

Rapidly close the attainment gap for Black Caribbean pupils

Part of the [Ealing's race equality guidance for educational settings](#).

The attainment gap between Black Caribbean pupils and all pupils in Ealing, and nationally, has persisted for many years and the Race Equality Commission has challenged Ealing schools to rapidly close this gap. The table below shows the proportion of pupils with Black Caribbean heritage achieving the expected at each key stage compared with all Ealing pupils in 2019

Key stage	All Ealing	Black Caribbean	Proportion gap
FSP (%GLD)	68%	62%	6%
KS1 (EXS+RWM)	58%	46%	12%
KS2 (EXS+RWM)	66%	43%	23%
4%+E&M	61%	34%	27%

In addition to the focus of the Race Equality Commission on the attainment of our Black Caribbean pupils, within ELP we focus on White and Black Caribbean pupils and Somali pupils.

Key stage	Black Caribbean	White and Black Caribbean	Somali	All Ealing
FSP (%GLD)	61.8%	65.1%	62.3%	68%
KS1 (EXS+RWM)	46%	55%	49%	58%
KS2 (EXS+RWM)	43%	50%	61%	66%
4%+E&M	34%	36%	55%	61%

The reasons for this under-achievement are wide ranging and complex. Extensive research has highlighted low expectations, unconscious bias and a lack of concerted leadership for equalities as common issues in schools. Each section of this toolkit is designed to contribute towards closing the attainment gap.

At a strategic level, there are 5 key areas for scrutiny and policy development:

- [Governance](#)
- [Data review](#)
- [Policy review](#)
- [Transition](#)
- [Aspirations and progression](#)

Governance

Aim: to enable governing boards/ trusts to carry out a systematic review of the schools' policies and processes regarding eliminating discrimination

A commitment to equality and diversity should be a visible element of the school/trust culture, rooted in embracing and appreciating our diverse society. This requires deliberate and consistent effort at all levels, starting with the governing board. Boards will need to ensure evidence is in place that demonstrates secure progress and outcomes of all learners but particularly those groups that are less well served. Groups of children who are linked by two or more protected characteristics are of particular significance when reviewing the impacts of both policy and practice.

Governance self-review tool: Focus on race equity and diversity has been developed for use by governors / trustees.

This self-review tool provides guidance and support to governors / trustees, in relation to their duties and responsibilities with a focus on race equity. It is not intended as a checklist but rather as a prompt to begin discussions and monitor impact. It can also be used to help identify priorities, actions, and development needs. Although this self-review is focused on race and ethnicity, the questions and principles can be used and adapted across the wider equalities' duties requirements.

Please note that when sharing data, boards need to be mindful of the [General Data Protection Regulation](#) (UK GDPR) and ensuring confidentiality i.e. data should be anonymous and in a format where no one can be adversely identified.

Before completing this self-review, boards should be familiar with the [DfE Equality Act: advice for schools'](#) and [NGA Equality and diversity: A guide for governing boards](#). Both give a comprehensive overview of duties and responsibilities in relation to equalities and diversity. [The Race Equality Code](#) is also a useful framework for organisations to consider.

Data review

Aim: To carry out a review of key data sets to identify any areas of disproportionality for Black Caribbean pupils compared to other ethnicity groups that needs further investigation

An important first step is for senior leaders to systematically review the full spectrum of data available to your school or setting for your children, young people, parents and staff by ethnicity and by intersectionality especially with deprivation factors and identified additional needs— including trends over time – and consider what the data is telling you, for example:

- progress and attainment
- behaviour including rewards/sanctions
- attendance
- special educational needs
- suspensions and exclusions

For example, how does the data for your Black Caribbean children, young people, parents and staff, compare to the data in your school or setting for:

- all other ethnic groups?
- your highest attaining ethnic groups?
- Do high prior attaining and non-disadvantaged Black Caribbean pupils achieve at the same level as non-disadvantaged pupils of other ethnicities?
- What further questions emerge from the review of the data?
- Who else do you need to share your data analysis with?
- As a result of the data analysis, what next steps might you take to ensure the sustained positive wellbeing and outcomes for your Black Caribbean children, young people, parents, and staff within your school?

Example data collection sheets are available for school or setting use:

- [Early years data collection sheet](#)
- [Primary data collection sheet](#)
- [Secondary data collection sheet](#)

Policy review

Aim: To review key policies and consider if any are disproportionately disadvantaging one ethnic group over another

Schools and settings are legally required to have a wide range of policies, and these must be reviewed on a regular basis. Regarding race equality, the recommendation is that policies are systematically reviewed to consider if they are disproportionately disadvantaging a particular ethnic group in comparison to others.

