluable role in developing pupils' reasoning, social/teamwork and behavioural skills through a wide range of sports and clubs as described:

> *'They are learning how to communicate with each other positively through circle times, discussions and we link them with peers who can show them more positive ways of interacting. We have quite a big pupil voice, so they have their peers to look up to.'*

The contribution of 'Going for Gold' reward system in improving behaviour has been noteworthy:

> *'The whole emphasis is on encouraging the positive… certificates are presented at the end of term, gold, silver and bronze, e.g. for 100% attendance, for helping other children in the playground; for completing homework projects. Children are recognised at a whole school assembly.'*

In their excellent work with intervention groups, learning mentors submit information to their line manager about the progress pupils are making*: 'we action plan for each child for a six week period and we have to produce a report of how the child has progressed*.' The learning mentors value opportunities they are given to show initiative: '*the good thing is the school will allow us to use our own initiative with the approval of the line manager. It's about being creative and if we see happier children, we know we are making a difference.'* They also value the training opportunities the school provides to extend their skills, for example, on a counselling course, behaviour management, phonics and lots of curriculum training. They also attend staff meetings after school. A weekly coffee morning, drop-ins for parents, meeting and greeting parents in the playground, 'dads' football sessions and a dads and toddlers group are all features of the learning mentors' valuable roles in engaging parents and carers.

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Effective Targeted Support for Black Caribbean Pupils

The case study schools work hard to ensure that their strategies for intervention reflect, and are sensitive to, the contexts in which they work. They have very ethnically diverse intakes. To be successful, the schools need to understand the diverse needs of different groups. They track the progress of different ethnic groups carefully but, if they are to intervene successfully, they must also be able to analyse the sometimes complex reasons behind any underachievement; they must also be able to provide effective and well-targeted support. Close partnership with the community is vital too. Another characteristic of all the schools is their willingness to go the extra mile in providing opportunities for all to succeed. They never give up on individual students. All the schools put in a considerable range of additional support to ensure that everyone is able to succeed.

For example, at **School E** pupils have access to a breakfast club which is followed at 8.30 – 9 a.m. by extra maths for 20 pupils who are borderline maths and English. There are mock exams and teachers mark exam papers over the weekend and give Year 11 pupils immediate feedback. This has proven to be very effective and will be extended to other groups. Other targeted support includes transition groups with small group teaching for Year 7 students who do not meet national expectations at the end of KS2; precision teaching – reading improvement programme ; Dyslexia group development ; ASD groups ; access groups for Maths and English ; access to educational psychologist, access to speech and language therapist , referrals made to other agencies as required, learning support assistant support in lessons, behaviour support mentors and close links with primary schools to aid KS2-KS3 transition.

The school has its own internal exclusion unit called the "Greenhouse Project" which is a unit within the school where students are able to go when they have a problem during the school day. It is managed by the Deputy Head for Inclusion and is run by a project leader in conjunction with three behaviour mentors. Students that come to the Centre learn about reparation, conflict management and mediation, do role play and circle time as appropriate as well as being able to have 1:1 sessions with an adult. The teacher in charge described this provision:

> *'Myself and three other members of staff work with pupils in terms of behaviour. We look at their home life any issues or concerns they may have with carers or their families. We do not operate on a one size fits all approach. We look at each child individually.'* **(Greenhouse Project Teacher, School E)**

School E has recruited three mature Black Caribbean male behaviour mentors in the Greenhouse Project, who provide excellent role models for pupils at risk and work closely with parents and families. They are the first point of contact for these pupils when they arrive at school for the breakfast club, settling them into school and dealing with any

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issues that might be troubling them. The Deputy Head (Inclusion) explained the rationale for these appointments:

> *'The social background and the area are significant. We recognise that in particular we do have an issue with parenting. Early on this was a Girls' school, nine years ago. It is now a mixed school. We were going to take in boys and we saw that the representation of staff did not reflect the intake. We thought we needed to recruit TAs and Specialist Assistants who were young males. However, we soon realised we should recruit older staff and this has helped not only pupils but parents also. Absentee fathers and single mothers struggling, who perhaps never had a male around or one that comes and goes and is a disruptive force. By recruiting this large team of parent advisers with a mentoring role for pupils and parents – parents appreciate that. They work with them. There is consistency of message however; it's no low expectations, firm boundaries, messages of consistency.'*
> *(Deputy Head, School E)*

Another innovatory project called 'Aspire to Achieve' is having a dramatic impact on some Black Caribbean pupils in Years 8 and 9 at **School D** and an experienced teacher originally from Trinidad and Tobago, who is the project leader, spoke with passion about her work:

> *'32 students from Year 8 and Year 9 are taking part in the project. My job is to break down things that go wrong and give pupils the right way to respond in a difficult situation. The project started when I worked at Forest Hill School. It is an intervention programme for Black Caribbean boys and it was called ACE. It was very successful and went public. Success was measured by attainment outcomes which were massive, for example from 18% to 48% in two Years in English and maths. The programme became well known and we had many people visit us. Sharon Geer led it and I was the other teacher on it. I just wanted to do this here but it had to fit the demographics of this area. Coming here I thought I knew this area quite well as I had set up a Nursery for 14 years. A lot of these children I had looked after their parents in the same Nursery. So they tell their children "you must respect Miss Tummings.'* ***(Aspire to Achieve Project Leader, School D)***

As mentioned in our discussions with other schools, it is apparent that some Black Caribbean pupils, despite being born and growing up in London, have had very little opportunity to visit places of interest outside their immediate locality, and when opportunities are provided for them to venture out; they sometimes receive a hostile response from those they meet as described by the above teacher.

> *'We went on a trip about 'working with others' it was team building. We went to an adventure centre. The idea was they would have to learn about team building and so on. They had laser guns and had a great time but they*

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experienced some negativity from the staff there in Essex. The staff were White and they were very negative with us – it was just unbelievable. They said "tell them to get out of the restaurant". One member of our staff was cold and asked if it was OK to sit there and was told "yes, if you must". The youngsters were mesmerised by the open land, they asked me if they were real horses in a field. They didn't get out of London. I wanted to broaden their experience. Most of these parents were born here. They were young girls who got pregnant and they didn't have these experiences themselves. Unless we take ourselves out of the cocoon and attune ourselves, things wouldn't change. If you ask some parents if they have been to a museum they say no.'
(Aspire to Achieve Project Leader, School D)

Church and Community Support and Guidance

There is other factor and partnership which is very important to raise the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils in schools. That is the link between parents, church and community and the school which serve them. Our focus group interviews revealed that the Christian Church plays a significant role in the lives of Black Caribbean people in the UK.

The need for Black governors from the Church has also been recognised by school governors:

> *'Our Headteacher and three members of the leadership team are Black Caribbean. There are a significant number of Black teachers in our school but not one Black governor.*
>
> *The Ark system has its own system of governing bodies. They haven't thought about how important this is. I have now worked carefully with the Headteacher to recruit Black governors. We have decided to contact the Black Churches as we would like to have a 50% Black governing body.'* ***(School E)***

A parent governor from **School B** who is of Black Caribbean heritage argued that the Church plays a valuable role in the lives of pupils and parents:

> *'What happens in the Church plays a vital part of peoples' lives. By that I mean people respect what comes out of Churches. The Church has promoted the value of education so people have taken that on board. The support and encouragement and the 'can do' approach – letting you know you are not alone, the help that is given. It is a place of hope. I am thinking about the Black majority Churches. A number of supplementary schools have come out of the Church. Where pupils were not getting the affirmation and support in the state school system, they have gone to the Church. You are expected to behave in a certain way and expected to achieve. Within the school setting if*

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the expectations are not particularly high, then children do not have any particular reason to achieve. Why bother or make the effort? I think there is a demand for supplementary schools with a lot more teachers involved, or teachers setting up these schools. The demand is there.'
(Parent Governor, School B)

A Pentecostal church leader also reiterated the significance of the Church in the lives of Black Caribbean people:

'The Church has one of the most important roles in mentoring young Black Caribbean people. In my Church what we emphasise is getting an education and when they achieve we applaud them. We also influence them to go on to further education. We run business courses for them. We do not believe the Church's role is just to get them to heaven, we believe we should enable them to make a difference to their community. Whatever we can do, we counsel parents to try to get their children into good schools and teach them to aim high. We teach them nothing is impossible.' (Church Leader A)

The chair of governors of a Church of England Primary School, who is a local vicar, emphasised the role that Black majority Churches such as Ruach play in the lives of Black Caribbean families:

'Ruach are offering a great outreach to pupils from Black Caribbean backgrounds. The evidence seems to show that if Black Caribbean pupils are in a place where they feel better, they will support this.'
(Chair of Governor, Church Leader C)

While the older generation of Black Caribbean families attend Church of England or Catholic Churches and their children attend these schools, the younger generation of parents tend to go to Pentecostal Churches, as Headteachers have observed:

'In this parish the congregation tend to be older Black Caribbean people but they are not involved in the school. Our parents do not attend the local Church of England Church; they go to local Pentecostal Churches.'
(Headteacher, School A)

School C describes a similar picture of older generation parents attending the parish Church while the younger parents go to Pentecostal Churches:

'I would say Black Caribbean parents go to other Pentecostal and Evangelical Churches. We do not have many children coming from School C, those that do tend to be White.' (Executive Headteacher, CE School C)

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Nevertheless, the Chair of Governors who is the vicar and a foundation governor of **School C** plays a vital part in the parish school and community, as the Executive Headteacher explained:

> *'Fr. S has a pastoral role, he does that naturally. If we have emotional issues with parents breaking up, bereavement etc., he is always there. Our Church is supportive in terms of the Food Bank. We signpost parents to that facility. We have fundraised at Harvest for the Food Bank…' 'The school has a youth club and Sunday School which is run from here. We do have Brownies and Scouts but not specifically for Black Caribbean families. Fr. S is always in the playground on Friday and they would freely go to him.'*
> ***(Executive Headteacher, School C)***

She believes that there is one reason why Church schools are successful in raising the attainment of Black Caribbean pupils and elaborated as follows:

> *'The school's values and the Christian ethos are key. There are two issues: 1) being an outstanding school which all schools want to be and (2) being an outstanding Christian school. We are an ambitious school, everything is in place. We have here the vision and values, the governors (who represent the Church). We have embraced British values which seem to be what all humane persons would want to embrace. They may not be the most academic children in the world but they know that to us they are unique – a gift from God and we treat each other in that way and we try to treat each other well. Loving God, loving your neighbour and treating others as ourselves. We have that Church distinctiveness. This is one of the strengths here. In helping other schools we have become better still.' (Executive Headteacher, School C)*

Pentecostal Churches, often have membership of several thousand people of African and Caribbean heritage. For this reason some of those we spoke to felt that there was a need for more 'Christian Schools' (non-denominational) to address the underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils. The former Vice Principal of a secondary school in Lambeth, who now works for a Christian Charity, commented:

> *'We need to start schools, provide good facilities for pupils, just like private schools which are able to provide the top coaches and resources. I have seen too   many people who just haven't made it in this country. Nothing would give me more pleasure than to see young people believe in themselves and to make a huge difference. I believe there is a God out there and I don't think he is racist'….* He continues: *My concern is that when people say faith schools are selective.. I reply 'how selective is a school in Brixton'? They say 'we've got to get the children out of faith schools. Don't forget in the US the Civil Rights movement was started by   the Church.'*

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As a person born and raised in Brixton, the former Vice Principal understands only too well the challenges faced by Black youngsters. He talked about his own experiences growing up and although he started well, he dropped out of further education for a time and the dramatic difference the Church made to his life which got him back on track:

'I grew up amongst a generation that rebelled. At one time I wanted nothing to do with religion. I read C L R James, Franz Fanon, Malcolm X, searching for solutions. I wanted to know about my history, African history, and I remembered the Rhodesian teacher's comment.. And the implications that people like me wouldn't be leading the country and I thought hang on we are supposed to get there on merit. All those things were an undercurrent in my mind when I focused on African history, but it got to a point where I had literally dropped out of society. A turning point for me was when, for a second time, I embraced Christianity. When I became a born again believer I felt I had the strength to deal with society. Church was a supportive environment. Being involved with a supplementary school, it highlighted the achievements of people who looked and sounded like me. At the supplementary school one of the teachers there suggested I go into teaching because I was good at it'... 'My life was transformed when I embraced Christianity. It was because I adhered to these principles and values that I was able to achieve success. School I and School RE play a key role as outstanding schools with large numbers of Black pupils but lots of White families around there don't go to those schools. Why? At School I there was a strong Christian ethos. The Headteacher at the time I was there always focused on aspiration. She would say to the girls 'you don't have a boyfriend unless your first date is to the library'. The school had an ethos of achievement. There was a school song, it was inside us. You have to have something to combat what is outside. We do not live in a perfect world and people judge. You tell me why parents who live in Balham with a highly successful school nearby would choose to send their children to school miles away. I recall a White family who send their two daughters who are now at Cambridge to School I. People asked their father, who is a strong Christian, why are you sending your children to a school with so many Black children? It was because they were of a different mind-set. They were people of faith that went beyond the boundaries of skin colour. Why is it you have Black areas and Black schools? As Black people moved in so White people moved out.'

With regard to the question of the over-representation of Black Caribbean pupils being excluded from school, the Pentecostal Bishop in Brixton responded:

'The established Church has negated its responsibility. I cannot see how schools can exclude a five year old. Something cannot be right if you going to do that. Yes, they may be rude, mischievous, and disruptive; you have to begin to mentor that child into the right way of behaving. The Black Caribbean pupils were at one time well-disciplined at home – told to have

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good manners and be respectful of everyone. I am not sure that exclusion of pupils was not as prevalent as it is today. The question for schools is 'are you interested in the child or are you just interested in your mark ups? The Church has negated its role to the Government; all schools were started by the Church. When we go back in history, we see that prisons were started by the Church but were designed to rehabilitate. Then the government took over and it began to punish. If you look at history, Robert Riggs started to take children to Sunday school. Six year old children were sent down the mines and into factories. This is how school started in England. It was through Christians who started them. We have negated our responsibilities and hence we have what we have today in our society. Many people may not like this and one of the things the Bible tells us is you should not spare the rod and spoil the child. You cannot reason with a two year old but if you them 'I will smack you' the child will remember the smack but he won't remember the conversation. Do not underestimate what is happening. The power that has been taken away from parents in disciplining their children. It is very necessary and if this cannot be done at home, then it will happen at school. Children are challenging authority.' (Church Leader A)

The reason why Black Churches are growing so rapidly is because they provide a supportive environment for families, for example:

'One of the reasons why Black African and Caribbean Churches are growing so large is because messages are uplifting and encouraging. Church schools can be successful because of the shared values, also you are singing from the same song sheet.' (Former Vice Principal, Church Leader B)

With the success of Christian Churches and supplementary schools in supporting Black Caribbean children and families, many have wanted to establish Free Schools but have been frustrated in the process. As someone who has benefitted from them, the former Vice Principal commented:

'A lot of groups from the Black community have not been successful in establishing a Free School unless they partner with another established provider. If you embrace the right value system you will be successful'.… 'Unless every application to open a Free school is deficient in some way, people of colour haven't got whatever it takes to run a school which I suppose is a Colonial trait. The question has to be asked why Black Churches have not been successful in establishing schools if the Black teachers who attend these churches can be successful in the state school system. London schools would collapse without them. How come they cannot run their own?'

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He continued:

> *'Even when Churches are applying for planning permission they are blocked all around. There are questions that need to be answered. What kind of a society are we living in? The way things are going will there be a backlash in the future? I wouldn't use the term 'Black school'. We don't use the term 'White school'. There is something wrong if an organisation is in an area where certain people groups are blocked'. If you go to Oxford or Cambridge you know you are going to be successful. If you aim at anything you hit it every time. People are successful because of what they tell themselves, what society tells them and what parents tell them. This is what the Churches do. All the main universities were started as religious colleges with Christian values. The thing that held me when I wanted to rebel was what my parents instilled into me when they taught me right from wrong. I lost a lot of friends because I wouldn't steal from shops. It annoys me when people say you cannot talk about God, because it's the one area that can save people. I am talking about what works.*
>
> *'It seems that many of the faith schools struggle for money. There is a body that is trying to get children out of faith schools. People are afraid to say anything about other faiths though. The advantage of Church schools is that Church leaders will tell parents off and there are shared values. Teachers cannot tell parents off but Church leaders can and do! Parents are being worked on at the same time as their children.'*
> **(Former Vice Principal, Church Leader B)**

The parent governor of a state primary school in Lambeth echoed what was said about the vital role that Church and supplementary schools play in the lives of Caribbean heritage pupils:

> *'What happens in the Church plays a vital part of peoples' lives. By that I mean people respect what comes out of Churches. The church has promoted the value of education so people have taken that on board. The support and encouragement and the 'can do' approach – letting you know you are not alone, the help that is given. It is a place of hope. I am thinking about the Black majority Churches. A number of supplementary schools have come out of these Churches. We have pupils who were not getting the affirmation and support in the state school system and they have gone to the Church. You are expected to behave in a certain way and expected to achieve. Within the school setting if the expectations are not particularly high, then children do not have any particular reason to achieve. Why bother or make the effort. I think there is a demand for supplementary schools with a lot more teachers involved, or teachers setting up these schools. The demand is there.' **(Parent Governor, School B)***

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The Bishop further commented that:

> *'The only thing that will change an attitude is a change on the inside. The only thing that can happen for good today with regard to fatherhood and taking responsibility is a change from the inside and it is Jesus Christ alone that can do it. I look back on my own life and I can vouch for that. I look at children in my Church who don't have a father and I encourage the men in the Church to mentor them.'* **(Church Leader A)**

Our findings suggest Christian values are shared and deeply valued by parents in the case study schools. Many Black families attend church, particularly evangelical churches, which have a culture of self-improvement and a commitment to education. In addition, the schools commitment to ensuring that all groups of pupils are fully included in activities is very high; much personal support enables this to be successful. Diversity is also fully celebrated in the schools and the church they attend and this makes a very good contribution to their understanding and awareness of culture other than their own. Pupils learn to be good citizens, making a very strong contribution to the church and wider community. This has a significant positive impact on the children education and their experience in schools and life in the area the leave.

A Clear Stand on Racism

Race equality is an issue for all schools and all pupils and there are many reasons to challenge racism and promote race equality in schools. The school teaching workforce are predominantly White British and they may feel out of their depth tackling racial issues due to their background and lack of understanding discrimination, racism and diversity issues. As a result research has shown that Black pupils are disciplined more frequently, more harshly and for less serious misbehaviour and that they are less likely to be praised than other pupils. DfE research found that there was *'systematic racial discrimination in the application of disciplinary and exclusion policies'* (DfES, 2006). There is also evidence that '*teachers can wittingly or unwittingly affect the performance of pupils by being openly prejudiced, by being patronising or by having unjustified low expectations of the child's abilities' (Richardson, 2005:37)* based on racial background. Evidence shows that Black pupils and particularly Black Caribbean pupils are disproportionately put in bottom sets (DfES, 2006). Pupils placed in lower sets suffer from lower expectations and often receive a less stimulating curriculum and are entered into less challenging exams. Where examinations are tiered this can have the effect of preventing these pupils from gaining the highest grades. '*For example, prior to 2006 the mathematics GCSE had a three tier system; pupils entered for the higher exam were able to achieve grades A*-D. Pupils entered for the foundation tier exam could only achieve grades D-G. White students are twice as likely as Black to be placed in the top maths sets. In London in two-thirds of Black students were entered into the lowest tier, where the highest grade they could achieve was a D. In effect, they were marked out for failure before they even sat the paper*.'(Gillborn, 2008:96)

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We need equality classes to become a key part of teacher training courses in a bid to reflect the growing diversity of British schools but research shows that in England teachers are not always provided with the tools to address racism or promote equality in the classroom environment, either through initial teacher training or continuing professional development. However, most of the teachers we interviewed had received little or no education with regards to tackling racism or promoting race equality whilst training or teaching. As a result they do not have the knowledge, skills or resources to be able to deal with these issues in the classroom. Our study highlights that there is a need for widespread training, including in-service training to empower educators in England with the skills and knowledge required to consider issues of race equality in their lesson planning and delivery; to value and acknowledge differences and similarities amongst their pupils; to tackle racism and to create an environment of openness where young people develop positive attitudes and a critical awareness of the world.

We would argue schools need to continue to actively support and engage in raising the expectations of all children and young people seeking to make tangible their potential irrespective of their race, gender, disability, religion or sexual orientation. Schools are at the heart of promoting racial equality. Despite the above challenge, however, there is evidence of positive work being undertaken, in the case study schools where they have made a serious attempt to embed race equality and to tackle racism in the school. In these schools there is a strong commitment to equal opportunities. This is a key characteristic of the schools. Their policies against racism are unambiguous and direct, as shown by this extract from one policy statement:

> *'The staff are opposed to racism in any form. We are committed to the principle that all children should be given equal opportunities to fulfil their potential. We condemn discrimination against people because of skin colour and cultural background because it is illegal, offensive and wrong. Our school is multi-cultural and multi-racial and we value this cultural diversity. Every member of the school community should feel their language, religion and culture are valued and respected. In order to achieve this we will use what children know and understand about themselves in our teaching.' (School A)*

Another pupil commented:

> *'Our Headteacher makes sure there is no racism and is brilliant at it.'*

In these schools there are no mere gestures to multiculturalism. Action to respect and celebrate diversity is informed by sophisticated analysis of data to check the participation and the achievement of individuals and groups. The schools effectively use ethnicity data to track individual performance, for teachers to review student performance, to have a reflection and good conversation on the current achievement of Black Caribbean and other BME pupils. The schools also encourage and support individual teachers and TAs to complete their own teacher assessments and evidence and to review target the setting

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process for all groups including Black Caribbean pupils. Ethnic profiles are well used to design interventions based on knowledge and cultural norms and aspirations of the community they serve. Ethnicity data is used extensively for monitoring and lesson planning to inform accurate targets for individual pupils and track progress of pupils, to identify weaknesses in topics or aspects in the class as whole; to set high expectations with pupils and to challenge the expectations of pupils and parents. Another important feature of the case study schools work is a school ethos which is open and vigilant, in which pupils can talk about their concerns and share in the development of strategies for their resolution. A number of teachers and pupils commented:

> *'The school takes racism very seriously.' (Parent, School A)*

> *'The school promotes equal opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups.' (Chair of governors, School JE)*

> *'Ethnicity data is critical in understanding how Black Caribbean and different groups in my class progress and achieve. We use it effectively.' (Teacher, School A)*

> *'I see ethnic monitoring as an effective method of raising achievement, to identify underachieving groups and prioritise our support systems.' (Teacher, School B)*

> *'This school is totally committed to inclusion in all aspect of school life. The analysis and use of ethnically monitored data are excellent and give rise to a wide range of initiatives to support Black Caribbean pupils and other underachieving groups.'*

> *'I work closely with Black Caribbean parents to ensure they know how their children are progressing in school. Black Caribbean parents are supportive.' (Teacher, School C)*

> *'We believe in the incorporation of the principle of equality of opportunity in every face of our work.' (Headteacher, School A)*

> *'The school talks to us about race and discrimination in PSHE and assembly. They deal quickly with any problem.' (Pupil)*

> *'Assemblies reflect different cultures and there are greeting signs in different languages about the school. Sometimes teachers try to speak with different community languages and a lot of teachers are from different cultures too.' (Pupil)*

> *'Good community links. Not stone left unturned to oppose racism and support community cohesion in our school.* Page 265

'The school collects data on racial incidents and these used to trigger appropriate action.' **(TA, School A)**

'I like my school because all children have different backgrounds and experiences and different mix of cultures.' **(Pupil)**

'In this school everyone is treated equally, no-one is discriminated against based on their colour.' **(Pupil)**

'I like best about this school because people are not racist here and people help other people.' **(Pupil)**

'I like best about this school because people are not racist here and people help other people.' **(Pupil**)

'I like the education and the teachers in the school. The teachers are not racist.' **(Pupil**)

In the case study schools the leadership of the schools are strong on equality issues and tackling racism. The schools recognises racism exists and negatively impacts upon the lives of many people. They challenge racism. The Headteachers generally see themselves as responsible for race relations and insisted on establishing good race relations and community cohesion as a priority. In addition these schools have a well-developed multi-cultural and ant-racist curriculum that meets the community the school serves. There are also plenty of opportunities for teachers and school staff to reflect on the achievement of the Black Caribbean pupils using data and their own experience and knowledge about individual pupils and progress. There is good dialogue at all levels about the achievement, diversity and race issue in the school which has made a significant difference for Black Caribbean children and parents.

