

The Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils

Good Practice



Feyisa Demie
Christabel McLean


Lambeth

The Authors

Dr Feyisa Demie is Head of Research and Adviser for School Self-evaluation. Prior to this, he was a university lecturer and Head of Research and Statistics. Feyisa is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (FRSA) and a school governor. Feyisa has worked extensively over 27 years with Local Authorities, government departments, schools and school governors on the use of research and data to raise achievement. He runs school focussed training programmes on the use of research and assessment data to support school self-evaluation for Headteachers, teachers, governors and policy makers, as well as an annual national school improvement conference to share good practice in schools at UCL Institute of Education (IOE). As an Education Adviser for school self-evaluation, he also works with schools in the area of Phonics, FSP, KS1, KS2 and GCSE assessment. Feyisa's research interests are in educational inequality and school improvement, with focus on what worked and what failed in raising achievement in schools. His expertise and extensive publications centre on the gaps in equality in relation to ethnicity, social class, gender, EAL, disadvantage and its impact on educational achievement and progress in schools. He is the author of over 100 articles, book chapters and research reports on education and has published articles in peer reviewed journals. For details see: www.lambeth.gov.uk/rsu

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.

Published by

**Schools Research and Statistics Unit
Lambeth Education and Learning
International House,
Canterbury Crescent
Brixton
SW9 7QE**

© The Authors. All rights reserved. March 2017
Photograph - Cover © Norwood School
ISBN: 978-1-910428-16-0

The Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils: Good Practice

Contents	Page
Section 1: Introduction	1
Background to the study	1
The aims and research method	4
Section 2: The Attainment of Black Caribbean Pupils in the Case Study Schools	6
Section 3: Raising Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils – Success Factors	9
Excellent leadership and Black Caribbean achievement	9
Effective teaching and learning	15
Use of a relevant inclusive curriculum	21
Parental engagement	27
Links with the Black Caribbean community	32
The work of learning mentors in supporting Black Caribbean families	36
Effective targeted support for Black Caribbean pupils	40
Church and community support and guidance	42
A clear stand on racism	48
Diversity in the school workforce	52
Celebration of cultural diversity	60
Effective use of pupil voice	65
Section 4: Summary and Conclusions	69

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1. Background

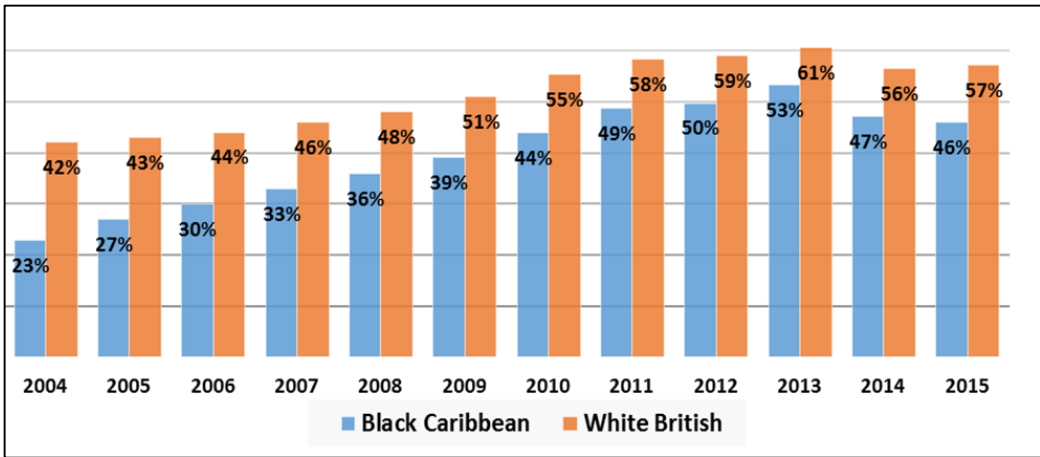
This research aims to explore the success factors behind raising achievement of Black Caribbean heritage pupils in schools. Over the last three decades considerable attention has been devoted to the issue of underachievement of Black pupils in British schools. There is now much research to show that 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).