Below are examples of ways that policies could be causing racial discrimination and inequality:

- a school uniform policy that prohibits certain types of hairstyles and headwear
- an anti-bullying policy that does not include specific guidance about racist incidents
- a curriculum policy that excludes writers, thinkers, and achievements of people from diverse ethnic backgrounds
- an attendance policy that does not make provision for religious observance other than Christian observance
- a behaviour for learning policy that requires that students show their attention and respect in a narrow range of culturally specific ways

The policy review should consider the following, for example,

- What does the application of this policy look like and feel like in practice for our Black Caribbean children, young people, parents, and staff?
- Are any of our policies inadvertently having a more negative effect on ethnic groups of pupils compared to others?

It is important to include your underserved groups of children, young people, parents, and staff in the systematic review of policies as they are the people with lived experiences of the policies. Senior leaders will need to consider how honest feedback is going to be gained from those children, young people, parents, and staff.

Our data shows that Black Caribbean parents are:

- the least likely group to say that they feel that their voices and opinions are genuinely heard or sought – and for whom investment in positive relationships and trust may need to be actively established
- the group who might feel that there may be negative repercussions, regarding theirs and / or their children's subsequent experiences within the school or setting, if they open-up and provide honest feedback

Further resources

In advance of carrying out the policy review, school leaders should consider reviewing the following publications:

- [Reviewing existing school policies \(annafreud.org\)](#) Anna Freud Anti-racism resource series
- [Halo Code School \(halocollective.co.uk\)](#) when reviewing your hair policy for Black Caribbean children, young people and staff
- [Race and racism in English secondary schools \(runnymedetrust.org\)](#)
- [Minority report: Race and class in post-Brexit Britain \(runnymedetrust.org\)](#)
- [Race Disparity Audit - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) (Cabinet Office, 2017/2018)

Transition

Aim: To ensure effective transition for Black Caribbean children so that their time in school starts as well as possible and helps to offset later challenges that impact on their educational progress

Starting in reception

Transition to reception class is always a time that requires careful consideration by schools, Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) and childminder (CM) settings.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, we have faced unique challenges, and this requires us to adapt our practice and to work even more closely together to provide highly effective transition arrangements, including with a sharp focus on our Black Caribbean children and their families.

Ealing data for 2019 shows that there was a 5% gap between the number of Black Caribbean pupils who achieve a Good Level of Development in reception

compared to all other Ealing pupil groups.

Percentage achieving a good level of development (GLD) at early years foundation stage in 2019

- The performance of Black Caribbean pupils was 5.1% points below the Ealing average and 6% points below the national average for GLD
- The performance of White and Black Caribbean pupils was 3.5% points below the Ealing average and 4.4% points below the national average for GLD

Pupil groups	Percentage
Black Caribbean	65.8%
White and Black Caribbean	67.4%
Black Caribbean and White and Black Caribbean	66.5%
All pupils (Ealing)	70.9%
National	71.8%

This attainment gap for Black Caribbean pupils significantly increases throughout their school career which is why it is so vital to prioritise the early years so that children are set up for future success.

All stakeholders agree that frequent and transparent communication is the key to a smooth transition process, which must be personalised to the needs of our children and circumstances of the receiving school.

A recommended transition process for Black Caribbean children has been produced for use by schools, PVI's and childminders. See [Effective transition support for Black Caribbean children](#)

It should be noted that considerations for transition to reception included in this guidance are to be used in addition to those outlined for all children in the [Ealing reception transition guide](#)

Moving from primary to secondary school

Moving from primary to secondary school is an important milestone. Many children will be anxious about this next step. They will be facing a new environment, bigger building and site, needing to move from class to class, developing more independence and making new relationships with a greater number of children and staff.

Transition from primary school to secondary school is always a time that requires careful consideration by schools. In recent years, there have been unique challenges, and this requires us to work even more closely together to support our children and families to ensure that we have consistency across the borough.

Some children may require additional support for successful transition. We encourage secondary schools to contact their feeder primary schools in the Summer term to identify the children who would benefit from a personalised transition plan. This may include an extra day or more of transition, which develops an early bond with the child and the school, where the child and staff get to know each other better.

[Year 6 to year 7 transition guide](#)

A [year 6 to year 7 transition guide](#) has been co-produced with primary and secondary SENCOs, Ealing parent carer forum and Ealing Council.

It is full of practical ideas and good practice suggestions for schools to consider. We recognise that schools' responses to the transition process must be personalised to the needs of the children and circumstances of the school. However, this document aims to outline the key principles that are recommended to ensure the best quality transition.

Related content

[Effective transition support for Black Caribbean children](#)

[Transition to high schools](#)

Contact:

- **Sarah Thompson**, School partnerships and enrichment: sthompson@ealing.gov.uk 020 8825 7372
- **Ealing race equality in education**: EducationRaceEquality@ealing.gov.uk

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