What was more evident during our research and classroom observation in the case study schools was that there was widespread in-service training to empower teachers and staff in the schools with the skills and knowledge required in race equality and diversity issues to value and acknowledge differences and similarities amongst their pupils and to tackle racism. All schools have an excellent commitment to equal opportunities and has an inclusive ethos that fosters achievement of Black Caribbean pupils. They take racism very seriously. Whatever background the children came from, whether they are Black Caribbean, Other Black, White or from the council estate doors, are open for them. The schools have high expectation of Black Caribbean children and they eat, drink, sleep and breathe inclusion. Furthermore the case study schools provide a high level of support to Black Caribbean pupils to help them to achieve and the staff show an appropriate and professional affection to Black Caribbean and BME pupils. All members of staff we interviewed are good role models and contribute to the process of raising aspiration of Black Caribbean pupils in their school.

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Anti-racist work is usually approached through school policies and procedures, through curriculum content and through assembles they draw attention to the negative impact of discrimination on individuals, their families and the community. These schools are aware racism is one of the reasons Black Caribbean children are underachieving in England's schools particularly in schools where teachers are mostly White. They argued racism has no place in their school and multicultural Britain in the 21st century.

As concluding remarks, we would argue the case study schools have a clear stand on racism and they do not tolerate any racist view or racism in their school. There is a strong ethos and culture of mutual respect where pupils are able to have their voices heard. There are clear and consistent approaches to tackling racism across the case study schools with focus on prevention.

Diversity in the School Workforce

Promoting equality and diversity

For many years in England, there has been a recognition and understanding by policy makers of the many benefits which can accrue from having a school workforce which is reflective of its pupil population. As far back as 1985, it has been recognised that minority ethnic teachers can play an important role in ensuring that all pupils get a more balanced view of society. For example, the Swann Report (1985) highlighted the need to ensure that the teaching ethos of each school reflected the different cultures of the communities served by society and that the lack of ethnic minority teachers in schools needed urgent attention.

The case study schools serve some of the most deprived wards in Lambeth. Many pupils come from disadvantaged economic home circumstances. The school population mirrors the community in which the schools sit. Most pupils come from African, Caribbean, Portuguese and White British ethnic backgrounds. A significant proportion of pupils have a mixed heritage. The schools promote community cohesion and ensure pupils understand and appreciate others from different backgrounds with a sense of a shared vision, fulfilling their potential and feeling part of the community. Through the school curriculum, pupils explore the representation of different cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious groups in Lambeth and in the UK. Senior managers provide strong leadership in ensuring the schools provide an inclusive organisation. The ethos that is developed is based on a commitment to a vision of the school that serves its pupil community in the context of diversity. The schools are multi-ethnic and multicultural schools. Staff are aware of the many pressures young Black Caribbean pupils face in the wider society. They actively consider this in their approach to education. They are promoting equality and diversity in the classroom as argued by Pretty by:

> *'Setting clear rules in regards to how people should be treated, challenging any negative attitudes, treating all staff and students fairly and equally,*

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creating an all-inclusive culture for staff and students, avoiding stereotypes in examples and resources, using resources with multicultural themes, actively promoting multiculturalism in lessons, planning lessons that reflect the diversity of the classroom and ensuring policies and procedures don't discriminate against anyone.' (Pretty 2014:1)

Effective use of diverse multi-ethnic workforce

The case study schools pride themselves on the diversity of its workforce. Table 3 also shows the percentage of BME staff in the case study schools' workforce to show how they are more inclusive compared to schools nationally. The schools have recruited good quality teaching and non-teaching staff that reflect the languages, cultures, ethnic backgrounds and faiths of the pupils in the school. The schools also pride themselves on recruiting from the local community and this has sent a strong message to the community that they are valued. This has helped the school to become a central point of the wider community and has built trust. Teaching assistants are greatly valued in the school. They play a key role in communicating with parents and supporting pupils.

Table 3. Percentage of BME Staff in the Case Study Schools' Workforce

	Leadership			Teachers			Teaching Assistants			Other Staff			ALL		
	BCRB	WBRI	BME	BCRB	WBRI	BME	BCRB	WBRI	BME	BCRB	WBRI	BME	BCRB	WBRI	BME
School Y	0.0%	66.7%	33.3%	5.3%	89.5%	10.6%	23.1%	30.8%	69.2%	10.0%	65.0%	35.0%	10.9%	65.5%	34.5%
School C	0.0%	100%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	11.1%	33.3%	66.7%	27.3%	36.4%	63.6%	12.9%	45.2%	54.8%
School JE	50.0%	25.0%	75.0%	9.7%	35.5%	64.5%	13.8%	31.0%	69.0%	42.1%	15.8%	84.2%	20.5%	28.9%	71.1%
School A	0.0%	100.%	0.0%	7.7%	76.9%	23.1%	44.4%	22.2%	77.8%	30.0%	30.0%	70.0%	22.2%	52.8%	55.6%
School SJ	33.3%	66.7%	33.3%	21.4%	64.3%	35.7%	33.3%	22.2%	77.8%	35.7%	35.7%	64.3%	30.0%	45.0%	55.0%
School SS	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	15.8%	36.8%	63.2%	4.8%	33.3%	66.7%	9.6%	40.4%	59.6%
School V	16.7%	33.3%	50.0%	7.1%	71.4%	28.6%	31.8%	22.7%	77.3%	33.3%	25.0%	75.0%	24.1%	37.0%	61.1%
School E	0.0%	88.9%	11.1%	8.5%	62.7%	37.4%	11.1%	44.4%	55.6%	20.3%	27.1%	72.9%	13.2%	47.8%	52.2%
School RE	0.0%	62.5%	37.5%	12.2%	34.1%	65.9%	14.3%	42.9%	57.1%	13.8%	50.0%	50.0%	12.3%	44.7%	55.3%
School O	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	26.5%	16.3%	83.5%	42.9%	14.3%	85.7%	33.9%	30.6%	69.3%	33.1%	24.8%	75.2%
School G	0.0%	72.7%	27.3%	9.9%	60.5%	39.4%	18.2%	59.1%	40.9%	11.5%	55.8%	44.1%	10.8%	59.6%	40.4%
School D	0.0%	66.7%	33.4%	5.6%	41.7%	58.5%	23.5%	23.5%	76.5%	20.5%	50.0%	50.2%	14.6%	43.7%	56.3%
School I	0.0%	83.3%	16.7%	30.3%	40.9%	59.0%	77.8%	0.0%	100%	39.6%	35.4%	64.8%	35.7%	38.0%	62.0%
CASE	15.6%	61.1%	37.8%	13.6%	48.1%	51.9%	25.4%	26.1%	74.9%	24.9%	36.4%	63.6%	20.2%	40.2%	59.9%
ALL	9.9%	67.8%	32.2%	7.6%	56.5%	43.5%	20.1%	36.1%	63.9%	18.6%	38.9%	61.1%	14.8%	45.9%	54.1%
NATIONAL	0.8%	91.3%	8.6%	1.0%	86.3%	13.6%	1.5%	86.4%	13.5%	1.4%	86.5%	13.4%	1.4%	86.5%	13.4%

Note: BCRB- Black Caribbean   WBRI- White British   BME- Black and Minority Ethnic group
Source: DfE School Workforce Census 2016

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The evidence from Table 3 suggests that in England, 86% of teachers, 91% of the leadership, 87% of teaching assistants and all school staff are White British. This national data shows a worrying picture and raises a question about the chances of Headship by BME teachers and an issue of representation for students. It limits an understanding of diversity. However in the case study schools:

- 52% of teachers in the case study schools are BME staff compared to 44% in the LA and 14% nationally.

- The percentage of leadership staff in the case study schools recorded as BME is 38% compared to 32% in the LA and 9% nationally. In England, 91% of the school leadership are White British.

- The percentage of teaching assistants recorded as BME in the case study schools is 75% compared to 64% in the LA and 14% nationally.

- 60% of all the case study school staff are BME compared to 54% in the LA and 13% nationally.

There is a great diversity in the workforce in the case study schools in terms of range of roles, skills and ethnicity. In one outstanding case study secondary school 50% of the leadership team is Black Caribbean. There are also significant number of White British, Black African, White Other, Mixed White and Black Caribbean, Mixed White and Black African, Other Mixed Race, White Irish, Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi and Other Black in the school. The school prides itself in its diversity. Overall over 84% of teachers and 75% of the school workforce is of ethnic minority origin and many of the languages, cultures and faiths of the pupils are reflected in the workforce. In another case study secondary school 59% of all of the teachers are BME and 30% of teaching staff are Black Caribbean.

The diversity of the staff is also a striking feature of another outstanding primary school. The school reported 94 staff. Of these about 77% school staff are of ethnic minority background including 36% Black Caribbean, 25% White British, 8% African, 9% Portuguese, 3% Russian, 2% Mixed Race, and 2% Bangladeshi. Other staff origins include Brazil, Poland, Morocco, Colombia, Philippines, Mauritius and Peru. These highly skilled and motivated minority ethnic staff work in the school supporting pupils. They make a valuable contribution to removing barriers against achievement.   In addition, there are staff who speak Portuguese, Greek, Polish, Urdu, French, German, Spanish, Russian, Arabic and Amharic. Bilingual staff are clearly able to communicate effectively with parents and pupils as they share those languages

Another case study primary school has also a diverse multi-ethnic workforce including staff of Black Caribbean, African and Portuguese heritage represented across the school and within the leadership team. There are currently 92 members of staff and over 75% are of ethnic minority origin and many of the languages, cultures and faiths of the pupils are

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reflected in the workforce. Of these, 34% are Black Caribbean, 25% White British, 21% Black African, 4% Portuguese, 2% Mixed White and Black Caribbean, 2% White Irish, 2% South American, 2% Romanian. There are also Polish, Hungarian, Bangladeshi, Indian, Other Asian, Other Black, Cuban and Arab staff in the school. The school prides itself in its diversity. The Headteacher believes that by recruiting staff from the local community she sends a strong message to the community that it is valued. It has helped the school to become the central point of the wider community and has built trust. Pupils feel that they can relate to the members of staff from their own cultural backgrounds. Staff members can empathise with pupils; they speak the same language and understand how the systems operate *'back home.'*

In another outstanding case study secondary school 50% of the leadership is Black Caribbean, 25% White British and 75% BME. What is particularly significant in this school is that 65% of the teachers and 71% of all the staff are ethnic minorities' staff. There is also a good number of White British, Black African, White Other, 2% Mixed White and Black Caribbean, Mixed White and Black African, Other Mixed Race, White Irish, Indian, Bangladeshi and Other Black staff in the school. A senior manager at the schools feels that because there are teachers from the same cultures as parents and pupils, those teachers can be direct about children with their parents, without being perceived to be stereotyping.

However, while there are good practices in the case study schools, a number of people in our focus group commented on how challenging it is to get more BME teachers and leaders. Some of the Headteachers we spoke to wanted to recruit more Black teachers but found that there were very few people of Black African and Black Caribbean origin entering the teaching profession.

> *'I am a White Headteacher and most of the teachers are White. We only have one Black teacher but we have a mixed staff. Although I interview teachers for Lambeth Schools, I have not interviewed any Black teachers and there are fewer Black Headteachers now in Lambeth than there used to be.'*
> **(Headteacher, School A)**

Another school also experienced difficulty in recruiting and retaining members of staff from Black and ethnic minority groups. As one of the teachers confirmed:

> *'Having a more mixed profile in the staffing is high on the school's agenda and has been for some considerable time – it's part of the school's positive ethos and is considered as very important.'*

We asked this one Black Caribbean heritage teacher at the school why there are so few Black teachers now:

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'I have always been curious to find out why many of my friends do not want to be teachers. It is a lot of stress being a teacher. There were not many Black Caribbean people going through the system on my course.'
(Teacher, School A)

In answer to the question as to whether there was any correlation between the lack of interest in becoming a teacher and their own negative experiences at school, she replied:

'That negativity could be expressed at home and it could put people off becoming a teacher.' (Teacher, School A)

There were instances when those interviewed expressed amazement when as pupils they saw Black teachers in schools. What is concerning is that this surprise was not just expressed when it happened to those at school five decades ago but by others with more recent experience of schools:

'I went to a Roman Catholic primary school in Clapham in the 1960s/1970s where Black pupils were in the minority. At one time we had a couple of Black teachers and I was amazed that we had qualified teachers who were Black!' (Parent C)

'I remember a Black teacher called Miss Pink and I thought 'wow a Black teacher'. Teachers were mainly Asians.' (SENCo, School P)

The Deputy Headteacher of a large secondary school felt that it is important for parents and the community to have a Black Headteacher. He commented:

'I have not questioned it before. If parents of any background have a trust in the school then it shouldn't be a problem.' (Deputy Head, School D)

As a White Deputy Head we asked whether he thought White people might find it difficult to work under Black leadership and he replied:

'I have seen racism towards the Black staff, particularly to those who have to deliver hard messages. If that were told to White families or it were given by me it might be difficult. I think it is important that the makeup of the leadership team reflects the area. We have Black members of the senior leadership team and in terms of gender and ethnicity there is a good mix across our faculties.' (Deputy Head, School E)

Those interviewed were generally of the opinion that there was a need to have more Black teachers in schools:

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> *'It's about identity. If you put a young White female teacher from outside London in a class with secondary Black Caribbean boys they know that they can wind her up and she'll easily leave within a couple of weeks. If you put a mature Black teacher in there, it will be different.' (Parent H)*

> *'Role models are important. We have a male and female Black Caribbean teachers, teaching assistants that play key role in supporting pupils. We need more in our schools to reflect the diversity of our school populations.'*
> *(White Headteacher, School A)*

Another Black Headteacher commented that:

> *'Being a Black Headteacher herself was a positive factor in Caribbean heritage pupils' achievement.'*

> *'In my school I had teachers from Sierra Leone, Jamaica and an Irish male teacher. It really did pull everyone together. It should reflect the makeup of the local community.' (Retired former Headteacher, School Z)*

In other schools the Headteachers are aware that *'as a Black Caribbean Headteacher'*, they are offering Black pupils in the school a strong role model, which for them is an important contribution to their ability to achieve.

> *'I use my success in achieving the position of Headteacher at the school to tell the pupils that it's about taking opportunities that are there to be taken; I tell them it's about being confident in your own abilities and about realising that we all   have a lot to contribute. I hope the Black Caribbean pupils see me as someone who understands and who is providing opportunities for every single child to succeed.' (Headteacher, School SS)*

The Headteacher felt what was important for the Black Caribbean children was that they felt comfortable with him and felt they could speak to an adult who they knew would listen. This strongly mirrored the view of the pupils who were interviewed. The pupils were extremely positive about the school staff, but at the same time expressed the importance of the presence of Black staff members to them.

> *'When there are no Black teachers you feel uncomfortable... You feel they are not mixing with you. It's much better now. There is lots of support for learning.' (Year 6 pupil).*

The Black Caribbean parents see the Headteacher's appointment as a very positive step. They feel the children now have someone who can relate to their issues, particularly issues around the perception of how Black children achieve. **(Headteacher, School SS)**

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'Having more Black Headteachers is critical for the success of Black Caribbean and African pupils in schools. It's not about appointing Black Headteachers because of their colour though; you need Black Headteachers who are equally good but with a good understanding of the local context in which the school is operating. Some Headteachers come from suburban and rural areas and they really don't understand what it is like to work in a multi-cultural environment.' **(Headteacher, School Z)**

We further asked a question why Black Caribbean pupils do well in this school. A number of comments were made during the interview:

'This is a school where diversity is highly valued and the Headteachers leadership is strong on equality and race issue.' **(Governors, School O)**

'The quality of leadership and planning by the Headteacher, the diversity, the values based recruitment, which leads to a high quality teaching and support staff.' **(Teacher, School O)**

'This is a school with high expectations for all its community. The Head leads by example. She has high standards for herself and expects the same for everyone else. She has recruited a multi-ethnic workforce that reflects the community we serve and this has helped to drive standards in the school.' **(White teacher comment on Black Headteacher, School SJ)**

A number of schools have several Black Caribbean and BME teachers who feel very confident in their roles as teachers. Four teachers of BME heritage in the case study schools agreed to be interviewed and were asked for their perspective on diversity in the school and the achievement of Black Caribbean and BME students at their school. The following case study summarises their comments:

Teacher A: Joined the school last year and was struck at the sense of community which pervades the school and to which she felt welcomed. She feels the Headteacher is a community leader whose open door approach makes both staff and students feel acknowledged. Teacher A enjoys the diversity of the school population in the school and has blossomed in the aspiring culture of the school community. **(Teacher, School RE)**

Teacher B: She is an African teacher from Ghana. Teacher B is one of the longest serving staff members and was struck at the sense of community which pervades the school and to which she felt welcomed. She worked as a teacher of EAL and for the last three years she has headed the EAL section and also teaches literacy. She is well qualified, experienced and knowledgeable and highly praised by the Headteacher for her work. She feels the Headteacher is a community leader, is inspirational and ensures

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that the school has high aspirations for all its pupils regardless of their ability or background. *'I enjoy the diversity of the school population in the school. Parents see having a diversified workforce and Black African teacher has made a big difference for the children and they are confident that they get help for any questions. I think this school is the best school doing a lot of work for Black Caribbean and Black African and other students. A lot of this changed with the current Headteacher and the school is now an outstanding school. This is highly appreciated by parents and community. I enjoy teaching in the school and supporting all pupils.'* *(Teacher, School O)*

Teacher C: The school has a number of Black Caribbean teachers who feel very confident in their roles as teachers - *'I am a well-educated Black woman in a position of authority which helps to confront stereotypes in British culture'* - and role models to all girls in the school. *'I bring my Caribbean background into my teaching and make common cause not just with Black Caribbean girls but also those Black Africans with a similar experience. I feel that generates a powerful discourse in a school where 75% of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds.'* Some Black teachers like Teacher C use this 'insider' position to challenge assumptions and raise expectations by invoking a traditional view of what would and would not be acceptable 'back home' in their countries of origin. *'I ask the girls 'How many of you have been back home and seen such behaviour?' I use this as a powerful lever around confronting negative behaviour.'* They share their confidence in their own ethnicity with the girls: *'I bring the resource of living and being educated in two countries (Barbados and England), which gives me a bicultural competence. If the Black Caribbean students don't have a powerful sense of identity and culture, they'll be lost. I know this approach has had a positive impact on achievement.'* *(Teacher, School RE)*

Teacher D: Our school schools reflect the local community we serve and respond to their needs. Staff of BME heritage are represented across the school and within the leadership team: *'Our staff are ethnically diverse and we have a good number of African teachers from Ghana and language support assistants who speak Twi, Ga and French between them, Black Caribbean, Irish, Portuguese teachers, Mixed race White and Black Caribbean, a Welsh teacher and two South Americans who speak Portuguese and Spanish. ....'* *(Teacher, School SS)*

As concluding remarks, we would like to point out that one of key success for the case study schools is the leadership's ability to create a community ethos by employing a diverse multi-ethnic workforce including Black Caribbean heritage staff, which represents the community the school serves. The quality of staff recruited including the diversity of

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the staff team is seen as crucial in case study schools. Some staff of BME heritage are represented across the case study schools and within the leadership team. Many schools pointed to their ability to acquire the right caliber of teaching staff, i.e. staff that would buy into the explicit culture and core values, as crucial to their success in raising the achievement of all pupils. They recruit teachers who want to be in the school and who believe in real partnership with pupils and their parents. The teachers are seen to come with attributes to enhance and help. What is particularly special about these schools is that local communities are represented well in the school and they have staff who speak many of the languages of the local community. As a result children feel that they can relate to a member of staff from their own cultural background and are highly motivated.

We would further argue strongly that promoting equality and diversity in the classroom need not be a challenge. In all schools in England, children from an early age should be familiar with diversity and multicultural education. The case study schools have a diverse multi-ethnic workforce. Schools actively recruit from the local community. This promotes racial harmony and shows loyalty to the community. The majority of the schools' staff teams are comfortable with the profile of pupils who attend. They do not see raising standards in their schools as a means of securing a different, less disadvantaged intake as a 'reward' for their efforts. And what's more, they have fun doing it, not all the time, not every day, but enough to make it worthwhile and to know that they are doing valuable and valued work. Above all, these are confident schools who take risks and trust their hunches. They are innovative because they are focussed on the moral purpose of raising the achievement of Lambeth pupils and through the accumulated experience of the past turbulent decade of educational change, they have emerged as strong advanced practitioners in raising the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils in multicultural schools.

Celebration of Cultural Diversity

The case study schools are truly multi-cultural schools where the diversity of ethnic origin, languages spoken and cultural heritage, brings real life to learning. The case study schools value the cultural heritage of each child and celebrate it as part of school life. Each school celebrates diversity in every sense of the word. The schools use a number of approach to celebrate cultural diversity through effective use of assemblies, Black History Month, the curriculum, International Day, international link and high quality displays.

Black History Month: Black History Month is an international annual month celebrating, recognising and valuing the inspirational individuals and events from within the BME communities. First celebrated in the UK in 1987, Black History Month is marked annually during the month of October with important reference to Black society. The schools uses Black History Month as an opportunity to explore different countries and celebrate diversity. A broad range of activities take place both within and outside the school day. These include a focus on Black and minority achievement through organising heritage days, a series of lessons, activities and assemblies to explore this area of the curriculum. One Headteacher commented that:

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'The school uses Black history month to recognise and to valuing the inspirational individuals and events that have shaped the Black generation. This takes precedence in the classroom during the month to remember and celebrate the important people from the past and also those who contribute to and help our society today.'

One pupil stated the school uses Black History Month as an opportunity to explore different countries and celebrate diversity.

'Every class studies a different country to give them a wealth of knowledge about the culture, the food, the language and people. Each class presents their country through an assembly- last year we learnt about 12 countries, this ingrains diversity in the children.' **(Pupil, School O)**

'We learnt about Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King and Mary Seacole in Black History.' **(Pupil, School O)**

The events on Black History Month elicited praise from parents, teachers and pupils, and was highly appreciated by parents and pupils. One parent and governor commented:

'We enjoyed the day and we are grateful to the Headteacher, EMAG staff and teachers for this as it helped our children to understand the Black history and heritage. Every culture and history is recognised and this is a great thing about this school.'

'Parents come in to talk to their children about their own heroes during Black History Month.' **(Governor, School O)**

Another parent said:

'I appreciate the way the school celebrates the culture of all children in heritage day and as part of Black History Month. We really enjoy the school's events when parents bring international food from around the world to share with others and dress with cultural dress.'

'The school has diversity month where pupils look at their family trees.' **(Teacher)**

International day: Annually there is also an annual 'International Food Day' where staff, pupils and parents dress up in their traditional dress and share food from around the world. Parents from all backgrounds mingle and share recipes and children are encouraged to try different foods which opens them up to other cultures.

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As part of a strong community link and to celebrate diversity, one school has organised an annual International Day. This event involves pupils, parents and neighbours celebrating cultures from across the globe at the school. In the words of the Headteacher:

'All the colours, sights and sounds of the world were brought to life at a buzzing international day. The parents and pupils from different parts of Africa played colourful African dances and music in traditional dress from Ghana, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Somalia and other African countries. A Scotsman played the bagpipes in traditional dress, while elsewhere a steel band played by pupils from the Caribbean world and there was African drumming by pupils from African continent. Many parents and students performed traditional Portuguese dance and music.' The Headteacher of the school said*: 'It went really well; the best turnout we have had. It is something we have been doing for many years, and it is about including all our different communities.'*

A teacher who helped in organising the events added:

'It was a really great atmosphere, and a really good way to get everyone socialising together to celebrate the achievement of the school and the community the school serves.'

International Links: Many schools have international links to reflect the school cultural diversity, to improve awareness and enrich the curriculum. The case study schools have links with schools in a number of countries around the world including Kenya, Ghana, Jamaica, Portugal, Sierra Leone, Germany, India, Cameroon, China and Russia. One school developed a Triangle project to link the school with Anchovy High School, St James, Jamaica and St Andrews Complex, Sekondi, Ghana. The project was developed to mark the bi-centenary of the abolition of slavery in 2007. It was named the 'Triangle project' in recognition of the historical triangle of trade which existed between Britain, Ghana and Jamaica. The aims of the project were to increase knowledge of identity and the contribution made by people of the Caribbean and to forge links with schools in Ghana and Jamaica.

'The project has a Christian ethos of 'love' of other communities and shares the resource we are blessed to have here. Many of the children's parents have a close link with the community and value highly the school link with Ghana and Jamaica. This project not only helped to enrich the school curriculum here but also helped to improve cultural understanding and exchange between Britain and the two countries. Parents are very supportive of the school link.' **(School Chaplain, School O)**

The project produced a teaching resource entitled 'The Triangle Project: Cross Curricular resources' which is widely used in the link schools. This publication is used to share the school and staff experience of visiting the schools in Ghana and Jamaica.

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The project continues to have a lasting impression on the school community. The link with schools in Ghana and Jamaica remains strong. One of the legacies of the 'Triangle Project' was not only developing cross curricular material for classroom use but also the creation a charity dedicated to fund raising initiatives designed to support the partner schools and to sustain the links. Overall as commented by the school Chaplain:

> *'The school works closely with the local community to organise charity events to support people in need in Africa and the Caribbean through the Triangle programme.' (School O)*

> *'Working with an International Partner school is a useful way of exploring issues around identity. After all, children first need to investigate their own culture in order to explain it to an audience of international peers. They can then discover similarities and differences with their partner school's culture- and perhaps delve into deeper issues such as racism, migration and cultural stereotyping.' (Headteacher, School O)*

Celebration of diversity using assemblies and inclusive curriculum: The celebration of diversity is also embedded into school life through, for example, assemblies, the teaching of modern foreign languages and the curriculum. **School G**'s curriculum responds effectively to the context from which students come – widely dispersed inner city areas of mixed heritage backgrounds, Black and ethnic minorities' heritage and many with English as an additional language. It is designed to meet the needs and interests of the different groups of students as they move through the school, and offers a creative and extensive range of choices at GCSE and in the sixth form, underpinned by outstanding careers guidance, which is appreciated by students. The curriculum and extra opportunities all contribute to outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development which prepares students extremely well for life in modern British society.

The case study schools value the cultural heritage of each child and celebrate it as part of school life.

> *'The school has now reached the stage where it is natural for everyone to be proud of their heritage; as a community we have embraced the different languages that we have. Everyone feels they can succeed and that they have something to contribute to the community.' (Teacher, School ST)*

> '*We aim to ensure the cultural, religious and linguistic heritages are welcomed inside and valued within the school curriculum.' (Headteacher, School RE)*

Another pupil stated:

> *'Everyone should be proud of their heritage; as a community we have embraced the different languages that we have. Everyone feels they can succeed.' (School O)*

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'We learn about different things and different countries. It help us as we need to know about our language and countries.' (Pupil, School RE)

The celebration of diversity is embedded into school life through assemblies and circle times, language of the week and use of the mother tongue in class, the teaching of modern foreign languages and the curriculum. This has led to a culture of acceptance and empathy across the schools. Parents are invited to a range of assemblies which celebrate a range of cultures.

Achievement Awards Ceremony: The case study schools and all other schools in the LA also celebrate the achievement of pupils at KS1, KS2, KS3 and GCSE each year at the Royal Festival Hall, Southbank Centre. The aim of the awards ceremony is to raise achievement of Lambeth pupils through:

- Motivating pupils through public acknowledgement of their achievements

- Improving pupils' self- esteem, academic standards, personal motivation and social skills

- Creating the opportunity for the wider community to publicly recognise and applaud the contribution that teachers make to pupils' achievement

- Celebrating parental involvement and support with the children's learning and working in partnership with schools to raise achievement

The Achievement Awards ceremony celebrate both the academic achievement of around the 850 young people as well as the support and commitment of their families and teachers every year. The event was attended by over 3,000 young people, their families, Headteachers, teachers and staff across LA schools. This event helped to inspire pupils and to engage parents in their children's education and is also warmly supported by parents, communities, teachers and Headteachers who welcome the opportunity to come together to offer encouragement and support to local achievers who excelled in national examinations and tests.

Use of high quality displays: There are also abundant and high quality displays that celebrate pupils' achievement and acknowledge the diversity of its population and the wider society. As one Headteacher commented:

'Displays in schools reflect the school community including Black Caribbean, mixed race and African contribution to history, cultural artefacts, cultural and language background of people of Africa and historical and political maps of Africa and Black history month activities. Displays are a reflection of our community. They are not put up to fill wall space. They are part of an ethos of expectations.' (Headteacher, School O)

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Overall the evidence presented here enables the conclusion to be drawn that celebration of cultural diversity is embedded into the case study schools life through assemblies and Black History Month, language of the week and the curriculum, International Days and the Achievement Award Ceremony, and has led to a culture of acceptance and empathy across the schools. In particular, the case study schools use Black History Month well as a celebration of Black heritage, culture and history including the past, the present and the future. This has inspired Black Caribbean pupils in the schools.

There are many opportunities for Black Caribbean and BME pupils to celebrate cultural diversity and explore Black history and enjoy a multicultural education. The highlights however are Black History Month and International Day where pupils celebrate their different cultures by introducing food, customs, music, dance and many other elements from their culture or country of origin. Overall the case study schools saw the diversity within the school community as a genuine asset to the life of the schools, to widen pupils' horizons and to enhance learning. The Black Caribbean pupils take delight in the multi-cultural environment in the schools which celebrates their cultural heritage. Their experience at the case study schools has equipped them with a high level of cultural fluency. The case study schools ethos that values and celebrates pupils' cultural heritage, and teaches openness and acceptance of diversity, enables the Black Caribbean pupils to feel comfortable and confident in their ability to understand and cope with the demands of a multi-cultural environment.

Effective Use of Pupil Voice

The case study schools have established a culture where all children and young people have a voice and have the opportunity to play and active role in the decisions that affect their learning and wellbeing. We interviewed pupils of Black Caribbean and Mixed White and Caribbean heritage during the research regarding their attitude to and views about their school and education. As part of pupil voice we explored the following questions with them:

- *Do you enjoy coming to school?*
- *What do you like about your school and*
- *What has helped you to do well at school?*

The overwhelmingly pupils in all the case study schools enjoy coming to schools, they like their teachers and appreciate their kindness, the exciting activities they take part in and how teachers are helping them with their work, as expressed in the following quotes

We asked the pupils the case study secondary schools '***What do you like about your school and what has helped you to do well at school?***

'This is an outstanding school.'
'This is a good school- the teachers care.' 'Teachers in this school teach well and help you.' 'Everyone helps and it's easier to learn.'

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'It is socially diverse and a welcoming school.'
'The relationship we have with teachers – they are open and loving to their students.' 'Teachers help us get better at school.'
'The teachers really understand and help you with any problems you have, either with your- self or your school work, or problems outside school.'
'Teachers are good.'
'There are many good, kind children in our school and very intelligent pupils.'
'Teachers help us achieve what we need to achieve.'
'The school is high achieving and the progress we make from where we started is very impressive.'
'Good support is available for students in our school. They go all the way to support you.' 'Teachers give extra help. We have a lot of help and revision support.'
'We are encouraged to aim high and we are supported to achieve it.'
'We celebrate our achievement at the Achievement Award Ceremony and Assembly.' 'Our school is ambitious and helps us to achieve our dreams. We all want to achieve both academically and in social life.'
'This school prepares you for life in addition to academic success.' 'The school is good in accepting new ideas.'
'Our school allows us to be active and be a good leader.' 'This school is a great school.'
'There are a lot of curriculum activities that motivate you in this school.' 'They take us from our comfort zone.'
'They give us opportunities to broaden our experience and travel to other educational places and institutions to learn.'
'They help us to achieve beyond expectations.'
'Our school ethos is based on Christian values. Our motto is 'with love and learning.' 'School is a multicultural school. It is the school that values every culture, heritage and religion.'
'The school is good in breaking cultural differences and outstanding in community cohesion. They bring everyone together.'
'They are strict and firm.' 'The teachers are very good.' 'We all enjoy learning here.'
'Teachers are very good at teaching and making lessons fun.' 'Our school is an excellent place to learn.'

The pupils interviewed at **secondary schools were** asked about their choice of subjects they would like to study at University when they finished their secondary education? Black Caribbean pupils we interviewed were high aspiring and gave the following comments about the subject they wanted to study at university when they finish their secondary education:

'I would like to go to Oxbridge to study mechanical engineering and physics.'
'I like Oxbridge and Russell Group. I would like to study astrophysics.'
'I would like to study law and would like to go to Exeter University which is the best in this field.'

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I want to study medicine at Oxford'.
'I want to study English at Cambridge University. English is my favourite
subject'. 'I want to study Arabic and would like to study at SOAS.'
I was planning to go to Oxbridge or Imperial College to do Chemical
Engineering.'

We asked similar questions to the primary pupils including 'What do you like best about the school?' They gave the following positive views about their school.

'I like the school because you get educated better.'
'I like the school because you get caring teachers. They help us and they are kind.' 'You can go to the teachers if you have a problem.'
'We have Going for Gold.'
'I like teachers in our school.'
'I like this school because children respect teachers.'
'I like the school because we learn different subjects' music, arts, maths, history, literacy, PE and science.'
'I like it because people communicate, they are well behaved, respect each other, respect teachers and do as they are told.'
'We have good music and I play the violin.'
'Every Thursday we have a music teacher come in and have a music assembly. We have violin, flute, drum kits, xylophones, and a school band that play at concerts.'
'I enjoy coming to school because the school gave me a good opportunity to be a peer mediator.'
'I enjoy coming to school. I am a school's Councillor. I met the mayor of Lambeth. I love the teachers, they give you really fine work, and I love Maths.'

We also asked 'What is special about your school?' The responses of the primary pupils are quoted below:

'Our school is special because we have someone to play with – we have friendship buddies.'
'They ask us how we feel about stuff because everyone in the school is different.'
'Our school is special because everyone is diverse. It is a multicultural school and we love it.'
'Our school is special because we respect the environment.'
'We have a team meeting.'
'Our school is special because they always encourage us with outstanding behaviour.'
'The school is welcoming.'
'We have a great opportunity.'
'You always learn new things.'
'This school is special. The school helped another schools.'
'This school is special because we have a reading week'
'We have a Black History month.'
'We have a golden book to reward children who achieve their targets. They get a

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postcard home to say that they have done well.'
'We have a lot of activities and after school club- Tennis, street dance, freedom academy and play games.'
'Teachers, staff, TA all support us and push us. They want best for us.'
'Teacher helps us to learn.'
'You always have someone to talk to.'
'Teachers respect you and you get lots of education.'
'People come up and invite you to play if you are a new person.'
'We have buddies if you are new; someone shows you around the school and looks after you to make sure you have some friends.'
'If someone is new you speak to them and are kind to them and make friends with them'.
'We have a lot of talented, smart people.'
'If teachers see you are struggling, they do the lesson the next day so you can learn'.
'I am new here, I feel more at home here than my other school'.
'You get chance to speak about what you have done.'
'If you really need help you get it from adults.'

Overall the pupil voice evidence suggests that the children in the case study schools were clearly very happy with their school experience and the school they attended is a happy and harmonious place. Black Caribbean pupils have overwhelmingly positive attitudes to learning and they contribute to the excellent progress of the school. They felt valued and treated equally. The pupils rated the care, guidance and support the school provided as good during the focus group discussion. Pupils we interviewed saw themselves going to College or University when they leave school. They were proud of the school and the staff, and were happy and enthusiastic and felt secure at school. They were confident, articulate and accomplished learners. There is a buzz of learning in the schools and pupils of Black Caribbean heritage take a genuine delight in mastering new skills.

We would also argue that there are a lot of pupil voice surveys and consultations in the case study schools. In these schools the views are sought through school council meetings with SMT, pupil questionnaires, parent questionnaires, target setting days and consultations. They are much valued and used to inform worthwhile change in the schools. Headteachers are keen for the children to have a greater say on the way the school is seen and greater involvement in their learning right. The following comments by Headteachers and teachers capture the way pupil voice is used in the case study schools and offers support of the conclusions raised in this paper:

'Every pupil is expected and encouraged to achieve their full potential by teachers. We use pupil voice to inform the school self-review and to provide an additional targeted support.' **(Headteacher, School I)**
'We want pupil voice to be credible to the children. Pupils do feel they have an input into policies etc…' **(Deputy Headteacher, School G)**
'We need to know what we can do better for them. We also need to know what they want from us.' **(Teacher, School G)**

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SECTION 4: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The underachievement of Black Caribbean heritage pupils has been a persistent problem facing national policy makers in British schools for many years. Over the past four decades national research has shown that Black Caribbean heritage pupils' achievements persistently lag behind the average achievement of their peers and the gap is growing at the end of primary and secondary education. This underachievement issue is a question that has stirred emotions from as early as the 1950s when the Black Caribbean community grew concerned about their children's education. Coard (1971) argued that they encountered widespread lack of understanding about the needs of Black Caribbean pupils, *'fueling the widely-held belief that Black children were somehow educationally subnormal'*. He explained how the low expectations of teachers damaged pupils' motivation and confidence thus dooming them to a life of underachievement.

This research project has been undertaken to discover and disseminate good practice in Lambeth schools, so as to contribute to raising the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils in all schools. Lambeth Schools have a significant proportion of pupils of Black Caribbean heritage and the main aim of this research project is to identify strategies used in the case study schools to raise their achievement at all key stages, through effective use of research evidence and the sharing of good practice.

The report draws on detailed statistical analyses as well as from case studies based on visits to schools by members of the project team. These draw on the views of Headteachers, staff, governors, parents and pupils, and on the views of four generations of Black Caribbean professionals expressed in focus groups.

All the case study schools share many of the characteristics of successful schools nationally. They demonstrate good practice in key aspects such as excellent leadership, high quality teaching and learning, effective use of performance data and strong relationships with parents and the community, an ethos of respect with a clear stand on racism (see for details Demie 2005, DfES 2003b, McKenley et al 2003, OFSTED 2002, Blair and Bourne 1998). Demie (2005) and DfES (2003) argued there is no 'pick and mix' option. An effective school will seek to develop all these characteristics underpinned by the practical use of data to monitor the achievement of particular groups of pupils to pinpoint and tackle underperformance.

The case study schools have very high expectations of their pupils. They enrich the curriculum they provide with a wide range of cross-curricular and extra-curricular learning. They provide an ethos that makes pupils feel valued and part of a wider community. They also demonstrate some significant features that appear to be key factors in the high achievement of their Black Caribbean pupils. Among the significant features are the levels of trust that have been established between staff and parents. Often this is because parents see the diversity of staff employed by the school and they feel confident that their children will not only be treated fairly but that they will have positive role models to aspire

to. Establishing trust between parents and the school is vital as evidence has revealed that previous generations of Black Caribbean parents and grandparents were subjected to overt racism and discrimination in the English school system. We asked 'what was a key factor in the successful and positive relationships which exist between staff and parents at **School D**. The senior teacher responded:

> *'I think it is down to the personal touch. Parents are invited – there is a partnership ethos. It's very warm. I know some of the parents by their first names. I care about their offspring as if they were my own and then they feel it. Building trust is important, parents appreciate someone with understands children'.* **(School D)**

It is important to give full credit to the hard work of teachers and parents in trying to counteract the negative influences of street culture in Lambeth. Here the role of Black leaders and teachers is particularly crucial. The case study school leaders are knowledgeable about the backgrounds of the pupils and they recruit teachers and staff who share the cultural heritage of their pupils and are aware of the challenges faced by them as one Head of School explains.

> *'I have always lived in this area. I have been used to being in this area and having Black people around me all the time and as I have got older the number of Black people in this area has increased… I go to a Baptist Church and I have Black friends. When I was little, education was always the way to improve yourself and I just always wanted to do the best I could for the children in this area. A lot of people, who teach in Lambeth, live in Lambeth and have been here all their lives. I think you get a real commitment to the people who live here, I think you understand the people and the children and the parents and the ways of life, the houses and facilities. It is just something else that makes you close.'* **(Head of School, School C)**

There is an empathy with the challenges some pupils face growing up in fatherless families, with very young mothers, living in areas where gang violence and drug crime is high and where there is often harassment by the Police. Headteachers choose staff that pupils can relate to, for example, the Headteacher of **School A** describes the composition of her leadership team:

> *'I have a Family Support Worker and a Parent Partnership Worker on my senior leadership team. They can talk with the parents more effectively than I can because I represent authority as a Headteacher. They do very well at building relationships with parents'.* **(Headteacher, School A**)

Having an in-depth understanding of the young people and local community is the reason why **School E** has recruited mature Black Caribbean male behaviour mentors. They talked about the challenges Black Caribbean pupils face because of their life circumstances and how they work with them first thing in the morning when they arrive at school, and at various times of the day to keep them on track Page 285

'49% of families are led by women. This has a massive effect on our boys. I work with hundreds of pupils each day. The boys and girls have a particular bond with you as a man. The most predominant question is "what do you think"? I try to give them the best opinion I can. The average pupil goes home, he doesn't eat with his family – he eats alone. They are latch-key kids. This has been brought about by Black Caribbean culture. If the family foundation is not solid you have lots of problems.'

Despite the many challenges pupils face, teachers in the case study schools have the highest expectations of them. There are clear and non-negotiable expectations about appropriate behaviour, which are calmly and firmly insisted upon as a teacher of Caribbean heritage explained:

'My high expectations of myself came from my home. In my background it has been embedded within myself. I am determined to do my best. I am quite strict as a teacher. It is important that children know that we are here to learn, you have to work hard for what you want'. **(School A)**

At **School O** the Principal and 50% of the teaching staff are of Black Caribbean heritage. The school has been transformed under the current leadership which took the school from requiring special measures to becoming outstanding when inspected in 2014. The teaching at **School O** continues to provide outstanding outcomes for students as Ofsted reported:

'Teachers and Teaching assistants have very high expectations of all students. This leads to teachers planning learning activities which ensure students are enthusiastic about their learning. Teachers gauge the quality of students' work very well and set appropriate, but challenging academic targets.' (Ofsted 2014)

In addition to high aspirations for pupils, the case study schools offer an exciting and relevant curriculum and they go out of their way to ensure that this is accessible to all pupils, as the Deputy Head for Inclusion at **School E** points out, some Black Caribbean pupils have very limited experiences of life outside their immediate area and so the school organises a residential trip out of London for pupils in Year 7:

'We had a residential fairly early on at Down. Lots of them have not had that kind of experience. We have kids who haven't even been on escalators.'(**School E)**

The Deputy Head with responsibility for the curriculum at **School E** explains their approach:

'The new national curriculum is narrowing, especially in English and history; you have got to be more creative now to make it relevant to our pupils. We have lead practitioners in a range of subjects. Our specialism in Performing

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and Visual Arts complements and enriches the curriculum which has been described by Ofsted as "innovative and engaging". The curriculum offers extensive opportunities for students including established links with world class organisations e.g. the Young Vic, Ballet Rambert and Laban and educational trips, visits and workshops with artists in residence.'

'Collaboration is strong and I am keen that faculties do not stick to their own areas.'

'With regard to enrichment: we have specialist staff and keen learners who are generally interested in their subject. There is no question of aspiration or challenge. No question that pupils have gone on to Drama Colleges, e.g. the Guildhall.' **(Deputy Head, Curriculum)**

The case study schools focus on rigorously monitoring teaching and learning and work very hard on ensuring (as a minimum) that all lessons continue to be at least good. The monitoring of lessons is extensive and rigorous, and leaders can identify very accurately how good individual teachers are and what they need to do to improve further. All new teachers are observed from a very early stage and, where their teaching is not at least good, focused additional support is quickly put in place. Most of the schools provide structured professional development for teachers during the early stages of their careers.

The case study schools have a clear stand on racism and they do not tolerate any racist view or racism in their school. There is a strong ethos and culture of mutual respect where pupils are able to have their voices heard. There are clear and consistent approaches to tackling racism across the case study schools with a focus on prevention. Unfortunately it is often assumed that trainee teachers are free from racist views and influences, despite the fact that many of them will have come from schools where these issues have not been discussed (Tomlinson, 2008). Initial Teacher Training (ITT) institutions often avoid discussions on racism as they feel uncomfortable with such 'delicate' topics. (Sherwood, 2007:45). There is much less time for such issues to be addressed (Jones, 1999).

We need equality classes to become a key part of teacher training courses in a bid to reflect the growing diversity of British schools but research shows that in England teachers are not always provided with the tools to address racism or promote equality in the classroom environment, either through initial teacher training or continuing professional development. Most of the teachers we interviewed had received little or no education with regards to tackling racism or promoting race equality whilst training or teaching. Resultantly they do not have the knowledge, skills or resources to be able to deal with these issues in the classroom. Many consider the best approach to be to adopt a colour-blind position of ignoring difference and attempting to treat all children the same. Our study highlights that there is a need for widespread training, including in-service training to empower educators in England with the skills and knowledge required to consider issues of race equality in their lesson planning and delivery; to value and acknowledge

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differences and similarities amongst their pupils; to tackle racism and to create an environment of openness where young people develop positive attitudes and a critical awareness of the world.

There is another factor that is important in this study, the link between parents, Church and the community. Many Black Caribbean families attend church, particularly large Pentecostal Churches, which have a strong culture of self-improvement and a commitment to education.

In fact, nearly half of churchgoers in inner London (48%) are Black, 28% in London as a whole, compared with 13% of the capital's population. That means nearly one in five (19%) of Black Londoners goes to church each week. Two-thirds attend Pentecostal churches, though the Black community is represented in every denomination. In Lambeth there has been at least a 25% growth in new churches and according to a report by the Evangelical Alliance in July 2015, Lambeth and Southwark are seeing a 50% growth in church attendance by Black and ethnic minority groups.

Our focus group interviews confirm that the Christian Church plays a very significant role in the lives of Black Caribbean people in the UK. The need for Black governors from the Church has also been recognised by school governors:

> *'Our Headteacher and three members of the leadership team are Black Caribbean. There are a significant number of Black teachers in our school but not one Black governor.*
>
> *The Ark system has its own system of governing bodies. They haven't thought about how important this is. I have now worked carefully with the Headteacher to recruit Black governors. We have decided to contact the Black Churches as we would like to have a 50% Black governing body.'*
> *(Governor, School EV)*

A parent governor from **School B** who is of Black Caribbean heritage supports the fact that the Church plays a valuable role in the lives of pupils and parents:

> *'What happens in the Church plays a vital part of peoples' lives. By that I mean people respect what comes out of Churches. The Church has promoted the value of education so people have taken that on board. The support and encouragement and the 'can do' approach – letting you know you are not alone, the help that is given. It is a place of hope. I am thinking about the Black majority Churches. A number of supplementary schools have come out of the Church.*
>
> *Where pupils were not getting the affirmation and support in the state school system, they have gone to the Church. You are expected to behave in a certain*

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way and expected to achieve. Within the school setting if the expectations are not particularly high, then children do not have any particular reason to achieve. Why bother or make the effort? I think there is a demand for supplementary schools with a lot more teachers involved, or teachers setting up these schools. The demand is there.' **(Parent Governor, School B)**

Supplementary schools set up in the 1970s to support Black Caribbean children and families are still in existence today and many of the teachers in these schools are working in Lambeth schools. It was argued by a number of those we interviewed that there is a need for more Christian Free Schools as Caribbean parents prefer Church Schools.

A number of the case study schools are Church Schools, the Executive Headteacher of one school says she believes that there is one reason why Church Schools are successful in raising the attainment of Black Caribbean pupils and elaborates on this as follows:

'The school's values and the Christian ethos are key. There are two issues: 1) being an outstanding school which all schools want to be and (2) being an outstanding Christian school. We are an ambitious school, everything is in place. We have here the vision and values, the governors (who represent the Church). We have embraced British values which seem to be what all humane persons would want to embrace. They may not be the most academic children in the world but they know that to us they are unique – a gift from God and we treat each other in that way and we try to treat each other well. Loving God, loving your neighbour and treating others as ourselves. We have that Church distinctiveness. This is one of the strengths here. In helping another school we have become better still.'
(Executive Headteacher, School C)

The single factor that links all the case study schools' success in raising the achievement of pupils is the excellence of their leadership. Headteachers have a very strong vision of the kind of school they want to lead and they have the leadership skills to create them. Universally they focus on high standards and high achievement. They devote time and resources to staff appointments and to continuing professional development.

They build strong cohesive teams and have the confidence to delegate responsibility to others. They lead by example. They create a sense of belonging to a school and a community with shared aims and very high expectations which is a highly motivating factor for pupils. All the schools in the project give high priority to raising and maintaining high standards for all pupils.

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Conclusions

The KS2 and GCSE evidence, without doubt, confirms that Black Caribbean pupils in the case study schools have shown a dramatic rise in achievement. Of the pupils in the case study schools 88% achieved level 4 or above at KS2 in 2015. Between 2008 and 2015 pupils in the case study schools improved from 64% to 88%. This is an improvement rate of 24 percentage points compared to 7 percentage points in all schools at national level. At Key Stage 4 also the case study schools perform 14 percentage points above the national average. This is despite a national trend of underperformance. There are a number of reasons why Black Caribbean pupils are doing well and key features and success factors include:

- Excellent leadership and Black Caribbean achievement
- Effective teaching and learning
- Use of a relevant inclusive curriculum
- Parental engagement
- Link with the community
- The work of learning mentors in supporting Black Caribbean families
- Church and community support and guidance
- A clear stand on racism
- Diversity in the school workforce
- Celebration of cultural diversity
- Effective use of pupil voice

These findings are also supported by the pupil voice and attitudinal survey. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about their experiences in the case study schools and gave good evidence about what successful schools do to raise achievement. The case study schools have established a culture where all children and young people have a voice and have the opportunity to play an active role in the decisions that affect their learning and wellbeing. We interviewed pupils of Black Caribbean and Mixed White and Caribbean heritage during the research regarding their attitude to and views about their school and education. As part of pupil voice we explored the following questions with them:

- *Do you enjoy coming to school?*
- *What do you like about your school?*
- *What has helped you to do well at school?*

The overwhelmingly evidence suggests pupils in all the case study schools enjoy coming to schools, they like their teachers and appreciate their kindness and the exciting activities they take part in. They rated their schools as good or outstanding and described their schools as 'socially diverse' and 'welcoming'. Teachers are described as caring and understanding, helping them with any problems, or difficulties with school work, or problems outside school. The children's confidence in their schools is justified by their exceptional results, achieved in spite of very low starting points.

Recommendations

Department for Education (DfE)

Establishing Raising Achievement Projects

Building on the lessons learnt from what works research on raising achievement of Black Caribbean pupils, London challenge and National Raising the Achievement of Black Caribbean pupils project 2003-2010 (Demie and McLean 2016; Tickly et al 2006; Mayor et al 2009; Demie 2005;DfES 2003; McKenley et al 2002; Ofsted 2002; EHRC 2016), the DfE needs to establish national Black Caribbean Raising Achievement project where there are the highest concentration of Black Caribbean pupils to support schools and LAs to address underachievement of Black Caribbean Children. Elements of the strategy should include:

1. The provision of national strategic officer posts within the DfE or regions to support delivery of the work of raising the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils at national level.
2. Ensuring there is adequate advisory staff provision such as Black Caribbean achievement consultants or EMA advisory teachers to support schools.
3. Ofsted monitoring and evaluation of the above Programmes and during inspections.
4. The provision of community led Black mentoring projects in order to ensure an adequate level of appropriately trained and ethnically matched mentors to serve in different regions where there are high numbers of Black Caribbean pupils.
5. Targets should be set by the DfE for recruitment and retention and of Black teachers, Black Headteachers, middle and senior managers and support staff and in schools.
6. The government should reintroduce Sure Start in areas where there are significant numbers of BC families.

Establishing ring-fenced funding

7. The DfE should introduce ring fenced targeted funding to schools where Black Caribbean pupils are underachieving and where schools are able to demonstrate the capacity for effectively leading the work, carrying out an audit and developing and delivering an action plan to redress any inequality and narrowing the achievement gap.

Schools

To help raise the achievement of Black Caribbean children, schools should:

8. Conduct an audit to determine their capacity for implementing whole school change to raise the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils. The audit should cover the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils in comparison with other groups;

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awareness of Black Caribbean achievement issues and of a race equality framework amongst senior managers, teachers, parents, pupils and governors; perceptions of behaviour management policy and practices; staff - pupil relationships; staff training needs and involvement of Black Caribbean parents.

9. Discuss openly race issues and ethnic diversity within lessons and as an integral part of the whole school staff professional development

Local Authority (LA) and Multi Academy Trusts (MAT)

10. Local Authorities and Multi Academy Trusts should audit the current workforce and pursue strong diversification at all levels including senior management and ensure that it reflects the community served by the LAs and MATs   Diversity in the workforce is particularly important for those LAs where there are high numbers of Black children.

11. LAs should continue to use data effectively to identify underachieving groups and to improve teachers and management awareness in understanding the roots of Black history in general and in particular Black Caribbean culture. This should aim to improve teachers understanding of Black children as learners, how and why some underachieve and what teachers can do to target these issues.

12. LAs and the Multi Academy Trusts should ensure that they provide schools with programmes of centrally based training to share good practice to raise attainment and narrow the achievement gap.

Acknowledgements

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The views expressed in the research report, however, are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Lambeth Council.

We accept full and sole responsibility for any mistakes or unintentional misrepresentations in reporting the findings.

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Overview & Scrutiny
Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission

Date of meeting: 8 February 2021
Title of report: Closing the Attainment Gap
Report author: Stephen Hall, Assistant Director School Performance and Improvement, Anton Francic, Principal Secondary Adviser.
Authorised by: Annie Gammon, Director of Education, 27 January 2021

Overall Hackney pupils including those from disadvantaged backgrounds and minority ethnic groups typically perform better than their peers nationally at all levels, however there remains persistent performance gaps between disadvantaged pupils, Black Caribbean Boys and Turkish Kurdish pupils and their peers. This report considers national and local indicators for the performance of pupil groups who underperform and the reasons for this underperformance. Pupil achievement data at all school stages is included with a commentary on its meaning. It highlights the particular groups whose achievement is a focus for Hackney Education and the actions that are being taken to close the achievement gap between these groups and other pupils.

It is recognised that Hackney Schools and Education Authority have a strong track record in reducing disadvantage and can point to their successes in eliminating or minimising performance barriers, however more needs to be done. Strategies that are being implemented by Hackney Education include a robust application of the Good to Great policy to challenge and support the minority of schools which are not yet providing a good education for pupils, review of the impact of additional funding for underperforming groups and borough wide initiatives to ensure engagement with local communities and the provision of a representative curriculum.

Nationally and locally there will be a negative impact from the successive school closures during the past year on pupil attainment overall, but in particular for disadvantaged pupils with the potential for gaps to further widen as a result. This will be a continuing focus in the coming year. Schools will need robust systems to track and support these pupils as they re-enter full time school based education to ensure that learning gaps are rapidly addressed as well as to ensure that the current remote learning offer is effective.

Working for **every child**

Hackney

The National Context*

Due to the disruption to public examinations in 2020, the most recent reliable pupil performance data is from the academic year 2018/2019. Examinations have again been cancelled in 2021 to be replaced by teacher assessments. The Dfe is currently consulting on the most appropriate methodology for this and further announcements are anticipated. There is likely to be a negative impact on pupil outcomes from the disruption to education settings during the last year. This is anticipated to impact most significantly on pupils who receive less support at home, or whose home circumstances are least conducive to private study. It has been suggested that school closures are likely to reverse the progress made to close attainment gaps in the last decade ([Education Endowment Foundation, 2020](#)).

In 2019, pupils in the final year of Key Stage 2 (Year 6) at Primary Schools took national tests in Reading, Mathematics, Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar. These were externally marked. Pupils were graded as either not reaching, reaching or exceeding (higher than) the expected standard. Maintained Schools, Academies and Free Schools also undertook these tests. Children who were considered to be working well below the level of the tests e.g. pupils with certain types of Special Education Need did not sit tests but are included in the school outcome data.

The KS2 Reading test is a comprehension paper based on three short texts including both fiction and non-fiction texts. The Mathematics test consists of three papers, arithmetic and two problem solving papers. The Spelling test is a dictated list of 20 words which are added to given sentences and punctuation and grammar is assessed through a separate written paper requiring 50 written responses. Writing is assessed against national benchmarks by teachers. These outcomes are moderated in a minimum of 25% of schools each year by The Local Authority.

The KS2 headline measure is the number of pupils who achieve the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Mathematics and the progress pupils make from Year 2 assessments for each individual subject.

End of key stage 4 outcomes are primarily reported through attainment across 8 approved (GCSE) qualifications (Attainment 8), gains from starting points across the same 8 qualifications (Progress 8), attainment in English and maths strong pass (Grade 5) and standard pass (Grade 4) GCSE examinations are now largely written linear papers taken at the end of Year 11.

Nationally achievement and progression gaps between ethnic minority groups and White children have reduced substantially over time however there are still notable variations (see* and summarised below)

Chinese and Indian pupils have higher attainment and progress throughout their school years and high university entry rates. Those from Gypsy and Roma, and Irish Traveller backgrounds have the lowest attainment, make the least progress and are least likely to stay in education.

The Black ethnic group makes more progress overall than the national average however Black Caribbean pupils see considerably poorer attainment and progression. White British pupils also achieve below average up to A-level. Pupils from Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds have now closed the attainment gap between themselves and White British pupils.

There is a sizeable attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and those from better-off households among White British Pupils, indicating that socio-economic factors are a strong driver of poor education attainment for them. In contrast, attainment for Black Caribbean pupils is low overall, with a smaller attainment gap, suggesting that other factors may be at play.

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At Key Stage 2 almost two-thirds (65%) of 10-to-11 year olds met the expected standard in reading, writing and maths in the school year 2018 to 2019. Pupils from the Chinese ethnic group (80%) were most likely to meet standard. White Gypsy and Roma (19%) and Irish Traveller (26%) pupils were least likely to do so. White British pupils performed at (65%), Black African performed above (67%) and Black Caribbean pupils (56%) performed below the national average.

In every ethnic group, pupils eligible for FSM (47%) were less likely to meet the expected standard than non-FSM pupils (68%); a gap which is wider than at early years. The gap is bigger among White Pupils (-24 percentage points), driven by significant lower attainment by FSM pupils (21 pp below the national average) compared to FSM pupils from other backgrounds.

In every ethnic group girls (70%) were more likely than boys (60%) to meet the expected standard. The smallest gap was found in the Irish Traveller ethnic group, where 75% of girls and 70% of boys met the standard. The biggest gap was found among the Black Caribbean group, where 64% of girls and 49% of boys met the standard; figures for White British pupils were 70% and 60%.

At Key Stage 4 in every ethnic group, pupils eligible for FSM had lower Progress 8 scores than those not eligible; see below. Girls (0.22) made more progress than boys (-0.25) in every ethnic group. Scores were negative for both boys and girls

In every ethnic group pupils, eligible for FSM made less progress between the ages of 11 and 16 (as measured by Progress 8) than those not eligible, with average scores of -0.53 and 0.06 respectively.

Pupils from the Chinese ethnic group (1.03) made the most progress between the ages of 11 and 16 ('Progress 8' score, with a positive score means that on average more progress since Key Stage 3 tests in Year 6 is being made than the average) in 2017/18. Asian (0.45) and Black (0.12) pupils made higher than average and pupils from White British (-0.14) and Mixed (-0.02) groups made lower than average progression. Pupils with the lowest progress scores were in the Irish Travellers (-1.16) and White Gypsy/Roma (-0.78) groups

Analysis conducted by the Office of National Statistics found that Bangladeshi and Pakistani children who are eligible for FSM have higher Progress 8 scores than the overall national average for all pupils, with Progress 8 scores of 0.30 and 0.03 respectively. This is even though children from Pakistani and Bangladeshi households are more likely to live in low income and in-material deprivation out of all ethnic groups: 2.8 and 2.4 times more likely, respectively (to live in low-income households) compared with children living in White British households.

In contrast White British children, who are less likely to live in poverty, progressed less than average if they were FSM eligible (-0.78). In addition, White British pupils have the second largest gap in average Progress 8 scores between FSM-eligible pupils and those not eligible, at 0.73 points. Indeed White Boys FSM pupils (-0.98) make less progress than Black Caribbean FSM boys (-0.81); a similar pattern is found with girls.

Low educational attainment and progression is closely associated with economic disadvantage, indeed for all ethnic groups children eligible for FSM have lower educational achievement. The attainment gap between socio-disadvantaged pupils and those from better off households, is much larger for White British pupils driven by underperformance by disadvantaged White British pupils rather than exceptionally high performance by their more advantaged peers.

Children from Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds are more likely to live in poverty, but those on FSM make higher than average progress between the ages of 11 and 16. In terms of GCSE attainment it is notable that Chinese, Indian, Bangladeshi and Black African FSM eligible pupils outperform Black

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Caribbean pupils **not** eligible for FSM and are closing the gap with White British pupils also **not** eligible for FSMs.

* For the full analysis see Mark Upton, LGIU Associate, December 2020, *Ethnic Disparities in Education,* https://lgiu.org/briefing/ethnic-disparities-in-education/

The Hackney Context (see also appendices):

In 2019, at KS2 66% of Hackney pupils reached or exceeded the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. This was one percentage point above the national level with 64% of Hackney Primary Schools reaching this benchmark.

The number of pupils achieving at least the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics in 2019 shows a five percentage point decrease from the previous (2018) year and also represents a three-year declining trend.

In 2019, Reading outcomes for disadvantaged pupils (those eligible for free school meals) also decreased by 5%, but due to the decline in both groups, the gap between the number of disadvantaged and all pupils achieving the expected standard remained the same.

Girls typically outperform boys across all three subjects by around 6-9%. The lowest performing group was pupils from Turkish, Kurdish Cypriot backgrounds. Caribbean pupils in Hackney outperform the equivalent cohort nationally (by two percentage points) but perform eight percentage points below the Hackney level; this gap is up from six percentage points in 2018. The percentage of African pupils achieving the expected level in reading, writing and maths fell by five percentage points in 2019 (from the 2018 level). Caribbean boys and African boys both performed at a lower level than Caribbean girls and African girls.

GCSE (KS4) results in 2019 showed that students in Hackney secondary schools make better progress than their peers nationally; the Progress 8 score is 0.29 compared with 0.01. Against the national average, across three years, Hackney has continued to be further ahead.

Outcomes for girls and boys are consistently above national averages. However, the performance gaps between them have widened, particularly at strong pass with girls outperforming boys. Standards and progress scores for Caribbean pupils are below local but consistently above national averages. The Attainment 8 measures for boys and girls improved on 2018. Across three years this has risen whilst nationally it has fallen. For girls, there is a small fall. Progress 8 scores across three years show a decline. The Attainment 8 score for African pupils of 46.8 is down from the 2018 and below local and, now, national figures. Across three years figures for boys and girls have fallen. Progress 8 scores have successively fallen during this period. Disadvantaged pupils (those eligible for FSM) outperform their national peers on both the Attainment 8 and Progress 8 measures. On these indicators, the performance gaps across the past three years are smaller than those seen nationally.

Hackney Education Actions and Contributing Factors to Achievement Gaps

The work of Hackney Education is underpinned by the Good to Great Policy. This outlines the graduated support and intervention provided for schools as well as the principles underlying the support given. All Hackney Education services now contribute to a common risk assessment that includes measures of pupil performance to better anticipate schools who may be at risk of falling standards.

4

Each Hackney school has a linked school improvement partner (SIP). School improvement partners are all experienced Head Teachers who have worked in schools that serve disadvantaged communities. As well as being a key contact between Hackney Education and the School, school improvement partners undertake a termly reporting visit to all maintained schools and biannual visits to academies and free schools. These visits are structured to explore borough wide priorities and support school leaders with their school self-evaluation and action planning. This includes an examination of the relative performance of different groups of pupils, the quality of the curriculum and curriculum delivery and the capacity of school leaders to deliver continued improvement. Underperformance is tracked and challenged and best practice shared. Reports from visits are shared with Headteachers and Governing bodies.

In September 2019 the format for school improvement partner visits was revised to allow a look in even greater depth at underperforming areas. Discussions over the relative performance and exclusion rates for pupils included an exploration of the achievement of looked after pupils, disadvantaged pupils, TKC and BRCB pupils. In September 2019, an increased number of schools were identified for targeted support which included support from consultants, visits to review progress and termly meetings to evaluate the impact of actions they were taking. Additional funding and support has been offered to these schools in 2020-21 to support specific school improvement priorities.

Many Hackney pupils have language and communication deficits on starting school and disadvantage can negatively impact on a broader cultural understanding of the world, and in turn comprehension skills. Schools which consider a well-planned, wide curriculum offer can minimise this disadvantage. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to live in households where reading is prevalent. Pupils who did not meet the expected standard in reading at KS2 in 2019 typically struggled to read at sufficient speed to successfully complete the paper. Schools with robust home and school reading programmes where pupils are encouraged to read regularly and often, perform better.

It has been recognised that school closures or pupil self-isolation due to the pandemic has exacerbated disadvantage and 10-15% of pupils do not have access to reliable digital resources. Alongside the Government and local schemes, schools have provided devices and internet access to pupils who are not accessing online learning. However, whilst this will support pupils to access learning it will not mitigate against the other aspects of home learning that are impacted by cramped households and limited parental support. Sustained support will be needed to ensure that disadvantaged pupils can catch up on their return to school based education.

Teacher expertise in the teaching of reading can be variable, and schools who have a structured approach supported by a robust development and monitoring systems typically perform better. It is of note that Hackney primary schools using the Hackney reading model Destination Reader typically performed better than other Hackney schools. This model explicitly teaches pupils reading skills such as inference, deduction and clarification of meaning through the use of taught language structure (e.g. 'I think that….because…'). This supports pupils who have less developed language and communication skills. A reading and mathematics audit tool has been launched by the Hackney Teaching and Learning team to support Primary school leaders in their self-evaluation of the quality of reading in the school.

It is suggested that unconscious bias can impact on both expectations of pupils' attainment and on teacher assessment data. A programme of cultural diversity training has been rolled out across Hackney schools and guidance for eliminating bias in assessment distributed. Schools which demonstrate the widest performance gaps have been prioritised for this offer. It has been recognised that set texts and curriculum themes can often represent a cultural bias. Schools have been encouraged to consider reading lists, library books and set texts to ensure sufficient representation. The Hackney Schools Group Board has launched

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working parties to consider how schools have adapted curriculum to minimise cultural bias and ensure that it is representative.

De-delegated funding has been used to develop and extend targeted school improvement projects to improve outcomes in reading for pupils from Turkish, Kurdish, Turkish Cypriot and Black Caribbean groups. This included the supported delivery of taught programmes, tuition and mentoring programmes, reading/book clubs for older pupils along with parent reading workshops to encourage home reading.

Schools that successfully reduce the gap for disadvantaged learners and minority groups typically demonstrate effectiveness in the following areas:

- A culture of high aspiration, driven by ambitious school leaders
- High quality coaching and training for classroom staff
- Diagnostic use of assessment and related actions to ensure those falling behind are swiftly identified and interventions put in place.
- A well organised and understood curriculum model that clearly outlines anticipated learning outcomes for each year group
- Strong engagement with parents and carers, and robust home learning programmes
- Additional enrichment opportunities including booster and homework support targeted at those most in need
- A language rich curriculum with a pervading focus on oracy and technical vocabulary

Hackney Post 16 Education

Hackney has twelve school sixth forms with a main course offer of A Levels. Ten schools also offer a vocational Level 3 curriculum. The cohort at the Sixth Form college has students following applied courses from Entry level to Level 2, alongside the A Level and vocational level 3 courses. It is our main provider of Level 2 programmes and below.

A-Level outcomes between 2018 and 2019 show very slight change. The average point score on A-Level entry (APSE) was 30.43, up from 30.11. The national average was 32.6, up from 31.8; the A Level best 3 score was 32.03. In 2019, the proportion of students gaining A*-D and A*-E grades in Hackney were respectively 91.7% and 98.6%, above the respective national averages of 90.8% and 97.5%. The Applied General APSE was 30.89, down slightly from 31.31 in 2018, but still Hackney was in the top quartile nationally on this measure.

In 2020 A-Levels were subject to school assessed grades rather than national examinations. Hackney saw a strong increase in high grades, particularly for A*-A, where it was almost 10 percentage points higher than in 2019. Rises in figures were seen across the country. Outcomes for Applied General were ranked third of all boroughs. Hackney remains mid-table amongst all London boroughs for APSE per A-Level entry.

The latest destination data is for the year 2018-19. This reflects the success of disadvantaged pupils in Hackney. There were 45% of disadvantaged pupils in the 2018/19 KS4 cohort in Hackney. Figures show 60% of Hackney Leavers aged 18 or 19 who went on to university or FE were disadvantaged.

Nationally 81% of young people had a sustained (for six months) destination into education, apprenticeships or employment. Of these 35% had a destination of Higher Education (HE). In Hackney, 62% of disadvantaged students entered HE, while for non-disadvantaged the percentage was 52%. Nationally, a higher percentage of non-disadvantaged students, 59%, enter Russell Group universities and achieve degree success.

6

Schools are finding that there is a very competitive environment in attracting their own and external students to their sixth form. Many are addressing the tension between raising entry requirements to improve achievement and to lower entry requirements to attract more students through offering Applied General courses.

Work to improve Sixth Form Achievement and Destinations

This year the focus has been on student wellbeing and remote learning as well as a continuing emphasis on improving the quality of teaching and learning. All schools are encouraged to buy into a software package (ALPS) which analyses outcomes in terms of the value added against their GCSE scores on entry. This gives a very useful tool to subject leaders and teachers for measuring their student progress, including that of different groups, throughout the course and improving the quality of their provision.

Ten of the schools and the college buy the support from our post 16 team, and two just attend meetings. We continue to attract some schools from Tower Hamlets and Islington.

Our network subject leaders are chosen because of being strong teachers in their subject. They play a key role in driving improvement through schools and the college, broadening the range of courses and improving access to higher education. All subject network meetings are currently held online.

As well as subject networks we hold regular meetings and symposia for Heads of Sixth, sixth form pastoral manager, and data managers. These focus on the overall leadership of the sixth form, assuring the quality of teaching and learning and developing the educational offer.

There is always a focus in the network meetings on how to improve performance, both high grades and pass rates. This has led to strategies for:

- Ensuring that the curriculum is relevant and accessible, taking on the issues of Black Lives Matter to all young people in Hackney
- Improving the teaching of content and student recall
- How to apply the knowledge learnt in answering the question
- The explicit teaching of student analysis, evaluation and problem-solving skills and fostering creativity
- Teacher and student understanding of exam criteria – this includes the moderation of questions taking place at both network meetings and separately by borough lead teachers.
- Improving the delivery of Applied Generals particularly in adapting the teaching to deliver the examined units alongside the coursework units.
- Improving the teaching and learning of GCSE Maths retake courses

All networks have focused on:
- Making sure that all the students are supported to catch up on content and skills missed in the first and now second lockdowns
- Addressing bias
- Techniques for improving the quality of blended and remote learning, ensuring that there are some opportunities for interactive learning and teachers give feedback to students

The Careers Collaborative works to improve advice and guidance to young people and show the relevance of the curriculum to a huge range of future careers and feeds particularly into sixth form pastoral managers' meetings. Periods of lockdown have revealed that to a certain extent the relentless focus on strategies for ensuring that remote learning is effective have been successful. Teachers and students all report that it is working much better than in the first lockdown and attendance at these lessons for year 12 and 13 is much improved. However, it remains a concern that some disadvantaged students are falling further behind because of lack of access to the internet and laptops and lack of a space to work in small households.

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Our A-Level directory of good practice has again proved very popular this year but there is less interaction through symposiums of good practice and visits to successful schools – an impact of Covid. Looking forward, we are aiming to identify centres with good practice in STEM subjects, including Computing.

Overall, in summary, strong progress has been made in developing the local offer and creating a culture where schools and colleges work together to improve the quality of education at Post-16.

Summary Conclusion

Overall Hackney pupils including those from disadvantaged backgrounds and minority ethnic groups typically perform better than their peers nationally at all levels, however there remains persistent performance gaps between disadvantaged pupils, Black Caribbean Boys and Turkish Kurdish pupils and their peers.

Many Hackney schools can point to their successes in eliminating or minimising performance barriers, however more needs to be done. Strategies that are being implemented by Hackney Education include a robust application of the Good to Great policy to challenge and support the minority of schools which are not yet providing a good education for pupils, review of the impact of additional funding for underperforming groups and borough wide initiatives to ensure engagement with local communities and the provision of a representative curriculum.

Despite small numbers of pupils accessing school provision and a remote learning offer for all pupils, it is anticipated that there will be a negative impact from the successive school closures during the past year on pupil attainment overall, and in particular disadvantaged pupils with the potential for gaps to further widen as a result. This will be a continuing focus in the coming year. Schools will need robust systems to track and support these pupils as they re-enter full time school based education to ensure that learning gaps are rapidly addressed as well as to ensure that the current remote learning offer is effective and accessible to all pupils.

Appendices: School Data

4.1 Focus on attainment of Young Black pupils 2019

Caribbean pupils in Hackney outperform the equivalent cohort nationally (by three percentage points) but perform five percentage points below the Hackney level (by five percentage points); this gap is down from ten percentage points in 2018. The percentage of African pupils achieving a good level of development fell by three percentage points in 2019 (from the 2018 level). Caribbean boys and African boys both performed at a lower level than Caribbean girls and African girls.

EYFSP GLD (Hackney figures are 'schools only')	2017		2018		2019	
	Hackney	England	Hackney	England	Hackney	England
All pupils	76%	71%	77%	72%	77%	72%
Caribbean (All)	76%	68%	67%	69%	72%	69%
Caribbean boys	66%	59%	58%	61%	65%	62%
Caribbean girls	85%	77%	76%	76%	80%	76%
African (All)	74%	70%	78%	71%	75%	70%
African boys	67%	63%	70%	63%	67%	62%
African girls	82%	78%	86%	79%	83%	78%
Mixed: White and Caribbean (All)	73%	68%	74%	70%	73%	70%
Mixed: White and African (All)	73%	72%	87%	73%	67%	72%

Caribbean pupils in Hackney outperform the equivalent cohort nationally (by two percentage points) but perform eight percentage points below the Hackney level; this gap is up from six percentage points in 2018. The percentage of African pupils achieving the expected level in reading, writing and maths fell by five percentage points in 2019 (from the 2018 level). Caribbean boys and African boys both performed at a lower level than Caribbean girls and African girls.

KS2 RWM (Exp+)	2017		2018		2019	
	Hackney	England	Hackney	England	Hackney	England
All pupils	72%	61%	71%	64%	66%	65%
Caribbean (All)	64%	54%	65%	55%	58%	56%
Caribbean boys	59%	48%	56%	49%	54%	49%
Caribbean girls	69%	59%	75%	61%	61%	64%
African (All)	68%	62%	68%	66%	63%	67%
African boys	66%	58%	66%	62%	58%	61%
African girls	70%	65%	70%	70%	68%	73%
Mixed: White and Caribbean (All)	68%	55%	59%	57%	69%	59%
Mixed: White and African (All)	68%	62%	83%	65%	77%	67%

Caribbean pupils in Hackney outperform the equivalent cohort nationally (by 2.1 points) but perform 7.7 points below the Hackney level on the Attainment 8 measure; this gap is down from 8.8 points in 2018. African pupils have an Attainment 8 score of 46.8, down from the 2018 level and below the overall Hackney

figure and the equivalent national cohort. Caribbean boys and African boys both performed at a lower level than Caribbean girls and African girls.

KS4 A8	2017		2018		2019	
	Hackney	England	Hackney	England	Hackney	England
All pupils	49.4	46.4	49.0	46.6	49.2	46.8
Caribbean (All)	43.0	40.5	40.2	39.6	41.5	39.4
Caribbean boys	38.7	36.9	36.4	35.5	39.9	35.7
Caribbean girls	46.8	44.0	43.0	43.4	43.4	43.2
African (All)	49.9	46.9	48.3	47.5	46.8	47.3
African boys	46.7	43.7	43.8	44.0	42.3	43.6
African girls	52.5	50.1	51.5	51.0	50.5	51.0
Mixed: White and Caribbean (All)	44.6	41.3	39.1	41.3	49.9	41.0
Mixed: White and African (All)	52.6	47.0	52.2	46.5	49.6	47.4

Caribbean pupils had a negative Progress 8 score of -0.27 in Hackney, with Caribbean boys having a Progress 8 figure of -0.55. African pupils have a positive 0.25 figure.

KS4 P8	2017		2018		2019	
	Hackney	England	Hackney	England	Hackney	England
All pupils	0.38	-0.03	0.31	-0.02	0.29	-0.03
Caribbean (All)	0.04	-0.23	-0.27	-0.30	-0.27	-0.34
Caribbean boys	-0.17	-0.47	-0.56	-0.59	-0.55	-0.65
Caribbean girls	0.23	-0.01	-0.06	-0.03	0.05	-0.04
African (All)	0.65	0.37	0.33	0.31	0.25	0.03
African boys	0.54	0.15	-0.04	0.04	-0.09	0.61
African girls	0.73	0.58	0.57	0.58	0.53	0.33
Mixed: White and Caribbean (All)	-0.05	-0.33	-0.35	-0.37	0.50	-0.38
Mixed: White and African (All)	0.77	0.08	0.30	0.01	0.23	0.04

1.2 Focus on attainment of SEN pupils

13% of pupils with an EHCP in Hackney achieve a good level of development, above the national level (5%). 35% of SEN Support pupils in Hackney achieve a good level of development, above the national level of 29%.

EYFSP GLD	2017		2018		2019	
	Hackney	England	Hackney	England	Hackney	England
EHCP	5%	4%	7%	5%	13%	5%
SEN Support	37%	27%	43%	28%	35%	29%

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13% of pupils with an EHCP in Hackney achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths, above the national level (9%). 33% of SEN Support pupils in Hackney achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths, above the national level of 25%.

KS2 RWM Exp+	2017		2018		2019	
	Hackney	England	Hackney	England	Hackney	England
EHCP	15%	8%	9%	9%	13%	9%
SEN Support	37%	20%	39%	24%	33%	25%

EHCP pupils and SEN Support pupils in Hackney both outperformed their equivalent national cohort in 2019 on the Attainment 8 measure, and both cohorts have a higher Progress 8 figure than the equivalent national cohort.

KS4 A8	2017		2018		2019	
	Hackney	England	Hackney	England	Hackney	England
EHCP	17.5	13.9	15.3	13.5	17.2	13.7
SEN Support	39.5	31.9	36.9	32.2	35.5	32.6

KS4 P8	2017		2018		2019	
	Hackney	England	Hackney	England	Hackney	England
EHCP	-0.84	-1.04	-0.93	-1.09	-0.91	-1.17
SEN Support	0.03	-0.43	-0.25	-0.43	-0.41	-0.43

1.3 Focus on attainment of disadvantaged pupils

69% of pupils eligible for FSM in Hackney achieve a good level of development, above the national level (57%). The FSM/non-FSM gap in Hackney (for percentage of pupils achieving a good level of development) is one percentage point, compared to 17 percentage points nationally.

EYFSP GLD	2017		2018		2019	
	Hackney	England	Hackney	England	Hackney	England
Eligible for FSM	68%	56%	70%	57%	69%	57%
Not eligible for FSM	72%	73%	70%	74%	70%	74%

57% of pupils eligible for FSM in Hackney achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths, above the national level (48%). The FSM/non-FSM gap in Hackney (for percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths) is 13 percentage points, compared to 21 percentage points nationally.

KS2 RWM Exp+	2017		2018		2019	
	Hackney	England	Hackney	England	Hackney	England
Eligible for FSM	62%	43%	58%	46%	57%	48%
Not eligible for FSM	76%	64%	76%	68%	70%	69%

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Pupils eligible for FSM in Hackney outperform the equivalent cohort nationally on both the Attainment 8 and Progress 8 measures, however the gap between pupils eligible for FSM and not eligible for FSM in Hackney widened on both measures in 2019 (compared to 2018).

KS4 A8	2017		2018		2019	
	Hackney	England	Hackney	England	Hackney	England
Eligible for FSM	44.0	35.1	43.5	34.5	43.3	35.0
Not eligible for FSM	52.0	48.2	51.5	48.4	52.4	48.8

KS4 P8	2017		2018		2019	
	Hackney	England	Hackney	England	Hackney	England
Eligible for FSM	0.11	-0.48	0.13	-0.53	0.01	-0.53
Not eligible for FSM	0.52	0.04	0.40	0.05	0.44	0.06

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Post 16 Outcomes 2018-2020 (Source: DfE SFR)

Student numbers in Hackney by course type

	time_period	All state funded schools and FE sector colleges
Number of level 3 students	201920	1,229
	201819	1,238
	201718	1,304
Number of A level students	201920	1,046
	201819	1,117
	201718	1,225
Number of applied general students	201920	288
	201819	212
	201718	160
Number of tech level students	201920	21
	201819	7
	201718	0

Attainment KPIs by school type

		time_period	APS per A level entry	APS per 'Best 3' entries	APS per applied general entry	% achieving 3 A* to A
All state funded schools and FE sector colleges	Hackney	201920	37.320	38.390	36.710	18.30
		201819	30.430	32.030	30.890	8.80
		201718	30.110	32.480	31.310	8.30
	London	201920	38.910	39.010	31.120	21.20
		201819	32.560	32.660	28.670	11.10
		201718	31.950	32.780	28.490	11.30
All state-funded schools and colleges	England All state-funded	201920	38.420	37.820	31.210	19.50
		201819	32.640	32.170	28.350	10.20
		201718	31.840	32.140	28.230	10.30

16-19 Destionations 2018/2019 (Source: DfE SFR November 20)

Regional

England

				Disadvantaged			Disadvantaged
			Hackney	Inner London	Outer London		England
State-funded mainstream schools	Total Cohort	%	434	5,409	6,689		71,638
		No.	434	5,409	6,689		71,638
	HE	%	65	61	57		200
		No.	283	3,313	3,836		35,260
	FE	%	3	4	3		17
		No.	11	211	223		3,212
State-funded mainstream schools & colleges	Total Cohort	%	759	12,328	14,095		126,944
		No.	759	12,328	14,095		126,944
	HE	%	46	44	38		25
		No.	348	5,366	5,419		31,981
	FE	%	3	11	11		13
		No.	24	1,403	1,543		15,970

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Raising Black Caribbean and BAME Achievement Strategy

2020/21

Why are we focusing on this?

Children and young people in Haringey attend some of the best schools in the country, with strong outcomes from early years to post-16, including:

- ✓ *95% of all early years judged Good or Outstanding*
- ✓ *97% of schools Good or Outstanding*
- ✓ *Early years outcomes near London Top Quartile*
- ✓ *Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 results above national at the Expected Standard and above London average for Greater Depth*
- ✓ *Strong Progress 8 at GCSE and Attainment 8 in line with the national average*

However, not all groups share equally in this success

Haringey has the <u>biggest</u> gap in the country between White British and BAME, especially Black Caribbean, attainment for children and young people

haringeyeducationpartnership.co.uk

"Every child and young person in Haringey matters.

Every child and young person deserves the best life chances, especially when they face additional barriers due to ethnicity and disadvantage.

It is everyone's responsibility to make this a reality and create the equality of opportunity we want to see"

Our mission in Haringey is to:

- Achieve outcomes for *all* children and young people as good as, or better than, anywhere else in the country

- Close the gaps in attainment for our different ethnic groups and disadvantaged pupils

- Tackle related inequalities and negative outcomes such as exclusions, which impact on life chances

Why it matters to Haringey

Haringey should lead by example for other local authorities and schools:

- Underachievement of any group of our pupils matters to us
- Every child, regardless of their race, class, religion or culture deserves – and can achieve – an excellent education
- There are still additional barriers to achievement based on ethnicity, which must be tackled, including institutional racism
- Black Caribbean children have been in our schools for at least 70 years yet consistently achieve less than their peers and are excluded more frequently
- Haringey has the largest Turkish speaking community of any local authority in the country
- The underachievement of these groups of young people represents a waste of talent and an increased cost to the borough

We cannot say we have succeeded until success is shared by all

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Early Years and Primary attainment gaps

2019 Early Years and Primary data shows a stark set of differences between different groups from the outset

	All	Turkish	Black Caribbean	Black African	EAL	White British	Disadvantaged
EYFS	75	58	61	74	72	85	68
Phonics	84	76	82	87	84	91	77
KS1 Reading	76	59	71	82	72	88	72
KS1 Writing	72	54	70	78	69	81	70
KS1 Maths	77	64	68	79	75	87	72
KS2 Reading	73	51	60	72	67	88	65
KS2 Writing	82	72	73	82	79	91	75
KS2 Maths	80	74	69	79	78	90	71

Haringey KS2 2019 RWM GDS vs EXS+
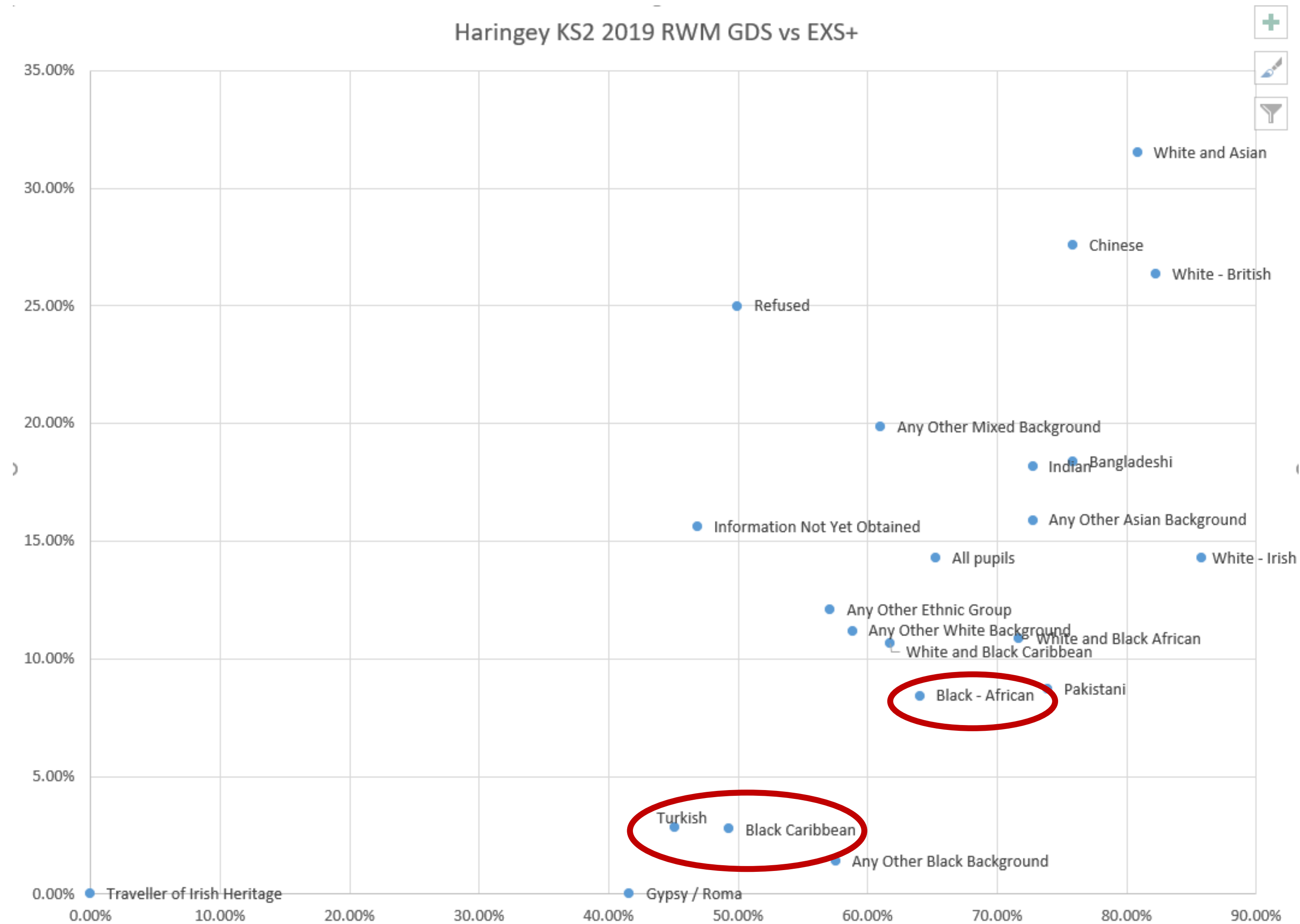
The gap at Key Stage 4

Attainment 8 Trend 2017-19
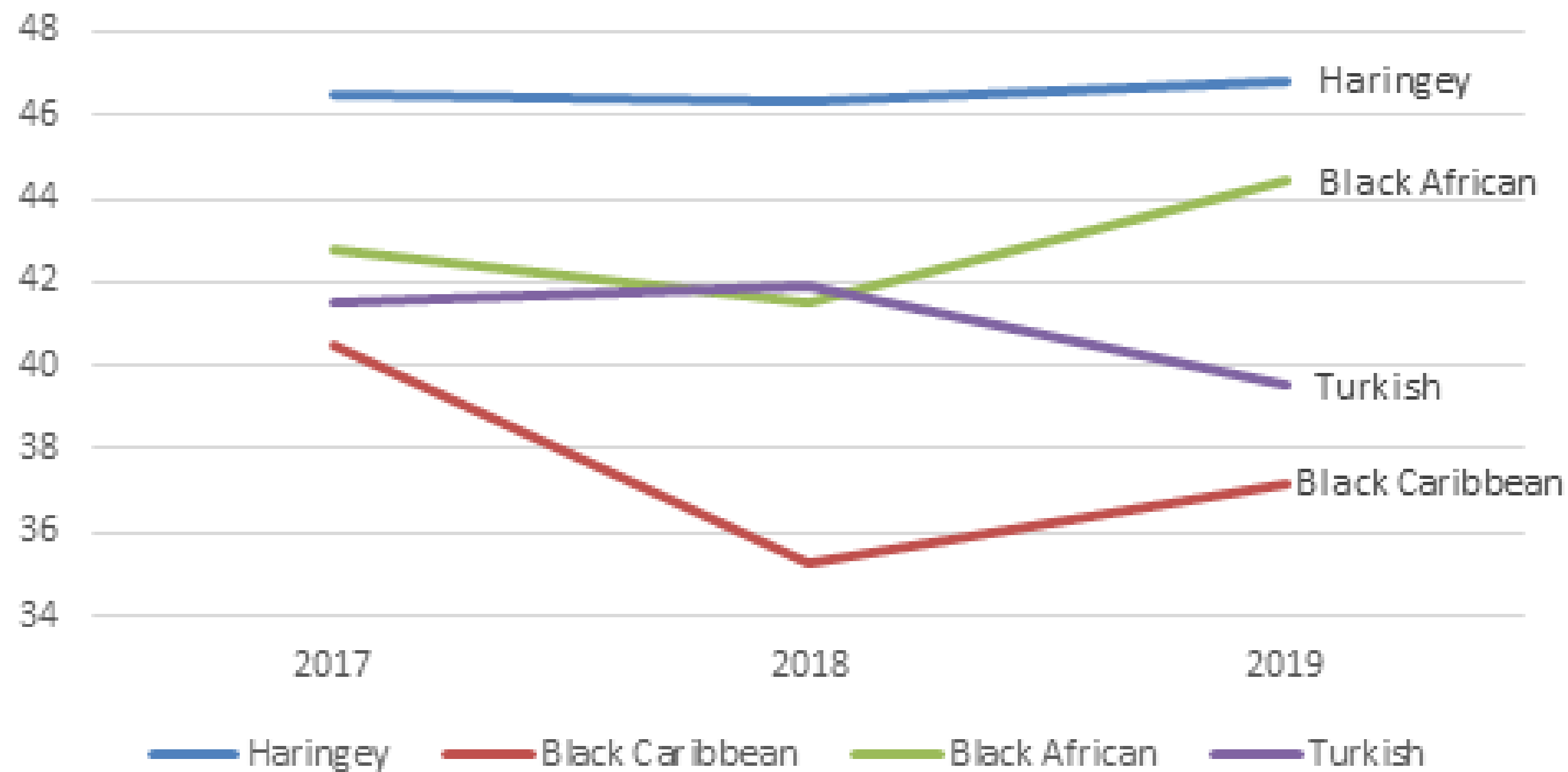
Progress 8 by ethnic group 2019

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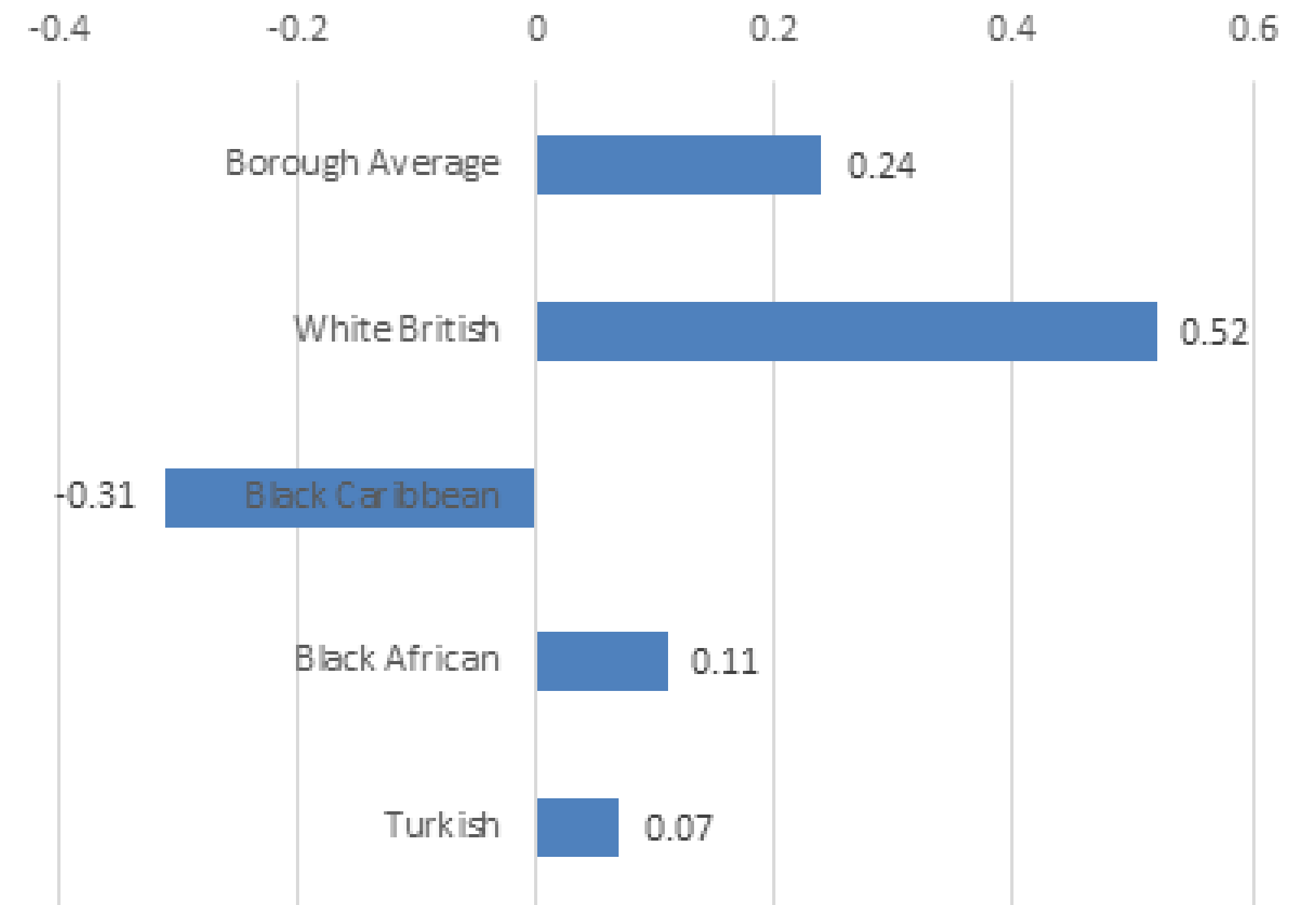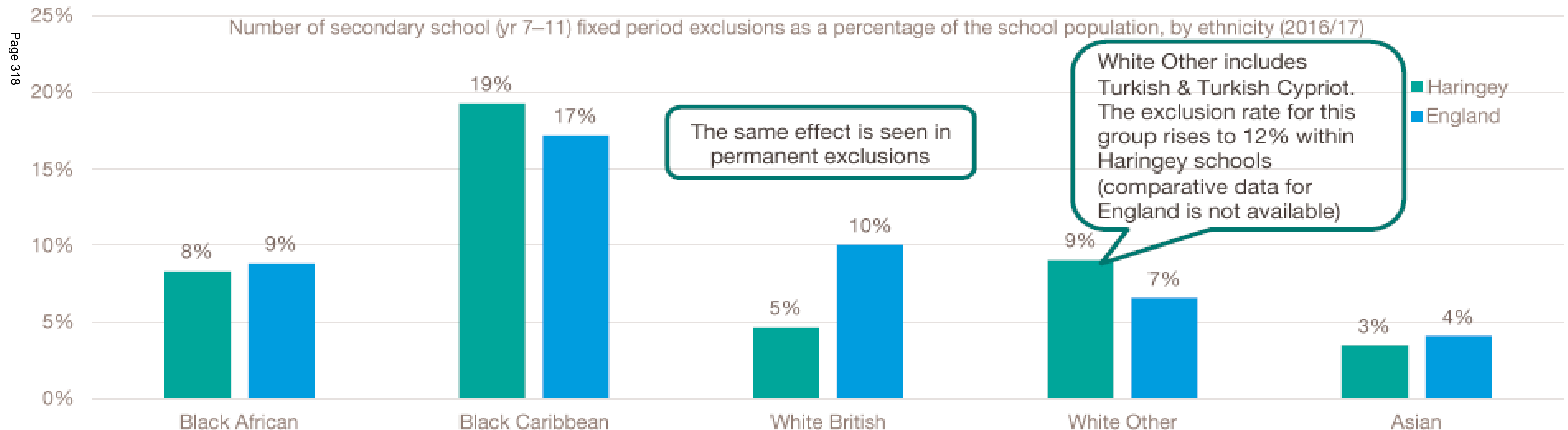
The impact of unequal outcomes

- Attainment at GCSE and post-16 impact directly on opportunities to pursue higher levels of education, with a knock-on effect for future careers and earnings – reinforcing existing inequalities
- We also know disengagement at school is linked to a range of other negative outcomes including: exclusions and alternative provision, mental health issues and unsafe behaviours such as perpetrating and being a victim of violence

Number of secondary school (yr 7–11) fixed period exclusions as a percentage of the school population, by ethnicity (2016/17)

The same effect is seen in permanent exclusions

White Other includes Turkish & Turkish Cypriot. The exclusion rate for this group rises to 12% within Haringey schools (comparative data for England is not available)

- Haringey
- England

Ethnicity	Haringey	England
Black African	8%	9%
Black Caribbean	19%	17%
White British	5%	10%
White Other	9%	7%
Asian	3%	4%

There are clear links between disadvantage, attainment and exclusions. Haringey's White British children and young people are much less likely to suffer from disadvantage than those from BAME backgrounds

English as an additional language will also play a key role for some communities

However, the varied patterns of attainment for different ethnic groups shows that this is not the whole story. We also need to look carefully at how the education system affects outcomes

In particular, we need to acknowledge and address issues which affect children and young people's sense of self-worth, aspiration and life chances, such as:
• Institutional racism and unconscious bias
• Low representation of BAME groups among leaders, teachers and governors
• Lack of understanding of cultural diversity – cultural competency
• The impact of being in a minority in a White majority school
• Limited or negative representations of BAME groups in school and the curriculum

Ethnic Group	Total no pupils	% Pupil Premium
Black African	5,671	51%
Black Caribbean	2,833	51%
White Other	10,675	26%
White British	7,587	13%
Haringey Total	38,664	31%

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National research backs up how important these issues are for BAME communities

A study by Bristol University found that – when compared with blind marking – teacher assessments in SATs were 5.6 points lower for Black Caribbean and 6.4 points lower for Black African students, while Indian and Chinese students were over-assessed and White British were over/under assessed based on class

Dr. Feyisa Demie's research *Experience of Black Caribbean Pupils in School Exclusion in England* highlights key factors for persistent underachievement:
- Headteachers' poor leadership on equality issues
- Institutional racism and stereotyping
- Teachers' low expectations, curriculum barriers and relevance
- Lack of diversity in the workforce
- Lack of targeted support

In its report *Forgotten Children* The House of Commons Education Committee attributed the ever-increasing rate of exclusions to:
- Behaviour policies with a zero tolerance approach
- Progress 8 measures at KS4 leading to a narrowing of curriculum
- The process of exclusions is extremely alienating for parents overall
- Alternative provision with no reintegration and poor record of pupil attainment
- Insufficient use of in-school alternative provision

"Every child and young person in Haringey matters. Every child and young person deserves the best life chances, especially when they face additional barriers due to ethnicity and disadvantage. It is everyone's responsibility to make this a reality and create the equality of opportunity we want to see."

Raising Black Caribbean and BAME Achievement

Our school is committing to:
1. A champion for Black Caribbean and BAME on the Senior Leadership Team
2. A lead governor for Black Caribbean and BAME achievement
3. Completing a self evaluation and sharing the results with governors
4. Leaders to set stretching attainment targets, lead 'difficult conversations' and commit to a whole school focus
5. Identifying Black Caribbean and BAME achievement in our School Improvement Plan, with regular progress updates and an annual report to governors
6. Releasing staff to attend and disseminate specific CPD
7. Supporting transition arrangements for vulnerable BAME young people
8. Engaging BAME parents' views at school and providing positive parenting support

Headteacher   Chair of Governors

We cannot say we have succeeded until success is shared by all

Closing the gaps is an urgent task and requires a level of focus far beyond our current ways of working. We are expecting *all* Haringey schools to publicly sign up to the pledge to address Black Caribbean and BAME underachievement. HEP and Haringey Council will support, challenge and hold to account, including reporting annually to Cabinet on progress

1. Champion for Black Caribbean and BAME on Senior Leadership Team
2. Lead governor for Black Caribbean and BAME achievement
3. School to complete the self evaluation tool and share the results with governors
4. SLT to set stretching attainment targets, lead 'difficult conversations' and commit to a whole school focus
5. Identify Black Caribbean and BAME achievement in SIP, with regular progress updates and an annual report to governors
6. Staff released to attend and disseminate specific CPD
7. Supporting transition arrangements for vulnerable BAME young people
8. Engage BAME parents' views at school and provide positive parenting support

Our target in Haringey can be nothing less than closing the gaps between different ethnic groups such that all succeed as well as the highest performing groups

We recognise this is not a 'quick fix' and so we need to set a trajectory to know we are on track:

- Reduce the attainment for all BAME groups against White British <u>every year</u> across Early Years (Good Level of Development), Key Stages 1 and 2 (Expected Standard and Greater Depth) and at GCSE (Attainment 8)

- Focus on our key cohorts - <u>within 3 years</u>:

  - Black Caribbean – Key Stage 2 RWM combined to reach Haringey average and Attainment 8 to reach the national average, with reduced exclusions

  - Turkish – halve the gap to the Haringey average at Key Stages 1 and 2; Attainment 8 to reach the Haringey average; exclusions at or below the Haringey average

  - Black African – to close the gaps with the Haringey average at Key Stage 2 and in Attainment 8, with exclusions at or below the Haringey average

- Close the gap between White British and BAME groups <u>within 7 years</u>

- As data for 2019/20 is not been available due to COVID-19, we will continue to work from the 2018/19 baseline

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We will use the following framework to harness our work in Haringey:

Strategic leadership

Leadership across Haringey will involve:

- Led by the BAME steering group on behalf of Haringey
- Haringey Pledge to provide public commitment and basis for holding to account
- Public accountability through an annual report to Cabinet
- Annual conference to ensure ongoing focus across Haringey
- HEP support and challenge to schools through Improvement Partners
- HEP to develop high quality CPD, resources and good practice
- HEP to lead on borough wide systems e.g. transition
- HEP to build the evidence base on what works
- Haringey Council to work with services (e.g. Early Help, safeguarding, SEND) and partners (e.g. police, CAMHS) through Young People at Risk strategy
- Haringey Council to lead a celebration event on achievement
- Partner with other leading boroughs (Hackney, Lambeth, Brent and others) to drive the agenda across London

This work is not a project or an 'add on', this is what we do

We want schools to have access to a full evidence base and the latest data in Haringey and beyond to understand what works and to track impact. To have real insight, this also needs to be coupled with research in Haringey, case studies of good practice and an openness to looking at practice in each others' schools

To achieve this we will build on the excellent data analysis in Haringey, HEP's relationships with academic researchers and other London boroughs leading on this agenda

HEP will:

1. Work with Dr Feyisa Demie to make the research base accessible
2. Work with research partners and other boroughs to share evidence
3. Constantly analyse Haringey level data and compare with statistical neighbours
4. Provide schools with more detailed data analysis and look into examples where schools are bucking the trend
5. Complete case studies to highlight good practice in Haringey and beyond
6. Foster a culture of 'learning together' so staff can experience what others are doing first hand
7. Work with partners in other London boroughs to learn from effective practice

https://www.haringeyeducationpartnership.co.uk/bame-achievement

- **Knowing your school:** school self-audit tool; data pack; half-day BAME review for schools; template action plan

- **Facing the problem:** guide to 'having the difficult conversations'; reading list for staff to understand the issues; national research; annual conference

- **Training:** BAME specific CPD for champions and teaching staff; governor training; conferences on specific issues

- **Curriculum and teaching resources:** BAME-representative reading list; schools sharing BAME-positive curriculum resources; Turkish pupils toolkit

- **Transition and vulnerable pupils:** transition days for primary / secondary; Vulnerable to Underachievement checklist; early transfer form

- **Making connections:** links to the Council and other services; parent and community engagement

+ Sign the pledge

+ Strategy

+ Resources

+ Haringey data 2019/20

+ Research and evidence

+ Wider reading

Holding each other to account

Closing the gaps will require all of us in the education system to hold each other to account, including on challenging our unconscious biases

This must remain high on everyone's agenda through:

- Governing bodies, engagement with parents and students, School Improvement Plans and senior leadership in schools
- Networked Learning Communities
- Heads meetings for primary, secondary and special heads
- HEP working with member schools
- Reporting on progress across Haringey
- Council and political scrutiny
- Ongoing work of the BAME steering group

Working together we can achieve our vision and close the achievement gap for our Black Caribbean and BAME children and young people – and set an example for other boroughs to follow

Communicating the agenda

Raising Black-Caribbean and BAME achievement is a top priority for all Haringey schools. The agenda will be in the spotlight for HEP and the Council. Schools will also take a lead with BAME achievement to be a key focus for our Networked Learning Communities and cross-borough discussions
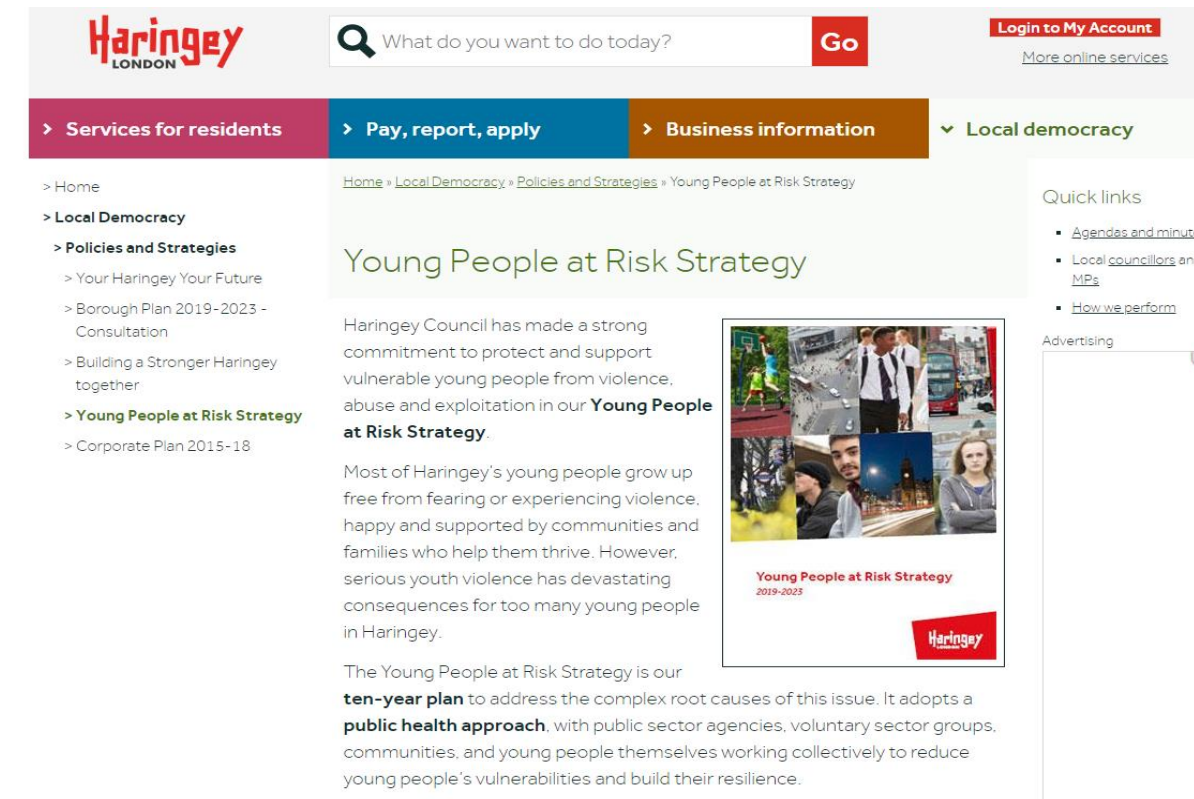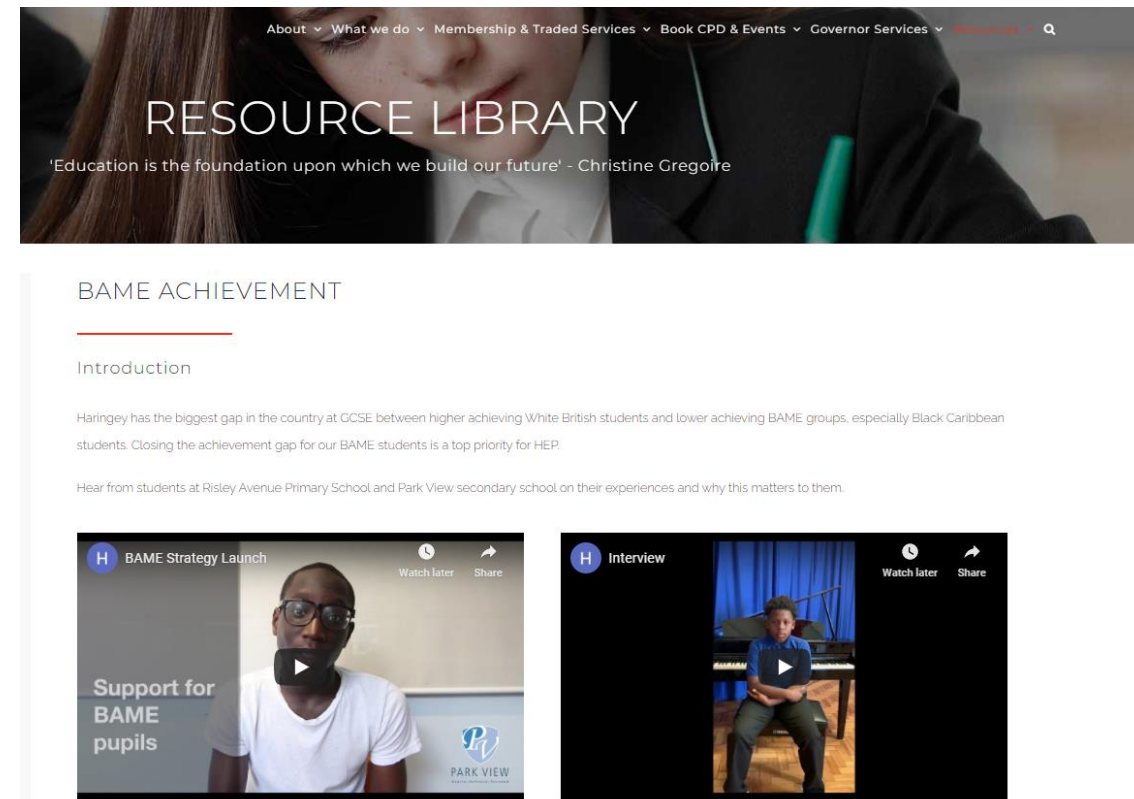
We cannot say we have succeeded until success is shared by all

On behalf of the BAME Steering Group, we look forward to working together to make our vision for all our children and young people a reality

For further information, please contact: james.page@haringeyeducationpartnership.co.uk

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Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme June 2020 – May 2021

Meeting 1	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
Meeting Date: Monday 15th June Deadline for reports: 1st June 2020 Publication Date: 5th June 2020	School Admissions – September 2020	● Marian Lavelle, Head of Admissions and Pupil Benefits, HLT ● Annie Gammon, Director of Education and Head of HLT	
	Impact of Covid 19 and recovery plan. (i) Service update from Children and Families Service and Hackney Education Service (ii) The impact of Covid 19 on the emotional health and mental wellbeing of children and young people.	● Anne Canning, Group Director Children, Adults & Community Health ● Sarah Wright, Director of Children and Families Service ● Annie Gammon, Director of Education ● Amy Wilkinson, Integrated Commissioning Programme Director for CYP & Maternity Services	
	New CYP Work Programme for 2020/21	● Commission/ Scrutiny officer	● To consult local stakeholders ● Meet with service Directors ● Collate topic suggestions

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme June 2020 – May 2021

Meeting 2	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
Meeting Date: Monday 13th July Papers deadline: **1st July 2020** Agenda dispatch: **Friday 3rd July 2020**	Childcare Sufficiency	• Donna Thomas, Head of Early Years and Childcare • Tim Wooldridge, Early Years Strategy Manager • Annie Gammon, Director of Education	
	Impact of Covid 19 - education, attainment gap and educational inequalities.	• Dr Rebecaa Montacute, Sutton Trust • Chris Brown, Principal, Bridge Academy • Richard Brown, Executive Head, Urswick School • Jane Heffernan, Executive Head, Cardinal Pole School • Annie Gammon, Director of Education	
	Outcome of school exclusions – update emerging conclusions	• Martin Bradford, Scrutiny Officer / Commission	
	CYP Work Programme 2020/21	• Martin Bradford, Scrutiny Officer / Commission	• Details of all topic suggestions circulated to members and published in the agenda. • Arrange meetings with senior officers to scope out work items.

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme June 2020 – May 2021

Meeting 3	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
Meeting Date: Tuesday 8th September Agenda dispatch Friday 28th August 2020 Papers deadline: Tuesday 24th August 2020	Update: Impact of Covid 19 and recovery plan for Children & Families Service and Hackney Education Service	• Annie Gammon, Director of Education • Sarah Wright, Director of Children and Families	
	Addressing racial inequality and unconscious bias in children and young people's services.	• Sarah Wright, Director of Children and Families • Lisa Aldridge, Head of Safeguarding and Learning • Annie Gammon, Director of Education • Orlene Badu, System Leader-Young Black Men Project	
	School Examinations 2020 Update	• Annie Gammon, Director of Education • Anton Francic, Principal Secondary School Adviser	
	Agreement of CYP Work Programme 2020/21	• Martin Bradford, Scrutiny Officer • Commission	-Feedback from stakeholder consultation -Presentation of draft programme

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme June 2020 – May 2021

Joint meeting with HiH scrutiny commission – integrated commissioning

Meeting 3a	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
14th October 2020	Update on integrated Commissioning - Children, Young People and Maternity Work-stream	● Anne Canning, Group Director, Children, Adults and Community Health ● Amy Wilkinson, Work-stream Director	With Health in Hackney

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme June 2020 – May 2021

Meeting 4	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
Meeting Date: Monday 2nd November 2020 Agenda dispatch: **Friday 23rd October 2020** Papers deadline: **Tuesday 20th October 2020**	Children and Families Service Bi-Annual Report to Members Full year to April 2020 - To include financial monitoring for Children and Families Service. - To include short update on Recruitment & Retention of Foster carers (40m)	● Anne Canning, Group Director, CACH ● Sarah Wright, Director of Children & Family Services	
	Ofsted Inspection Outcomes - Action Plan (40m)	● Anne Canning, Group Director, CACH ● Sarah Wright, Director of Children & Family Services	
	Hackney Schools Group Board (25m)	● Eleanor Schooling, Independent Chair	
	Budget Monitoring Hackney Education Service (25m)	● Annie Gammon, Director of Education ● Tracey Caldwell, Director of Operations	Meeting with Annie Gammon / Director of finance to confirm scope.
	CYP Work Programme 2020/21	● Martin Bradford, Scrutiny Team	● To review and monitor progress.

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme June 2020 – May 2021

Meeting 5	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
Meeting Date: Monday 7th December 2020 Agenda dispatch: Friday 27th November 2020 Papers deadline: Tuesday 24th November 2020	Annual Question Time with Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Families, Early Years and Play (45m)	● Cllr Caroline Woodley, Cabinet Member for Early Years, SEND and Play	3 items to be selected 6 weeks ahead of the meeting (26th October 2020)
	Childcare Sufficiency (Update) (25 min)	● Donna Thomas, Head of Early Years, Hackney Education Service	To be taken as part of Cabinet Q & A with Cabinet Member for Families, Early Years and Play
	Young Futures Commission (45m)	● Polly Cziok, Director of Communications ● Pauline Adams, Head of Young Hackney ● Jernaine Jackman / Shekeila Scarlett YF Co-Chair ● Rohney Saggar-Malik, Project Head, YF Commission	-How will the outcomes of Young Futures be embedded across the Council and with partner agencies? -What governance structures are there to support young people's involvement through Young Futures, Hackney Youth Parliament and CYP Scrutiny.
	Child Friendly Borough Supplementary Planning Document (30m)	● Natalie Broughton, Head of Planning ● Gabrielle Abadi, Planning Officer ● Karol Jakubczyk, Senior Planning Officer ● Lizzie Bird, Planning & Implementation officer	
	CYP Work Programme 2020/21	- Scrutiny Officer	- To review and monitor progress.

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme June 2020 – May 2021

Meeting 6	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
Meeting Date: Tuesday 12th January 2021 Agenda dispatch: Monday 4th January 2021 Papers deadline: Wednesday 23rd December 2020	Children & Families Service - Budget Monitoring (25m)	• Annie Coyle, Director of Children's Social Care Services • Naeem Ahmed, Director of Finance CACH	
	Annual Report City and Hackney Safeguarding Partnership (45m)	• Jim Gamble, Chair of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership • Rory McCallum, Senior Professional Adviser	
	Unregistered Educational Settings -Update 2 (20m)	• Anne Canning, Group Director, Children, Adults and Community Health • Annie Gammon, Director of Education • Rory McCallum, Senior Professional Adviser, CHSCB	
	Annual Question Time with Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care. (45m)	• Cllr Anntoinette Bramble	Up tp 3 policy areas to be selected 6 weeks ahead of the meeting (1st December 2020)
	CYP Work Programme 2020/21	Scrutiny Officer	To review and monitor progress

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme June 2020 – May 2021

Meeting 7	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
Meeting Date: Monday 8th February 2021 Agenda dispatch: **Friday 29th January 2021** Papers deadline: **Tuesday 26th January 2021**	The Attainment Gap: local priorities and effective strategies to reduce the educational attainment gap, with particular reference to: Black Caribbean boys and other BAME groups. (120m)	*Local Policy* ● Annie Gammon, Director of Education ● Stephen Hall, Assistant Director for Improvement and Learning *National Policy* ● Professor Feyisa Demie, University of Durham ● Mary Reader, Senior Researcher Education Policy Institute *Comparative* ● James Page, Chief Executive, Haringey Education Partnership Local Practice ● Anna Feltham, Headteacher, Clapton Girls Academy ● Nicole Reid, Executive Head, New Wave Primary Federation ● Lisa Clarke, Headteacher Comet Children's Centre & Nursery	
	CYP Work Programme 2020/21	Scrutiny Officer	● To review and monitor progress.

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme June 2020 – May 2021

Meeting 8	Item title and scrutiny objective	Directorate – Division – Officer Responsibility	Preparatory work to support item
Meeting Date: Tuesday 11th May 2021 Papers deadline: Tuesday 27th April 2021 Agenda dispatch: Friday 30th April April 2021	Children and Young People's Mental Health in Hackney (30m)	● Amy Wilkinson, Managing Director CYP and Midwifery of Integrated Commissioning ● Greg Condon, Commissioning Manager City & Hackney CCG	To be scoped with Managing Director of CYP & M Integrated Commissioning to include: strategic oversight: needs, funding, priorities and performance Conduct focus groups with young people ahead of the meeting to inform discussion.
	Children and Families Service Bi-Annual Report to Members April 2020-September 2020 - to include financial monitoring data (40m)	● Anne Canning, Group Director, CACH ● Annie Coyle, Director of Children & Family Services	
	Special Educational Needs and Disability (i) Performance (ii) Recovery Plan (60m)	● Nicholas Wilson, Head of High Needs and School Places ● Annie Gammon, Director of Education	To be scoped with Head of High Needs/ Director of Education
	School Moves: Annual Review of children being excluded from school, subject to a managed move, or move to Elective Home Education /Alternative Provision. (25m)	● Annie Gammon, Director of Education	To be scoped with Director of Education
	CYP Work Programme 2020/21	Scrutiny Officer	To review and monitor progress

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme June 2020 – May 2021

Review 2020/21

Service Area	Officers	Date
Adolescents entering care: analysis of pathways into care to help identify early help / prevention.	● Sarah Wright, Director of Children and Families Service	To be scoped

Informal reconnaissance meetings with Director and Service leads and to report back to Commision.

Service Area	Officers	Date
Youth Offending	● Sarah Wright, Director of Children and Families Service ● Pauline Adams, Head of Young Hackney ● Brendan Finegan, Head of Youth Offending Team	
Young Hackney - Youth Services	● Sarah Wright, Director of Children and Families Service ● Pauline Adams, Head of Young Hackney	

Short brief required

Service Area	Officers	Date
Prevention of NEET - employment, education and training opportunities available for young people post Covid	● Annie Gammon, Director of Education ● Andrew Munk, Head of Employment & Skills	

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme June 2020 – May 2021

Impact of complex parental (family) mental health on children and young people.	● Amy Wilkinson, Managing Director CYP and Midwifery of Integrated Commissioning	To scope.

Planned Site visits		
Childcare Providers to support item on 7th December 2020	Virtual meeting held with Children Centre, Independent Childcare Provider and Maintained Nursery.	4th December 2020

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission Work Programme June 2020 – May 2021

One off Items agreed from 2020/2021		
Update on exams 2020 and provisions for 2021	Annie Gammon, Director of Education	
Update on childcare provision across Hackney	Donna Thomas, Head of Early Years	7th December 2020
Tacking racial inequalities	Annie Gammon, Director of Education Annie Coyle, Director of Children and Families	2021/22 work programme
Hackney Schools Group Board	Eleanor Schooling, Independent Chair	2021/22 work programme
Young Futures Commission - Delivery of 'asks' - Legacy	Rohney Saggar-Malik, Project Lead, Polly Cziok Director of Communications, Culture and Engagement Co-Chairs	2021/22 work programme
Contextual Safeguarding	Annie Coyle, Director of Children and Families	

Overview & Scrutiny

Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission
Minutes of 8th February 2021

<u>Attendees</u>
Sophie Conway (Councillor) (Chair)
Margaret Gordon (Councillor) (Vice Chair)
Ajay Chauhan (Councillor)
Clare Potter (Councillor)
Katie Hansen (Councillor)
James Peters (Councillor)
Sharon Patrick (Councillor)
Clare Joseph (Councillor)
Sade Etti (Councillor)
Richard Brown (Statutory Co-optee)
Jo Macleod (Co-opted member)
Ernell Watson
Shabnum Hassan

<u>In attendance:</u>
- Cllr Anntionette Bramble, Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Children's Social Care
- Cllr Caroline Woodley, Cabinet Member for Early Years, Families and Play
- Anne Canning, Group Director, Children and Education
- Annie Gammon, Head of Hackney Learning Trust and Director of Education
- Stephen Hall, Assistant Director of Learning, Achievement
- Orlene Badu, Systems Leader, Hackney Education
- Anton Francic, Senior Secondary Adviser, Hackney Education
- Mary Reader, Senior Researcher, Education Policy Institute
- Prof Feyisa Demie, School of Education, Durham University
- James Page, Chief Executive of Haringey Education Partnership
- Anna Feltham, Headteacher, Clapton Girls Academy (5min)
- Nicole Reid, Executive Headteacher, New Wave Primary Federation
- Lisa Clarke, Headteacher Comet Children's Centre & Nursery

Cllr Conway in the Chair

1. Apologies for absence

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from the following members of the Commission:
- Justine McDonald.

1.2 Apologies for lateness were received from the following members:
- Cllr Clare Potter.

2. Urgent Items / Order of Business

2.1 There were no urgent items and the agenda was as published.

3.   **Declarations of interest**

3.1   The following declarations were received by members of the Commission:
- Cllr Conway worked for Just for Kids Law;
- Cllr Chauhan was a member of NEU and a teacher at a school external to Hackney;
- Cllr Peters was a governor at a school in Hackney;
- Jo Macleod was a governor at a school in Hackney;
- Sahbnum Hassan was a governor at a school in Hackney;
- Cllr Bramble indicated that she was an adviser to the Education Policy Institute.

4.   **The Education Attainment Gap**

4.1   The Commission maintains oversight of the academic attainment of children across Hackney and receives regular updates on pupil achievement each year. Given ongoing disparities in educational achievement among different cohorts of young people, the Commission agreed to dedicate this meeting to further scrutinise the local attainment gap. Although the focus of the meeting was how the attainment gap impacted on Black Caribbean and other black or minority ethnic communities, the Commission acknowledged that other communities were also impacted and would assess these in due course.

4.2   The session had four aims:
- To review national data and trends in the attainment gap;
- To consider how the attainment gap disproportionately affects Black Caribbean and other minority ethnic groups;
- To assess those strategies which help to close the attainment gap with Black Caribbean and other minority ethnic communities;
- To identify what further action the authority can take to support schools to close the attainment gap.

<u>Mary Reader, Education Policy Institute - National Policy Context</u>

4.3   The Education Policy Institute reports on the attainment gap at national and regional level annually from early years through to primary and secondary. The most recent data was of cause for concern because for the first time in 10 years the attainment gap had not reduced for children on FSM. At GCSE level, children on FSM were 18.1 months behind their peers in respect of their learning and development and this gap has not closed for the past 5 years. The data also noted that the attainment gap had continued to widen as children progressed through their education where children were 4.4 month behind in their education and learning at the end of early years and 9.6 month at the end of primary.

4.4   The EPI has also published data from 2019 on the attainment gap and ethnicity for the past 10 years which has consistently confirmed the educational inequalities that exist for children from Gypsy Roma, Irish Traveller and Black Caribbean children. At GCSE level children from Gypsy Roma communities were on average almost 3 years behind children of White British heritage, and children from Irish Traveller and Black Caribbean communities were also 23 months years and 11 months behind respectively. It should also be remembered

that there are specific variations within this ethnicity data and that some ethnic groups do better on average than White British young people.

4.5   EPI Trend data since 2011 would suggest that the attainment gap between Black Caribbean children and White British children had widened, where the former were now 10.9 months behind the latter at GCSE level compared to 6.2 months behind in 2011 (an increase of 68%). The same data noted that the attainment gap also widened between other Black minority ethnic groups of children and White British students.

4.6   Children who have English as an additional language are known to struggle academically, and this was also confirmed in this data where they were on average 21 months behind their White British counterparts. The gap between children with English as an additional language and whose first language was English has also widened by 11% since 2011.

4.7   In relation to children with SEND, the data indicated that the disadvantage gap grows as children get older. There has however been a marginal decrease in the SEND disadvantage gap at GCSE level since 2011; children with no EHCP were now behind by 24.4 months compared to 28.6 months, and children with an EHCP were now behind bny 44.1 months compared to 44.3 months. There are also significant gaps in attainment for children in receipt of social care at GCSE age, those on a Child Protection Plan were 25.7months behind and Children in Need were 19.6months behind.   Looked After Children have experienced little change in the disadvantage gap they have experienced since 2014, though there has been some improvement for those children on a Child Protection Plan and Children in Need.

4.8   In summary, the evidence suggests that after many years in which the attainment gap has narrowed, progress has now stalled and is beginning to widen again. It is suggested that wider systemic change is needed to address these educational inequalities.

Prof Feyisa Demie, Durham University - National Policy Context

4.9   Professor Demie has worked in education for many years and specifically in relation to the attainment and achievement of children from the Black Caribbean community. To ensure that certain groups of children are not left behind, the key question that policy makers need to address is the attainment gap. This gap in attainment has been evident in the Black Caribbean community for the past 50 years, where the academic results of young people from this community have lagged far behind their White British peers. Black Caribbean underachievement is real and persistent.

4.10   Analysis from 2019 indicated that just 42% of Black Caribbean children achieved 5 GCSEs as compared to 60% of White British students. There are marked differences in the performance of young people from different ethnic groups, where the proportion of children from Indian (77%) and Chinese (86%) communities who achieved 5 GCSEs were consistently higher than those from

other ethnic groups. Black Caribbean children are consistently at the bottom of this educational metric (with the exception of children from Gypsy Roma communities).

4.11   Educational policy in England has operated on a colour blind approach and has not fully recognised or responded to the attainment gap experienced by different ethnic groups. A Raising Achievement Fund was phased out from 2010 which meant that there were no dedicated earmarked funds to help improve attainment in underachieving groups or communities. This meant that National (£200m) and regional (£80m) assistance programmes to support underachieving groups have been lost.

4.12   Research has suggested that there are a number of other systemic factors which may explain why Black Caribbean children underperform at school. Seven key reasons were identified for underachievement in Black Caribbean communities from Professor Demie's research:
1. Poor leadership on equality issues (not so prominent in London);
2. Institutional racism;
3. Stereotyping;
4. Low expectations from teachers;
5. Curriculum barriers and relevance;
6. Lack of diversity in workforce (91% of school leaders are white British)
7. Lack of targeted support for this community and no national strategy to guide work.

4.13   Qualitative research also suggested there were also other reasons why Black Caribbean children under-perform at school which included disproportionate levels of school exclusion, low expectations of parents, low literacy levels and a lack of positive role models.

4.14   Research suggests that with effective support and targeted interventions, Black Caribbean children can do well and achieve at similar levels to other children from different ethnic groups.   Evidence of best practice from Primary and Secondary Schools identified a number of key features of successful schools in raising attainment with Black Caribbean children which were:
1. Leadership and management of schools
2. Inclusive curriculum and effective teaching and learning
3. Good parental engagement and links with the community
4. Role and work of learning mentors
5. Diversity in the workforce and clear stand on racism
6. Celebration of cultural diversity
7. Effective pupil voice

4.15   Despite Black Caribbean and minority ethnic groups under achieving, there were few national initiatives focused within these communities to raise standards. Effective practice recommended:
- National action from DfE including targeted and ring-fenced funding for schools, targets for reduction of exclusions;

- Tackling racism and addressing diversity issues should also be central to addressing Black Caribbean underachievement;
- Schools should audit workforce and address diversity issues, openly discuss race and diversity issues within lessons and among the workforce, celebrate cultural diversity;
- Local Authorities should audit the workforce to ensure diversity, diversification at all levels - this is particularly important for those LA's with high number of black children;
- Local Authorities should use data effectively to identify and target underperforming groups of pupils and improve local leaders and teachers' awareness of black history and culture.

4.16   Nationally funded schemes have been effective in the past in overcoming the barriers to Black Caribbean achievement. These schemes have employed black leaders and teaching staff to provide targeted support to Black Caribbean pupils (small group work, personal tutoring, summer school and after school activities). However, failure to provide dedicated funding to support such schemes has meant that the attainment gap has increased to 2005/6 levels. Without a national strategy with earmarked funding it would be difficult to make inroads in tackling these inequalities. There also needed to be further work to help identify and share good practice at the national level.

Hackney Education Service - Local Policy & Practice

4.17   Although education is complex and there are numerous factors which may impact on attainment, HES was clear that it wanted all schools to be excellent for all their children. In terms of the culture and ethos of schools there were equally high expectations around the inclusivity of schools. These ambitions help achieve the best for all children. It should be remembered that schools are autonomous institutions and determine their own policies and approaches within the overall government education framework.

4.18   Although Hackney schools perform well against national averages, there are gaps in educational performance amongst certain cohorts of young people, in particular Turkish/ Kurdish boys and Black Caribbean boys. There have been notable success stories across schools and whilst they may have adopted varying approaches the aspirations of the school and effectiveness of teaching were undoubtedly key to this success. Schools were the key agents in delivering improvements to close the achievement gap and the local authority would work alongside them to assist them in this objective.

4.19   From the submitted report, key aspects of local data in relation to the attainment gap were identified;
- Overall local pupils exceeded expected standards in reading, writing and maths (1% above national average), however, there was a declining trend.
- At KS2 the number of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths has declined for the past 3 years.
- At KS2 - girls outperform boys, and the lowest performing group were Turkish Boys. Black Caribbean boys outperform national peers but

under-achieve by 8% points locally. Black Caribbean boys and African boys perform at a lower level than Caribbean girls and African girls.

- KS4 - generally local students make better progress than peers nationally at Progress 8 (0.29 compared to 0.01).
- At KS4 Black Caribbean boys outperform national peers but are below local averages.

4.20 The Local Authority operates a 'Good to Great' policy to support schools to develop and improve. It offers a graduated system of support for local schools ranging from light touch support for those schools performing well, and more intensive support where improvements are needed. The policy was also a ground upward approach which aims to support schools to enable them to better help their pupils. A School Improvement Partnerwas allocated for each school in Hackney, all of whom are ex-headteachers and have extensive knowledge of inner city schools.

4.21 The Education Service operates a number of programmes to improve attainment among Turkish and Black Caribbean pupils and provides support at both pupil and at school level. The programmes help schools to deliver additional support to pupils and their families. The Education Service also employs a dedicated Systems Leader working with schools to support inclusive leadership, reduce unconscious bias and develop a more representative curriculum.

4.22 The attainment gap is evident at an early age when children first enter the education system into early years settings, which is mainly the result of language deficit and differentials in the nature and quality of parental support. It is therefore important to focus improvement work in these settings to equip children with the skills that they need to continue with their education. There are also effective programmes to support teachers to develop effective reading strategies for children in early years and primary settings as this is key to engagement and success of young people.

4.23 There was also strong leadership across local schools which recognised the value of diverse communities and who had very high expectations of their staff and all their pupils. Effective schools also provide a comprehensive coaching and training systems for staff to help develop and refine teaching skills. Such schools also use assessment carefully to identify areas of weakness in pupils, and to provide targeted support and monitor progress. Effective schools also engage well with parents and assess home learning support available to pupils.

4.24 At Post 16, there are 12 schools with 6th Forms and local colleges. The Education Service is working with all these settings and leaders around unconscious bias. These leaders are working together to ensure that there is diverse provision for post 16 pathways to increase the number of young people staying in education. It was noted that 45% of the disadvantaged cohort of pupils went on to higher education. At post 16, Black Caribbean children outperform their national peers which was to be celebrated.

4.25   The Systems Leader noted that there is an urgency to addressing the attainment gap and to ensure that requisite changes were in place to support this in terms of local policies and practice. All schools were cognisant of the issue and the need to address the attainment gap. Work had already begun on the inclusive curriculum and supporting documents were now available on-line to support both primary and secondary schools. 591 schools both in and out of the borough had engaged with this body of work which not only demonstrates how the curriculum can be developed for Black Caribbean children, but also provides a toolkit for wider curriculum development for other cultures. The SL has also worked with schools in respect of unconscious bias and examination assessments. The authority is also working with schools to develop the voice of Black Caribbean children and their parents to ensure that this is reflected in local approaches to improvement.

Haringey Education Partnership

4.26   The issue of underperformance of Black Caribbean children in school is a systemic issue, but also an historic issue which has long been recognised for over 50 years. Given that Black Caribbean pupil under-performance remains an issue today, it is evident that what is required is more than the application of a 'toolkit' of interventions, but greater cultural literacy and a deeper understanding of local communities and their histories. The histories and experiences of Black Caribbean and other black and minority ethnic communities and the prejudice and discrimiamtion that they have faced over time undoubtedly shape and influence their perspectives on society and education.

4.27   In Haringey disadvantaged children tend to do better than other London boroughs, and there is a relatively low disadvantage gap. The gap between White British and Black Caribbean children at GCSE level is the highest in the country, and the outcomes of this cohort are poor compared to other black and minority ethnic groups. Like in Hackney there are also education gaps among Turkish /Kurdish communities where just 51% of pupils at KS2 reached the expected standard in reading compared to 90% of White British pupils. Whilst the attainment gap may not be as visible, Black African pupils still face discrimiantion and disadvantage.

4.28   Within its submitted reporting, Haringey Education Partnership identified a number reasons behind the attainment gap for Black Caribbean children and their white peers, which included:
- White communities less likely to experience disadvantage and less likely to have English as a second language;
- Institutional racism and cultural bias;
- BAME representation in school teachers and leadership;
- Cultural competency;
- Impact of being a minority;
- Limited representation or negative BAME representations in curriculum.

4.29   Work to redress these issues commenced 4 years ago (2017) which to begin with focused on analysing local data to help establish the nature and extent of

the attainment gap, and to identify intersectionalities with underachievement. This work has included:
- The development of a school self audit tool;
- A conference for all schools to assess how best to tackle the attainment gap.

4.30 Haringey have also given considerable thought to appropriate governance structures to oversee the approach to closing the attainment gap. A borough wide Steering Group made up of Hackney Education Partnership, the Local Authority and Heads and Governors has been key in providing leadership and direction for this work. This body had developed a range of research, tools and resources to assist all schools across the borough.

4.31 The voice of young people has also been cultivated in the programme. The biggest issue to emerge from this work was the poor self image and self identity that young balck men gain at an early age. This also impacts on not only self expectations of young black men and boys but also the expectations of others.

4.32 The Steering Group has also developed a pledge for local schools to sign up to which contain 8 commitments which include:
- There there is black attainment champion on the SLT within the school;
- That there is a lead school Governor for black attainment;
- That closing the attainment gap is included within school improvement plans and ambitious targets are set;
- That there are effective strategies to engage and involve parents;
- That the school maintains high expectations of young black pupils.

4.33 It is hoped that schools will use the new data, research and tools made available to enable them to close the attainment gap. In addition, schools will have the support of School Improvement Partners to help them achieve local goals and targets. In addition, training and support is offered through the HEP, including a BAME review for schools and maintaining local networks for attainment gap champions and lead governors.

4.34 Work is already taking place to identify ways in which schools can improve engagement and involvement of parents, particularly those from BAME communities. There is also a workstream considering developments to the curriculum which not only aims to ensure that these are knowledge rich, but also are sufficiently diverse and representative of different local cultures.

4.35 Haringey Education Partnership itself has three explicit targets for this work:
- Reduce attainment gap - year on year at KS1, KS2 and GCSE (Att8)
- Focus on 3 key cohorts - Black Caribbean, Turkish, Black African
- Close gap between white and BAME groups within 7 years.

4.36 Local conferences for all schools on this and related topics (e.g. exclusions) were noted to have been very productive as a tool to agree and plan change in relation to the attainment gap. Such local school conferences offer a way to discuss

system wide issues, identify and prioritise solutions and also help maintain momentum for change and improvement. There has also been collaborative work with other London boroughs on this issue including with Lambeth, Brent and Hackney. It was noted that few boroughs outside the above named had dedicated programmes or initiatives to address the disadvantage experienced by Black Caribbean young people.

4.37   Haringey's approach to closing the attainment gap was centred around improved governance, greater public accountability and sharing of best practice.
- BAME steering group overseeing local work and initiatives;
- Annual Conference;
- Annual reporting to Council and Cabinet;
- Develop local resources and best practice;
- Partner with other LA's;
- Not an 'add-on' approach - 'this is what we do';
- Research and evidence base;
- All players in the education system holding each other to account.

Early Years - Comet Children Centre & Nursery

4.38   There are 120 children on roll at the nursery and funded provision for 2 year olds is also provided for disadvantaged children.   Turkish and Kurdish speaking children make up 10% of the children attending and Black Carribean approximately 3%. In total, there are 27 different languages spoken by children at Comet. Comet is also inclusive, which is reflected by the fact that 1 in 4 children at the nursery school or Children's Centre have additional needs.

4.39   Staff were inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement during the summer of 2020 and this provided the springboard to engage in strategies to address local disparities among BAME communities. Teaching staff had undertaken unconscious bias training and had found this to be both interesting and useful and helped staff to critically analyse their approach to supporting children.

4.40   Comet noted that gaps in children's development and attainment when they first entered the early years setting. The work of early years encompassess family support alongside the development of children. A home visit is undertaken for all children accessing the Children Centre which serve to demonstrate the disparities in children's home environments and the potential barriers to children's learning and development (e.g. poor housing, access to play facilities). Many young people from Turkish/Kurdish communities enter with lower levels of attainment which in part was attributed to undeveloped English language skills.

4.41   This early years setting focused on supporting children's development, self-esteem and identity. The setting used the Early Years Pupil Premium to support disadvantaged children via its natural explorers programme. This programme sought to improve the lived experiences of children by taking them out into the community to museums, restaurants, or to the shops to buy cakes. These experiences help build children's understanding and confidence in the community in which they live, and which help to shape and inform their own

identity and aspirations. These visits are also important in developing children's language, communication and literacy skills by providing real world applications for their learning.

4.42   The pandemic had also exposed considerable disparities in young people's access to digital resources to support their learning. The setting has supported families to access on-line resources to support their child's development and learning.

New Wave Primary Federation

4.43   The Executive Head of New Wave Primary Federation (3 primary schools in Hackney) emphasised the importance of high quality teaching as the single most important tool to improve outcomes of young people, especially those from disadvantaged communities. The NWF sought to grow and improve teaching staff by ensuring that teachers:
- Had access to knowledgeable and supportive mentors;
- Developed consistently high quality teaching to enable children to be consistent and stable learners;
- Had access to appropriate digital resources and technologies and was embedded within the curriculum;
- Had access to professional connections to enable them to refine and develop teaching practice.

4.44   The schools aim to create a positive and inclusive environment and curriculum for children. The 'Know me before you teach me' approach helped teachers to understand more about young people they taught which assisted in more bespoke learning approaches and helped to develop empathetic relationships in which children can be more successful.   NWF teaching aims to celebrate all children and where they come from and will aim to accommodate different behaviours.

4.45   Staff had a clear understanding that disadvantage was not just a singular category and a nuanced approach was required to address the range of inequalities among different groups of children. Staff were also driven to help children overcome barriers to learning and close gaps in their personal development and attainment. Improving children's reading skills was key to engagement with the curriculum and wider learning and development environment. NWF ensured that children were also tutored in developing key skills in talking, phonics and comprehension which provide a solid foundation for learning.

4.46   A number of suggestions were put forward to help address the attainment gap:
- Having conversations to share good practice;
- Ensuring that data on the attainment gap is widely circulated;
- Holding schools to account for addressing the attainment gap.

Clapton Girls Academy

4.47   Clapton Girls Academy (CGA) is a stand alone academy with over 1200 girls aged between 11-19 years of age attending. To date CGA has focused on closing the gap between children in receipt of Pupil Premium and those not in receipt of this benefit, and has managed to have some success in this. The school is now moving to tackle disparities in achievement in other smaller cohorts of young people including young people from Black Caribbean and Black African communities.

4.48   There were a number of barriers to learning and attainment which contributed to inequalities in educational attainment:
- Social and economic disadvantage - some children were better resourced and supported at home than others;
- Housing - young people were attempting to learn at home in often overcrowded conditions and those located in temporary housing were moving frequently, and some were travelling some distance to attend school;
- Girls often had caring responsibilities for siblings which impacted on their own ability to study and learn;
- Poor relationships with school;
- Mental health - the incidence of poor mental health and anxiety among young girls was increasing;
- School moves - children who have moved once or twice face significant barriers to learning and development.

4.49   High quality teaching was central to approaches to tackle the attainment gap in the school. This had been supported by additional training and development around unconscious bias, cultural competence and diversification of the curriculum. The diversification of the curriculum was noted to be important as this underpinned the inclusive ethos of the school. Teachers appraisal objectives were also linked to the diversification of the curriculum. The school was also working on the recruitment and retention of school teams and ensuring that the Leadership Team and Governing body reflected the diversity of the school.

4.50   The school has also instigated a number of developments from the student side, and actively engages young people what they would like from the school. There have been changes to school policies in respect of uniform and hairstyles to ensure that these do not discriminate and the curriculum gives all children an opportunity to express themselves. The school also aims to ensure that children from all communities participate in all aspects of school life.

4.51   The school has reviewed its timetable and the operation of the sets system and how children are moved up and down within that system. There has been a policy of having more mixed ability teaching, and more challenge provided to staff on why children may be moving up or down sets. How support staff are used has also been reviewed, and there has been a concerted effort to identify and address underlying issues in a children's behaviour, attendance or attainment. There is active surveillance of children to identify those children who

are not making necessary progress, and to understand why this may be the case.

4.52   A wide range of other advancements have been made in how children's attainment is monitored and supported included:
- More supportive transitions from primary and improved exchange of information;
- Reviewing behaviour policies to ensure that these are positive and not excessively punitive;
- Early literacy and numeracy development in Year 7;
- Confidence building among students;
- Multi-agency support for students;
- Digital inclusion and making sure all students have access to a device and to the internet;
- Improved engagement with all aspects of school life.

Questions from the Commission

4.53   The Chair requested that in future, it would be helpful to have data which compared ethnic subsets against 'White British' rather than 'All other pupils' for a more accurate portrayal of how different groups compared against each other. The Chair also noted that it would be helpful to obtain attainment data by individual schools so that it was possible to identify and share good practice. It would be helpful to know if there were schools which were doing really well at closing the gap and those that lagged behind.
- There were many schools which were doing excellent work to close the attainment gap locally, and School Improvement Partners (SIP) were providing challenge to those schools which were not performing as well as could be expected on this issue. There was clearly much best practice which can be shared across the local school system, and this approach was preferred rather than public shaming those schools which may be underperforming.

4.54   A number of reasons had been put forward for lower attainment among Black Caribbean children from the research of Professor Demie (see 4.12). To what extent was HES addressing these issues locally?
- HES has been making substantive progress in all these areas and there was good uptake among local schools. HES had developed advice and guidance on unconscious bias and invested in the development of an inclusive curriculum, both of which have been well received and have a strong uptake among local schools.
- There is a culture of high pupil expectations within and among local schools and School Improvement Partners tackled low expectations where these were identified. It was also standard practice for schools to deliver targeted interventions to those children and young people most in need of support. Additional funding was available for primary schools to target interventions with Turkihs/Kurdish and Black Caribbean children.
- Sharing good practice was key to closing the attainment gap and there was local infrastructure in place to support this.

4.55   A school in a neighbouring borough which was almost exclusively made up of children from black and other minority ethnic backgrounds and had a high level of children on FSM, managed to support 41 students to Oxbridge in 2019. Whilst Hackney has performed well to date, what more can be done in terms of effective strategies to close the attainment gap? Why is it that girls from Black Caribbean communities perform comparatively better than their male peers?

-   The Cabinet member noted that whilst disadvantage and other factors may underpin poor attainment it did not explain the disportionality experienced by Black Caribbean children. What was needed was greater comfortableness in talking about race and racism and how this impacted on children's development and attainment. The Cabinet member commended all the work of all schools in helping to address the attainment gap.

-   Research was cited which indicated that children who were socioeconomically disadvantaged, were non-white and male were the most 'pushed out' by society and who faced the biggest barriers to attainment.

-   Given the scale of investment required, Local Authorities cannot be expected to deliver change alone and need central Government investment to ensure that there are sufficient resources to drive societal change and fund improvement programmes. Schools were just one area in which additional investment was required, and much larger investment was needed in other areas of community life (outside the school) to help close the attainment gap (e.g. other support services, tackling racism in society).

4.56   Whilst acknowledging that additional investment was necessary to deliver targeted interventions to close the attainment gap, is there anything else which the Local Authority can do to close the gap between Black Caribbean boys and their peers? Will the setting of targets help?

-   Schools are asked to set targets for themselves each year and are challenged where they have not reached these targets. Data on the attainment gaps in individual schools are presented and discussed alongside strategies to overcome these gaps. It was acknowledged that Schools have to buy into this process for this to be effective.

4.57   As it was noted that some ethnic groups of students perform comparatively better than White British students, what can be learnt from research into this?

-   Bengali and Bangladeshi communities do appear to perform better than their White British counterparts, though the academic literature was inconclusive as to the reasons behind this. It underlines the need to assess ethnicity as a heterogeneous issue and not simply as as black and white issue. It was noted that different ethnic groups have unique histories of migration and identities within the UK which shape perceptions of education. It should be noted that whilst there are high levels of socio-economic disadvantage among Bengali and Bagladeshi communities, young people from these communities still perform relatively

well, which suggests that there are other factors at play. This would also suggest that poverty and social deprivation is not necessarily a barrier to educational attainment and progression.

- It was noted that historically, young people from Bengali and Bangladeshi communities had high levels of English as an Additional Language which inhibited fluency in English and presented a barrier to attainment. This particular barrier has however been overcome and there are now lower rates of EAL in these communities, which together with high educational aspirations has meant Bengali and Bangladeshi children and young people on average now perform better than White British counterparts.

4.58   How do schools and the Local Authority ensure that underachieving children are not 'drowned out' in the general drive to catch-up after the closure of schools in 2020/21 due to the pandemic? When is the situation expected to get back to normal?

- It was understood that schools had developed baseline assessments to help identify those children who had fallen behind and who needed support to catch up. There would also be an element of schools adapting the curriculum to allow all children to recap, and rebuild the basic knowledge and understanding they need to progress. There is however considerable reliance on teachers and quality of teaching to ensure that all students are not left behind and that appropriate support is put in place for pupils that need it.

4.59   Is there more that can be done to help schools develop positive and affirming cultures which recognise the importance of self-image, self-confidence and sense of identity? The Commission noted that Haringey schools have signed up to a Charter with explicit commitments, could schools in Hackney be asked to develop and agree a similar Charter?

- The School Improvement Partners do regularly ask key questions of schools particularly in relation to the decolonisation of the curriculum and their approaches to antiracism. HES was building on the work developed by Young Black Men's Programme and had rolled out unconscious bias and cultural competency training across schools. All schools were cognisant how important these issues were to the community and were actively engaged in this agenda. The Good to Great policy was effective and was helping schools to improve to the point that 93% were rated as either good or better by Ofsted.
- Enabling schools to share good practice was a key development and improvement strategy, and HES was continually seeking to develop new platforms through which this can take place.

4.60   What explicitly does the Council and local schools need to do to improve the performance of Black Caribbean boys? What do parents and pupils think about these initiatives to improve attainment?

- Engagement with young people has suggested that self-image and self-identity are important to them and this is embedded within the approach taken by the Council in its engagement with schools in this area.

HES was aware of the negative impact that Stop and Search Policy was having on young black men and was supportive of the Young Futures Commission work and recommendations on this. It was also noted that Hackney Schools Group Board has undertaken a consultative exercise with parents at a number of schools to help understand their experience of race in education. A publication has been developed from this and has prompted further uptake and engagement among other schools in Hackney.

- The approach of the Young Black Men was about recognising the systemic inequalities and barriers facing young black men, and to encourage stakeholders to challenge unconscious biases which may influence their perceptions and expectations of young black men. As had been noted in previous evidence, this necessitated an approach which moved away from specific interventions to more system wide approaches.

- The pupil voice is very powerful and should be central to local approaches to improve attainment and from the research undertaken with young black boys in Haringey, a number of themes were identified:
    - They found it difficult to escape widely held negative images of young black men in society throughout schooling;
    - There were lower expectations of young black men in school by teachers which reinforced under-achievement. Young black men consulted here just wanted the same expectations of them as other male pupils across the school;
    - Whilst there was an acknowledgement that schools were trying to tackle the issues of race and discriminatiion, there was an expectation that school leaders needed to deliver practical developments to improve the experience of young blakc men in school.
    - A more representative and inclusive curriculum did not emerge as an important development for young black men in this research.

4.61 Contributors noted that poor housing was a contributor to underperformance of pupils at school, particularly when children and families lived in temporary accommodation or in overcrowded conditions. As a landlord, what can the council do to better support local educators?
    - Schools are more commonly being asked to provide evidence to housing services on the impact of poor housing on children's education and learning. Overcrowding and living in temporary accommodation outside the borough were common issues raised by parents and which impacted on their child's education. The pandemic had brought this issue into sharp focus, as it served to highlight the disparities in the home study and schooling environments of children. Parents in temporary accommodation were often moving which was also unsettling for children and families. In addition, some of the accommodation did not have access to basic facilities such as a washing machine and early years settings often looked to provide grants through the Children Centre to obtain such support. Poor housing conditions may also lead to mental health issues which can also impact on the family and children's schooling.

- New Regents College (the local PRU) noted that unsettled accommodation was a common denominator in many of the young people who were excluded from school. As a Hackney PRU, it can only take children resident in Hackney, therefore when children in temporary accommodation are moved out of the borough this may mean that they are required to seek alternative provision outside the borough.
- It was also noted that remote learning can be difficult in overcrowded accommodation as young people may not have their own room or workspace in which to engage with on-line teaching. Urswick school has managed to close the digital divide within its school in recent weeks as it has managed to distribute upwards of 400 devices, and it was hoped that this will have a longer-term positive impact on young people's access to IT which may facilitate home study, learning and improved attainment in the future.

4.62 What work is in place to audit the ethnicity of the local education workforce (school leadership, teachers and governors) to ensure that these are representative of the community?
- HES has access to data on those schools which use the Councils Payroll system. Analysis of this demographic data suggests that the ethnicity of teaching staff is not representative of local communities. Higher levels of community representation are recorded among support staff than senior teaching roles. Whilst the workforce was not as representative as it HES would like it to be, there were excellent role models from black and other minority ethnic communities in senior leadership positions and the service was working to improve this situation.

4.63 The Chair closed the session noting the following:
- It was apparent that there was much good practice in local schools across Hackney and that sharing good practice was essential to bring improvement across all schools;
- The idea of the school pledge which had been successfully implemented in Haringey could represent a further avenue for improvement locally;
- It would be helpful to have further transparency on this issue to help identify areas for development and improvement.

4.64 The Chair thanked all contributors for attending and contributing to the session.

5. Work Programme

5.1 The final meeting of the Commission will be held on May 11th 2021 to avoid overlap with the pre-election period (for Mayoral election).

5.2 The Commission is drafting a scoping document for its next review on adolescents entering care. Officers from Children & Families Service have been consulted in this scoping review and this will be sent to members of the Commission for comment.

6.   Minutes

6.1   A number of actions were noted from the previous meeting held on 12th January 2021.

    1) City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership were asked to respond to additional questions due to time limitations at the last meeting. Written responses are provided in the reports pack.

    2) Hackney Education Service was requested to provide further information on Demographics of those Children in Elective Home Education and the The Out of Schools Project. Written responses are provided in the reports pack.

6.2   The minutes of the meeting held on the 12th January were noted and agreed

7.0   Any other business

7.1   There was no further business.

The Meeting concluded at 21.15

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