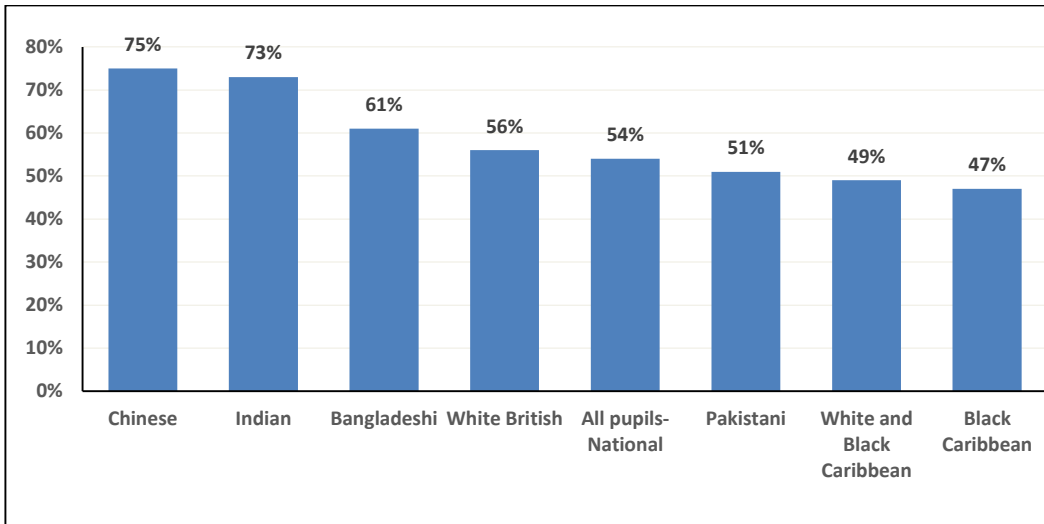
Research in the 1980s gave a good deal of attention to the underachievement of pupils of Black Caribbean backgrounds and confirmed that '*they are underachieving as a group within the education system*' (Rampton 1981, Swann 1985). Other research in the 1990s and 2000s also reflected earlier findings 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.

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.

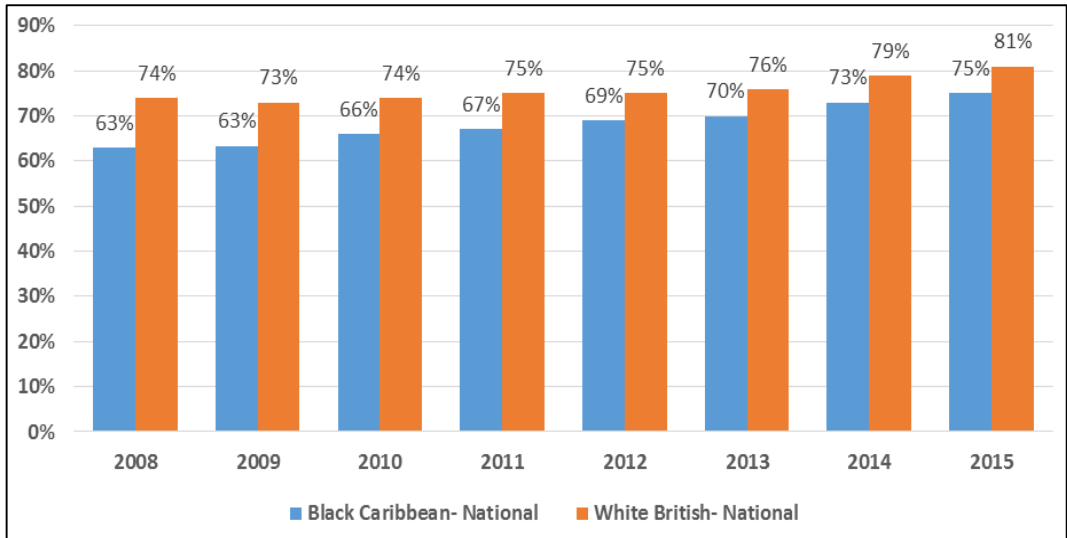
Figure 2. Black Caribbean Achievement in England (5+A*-C including English and Maths)



Source: DfE (2015). The Statistical First Release: National Curriculum Assessment and GCSE/GNVQ attainment by pupil characteristics, in England, 2012/5 at <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000448/index.shtml>

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:

- 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.

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%

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.

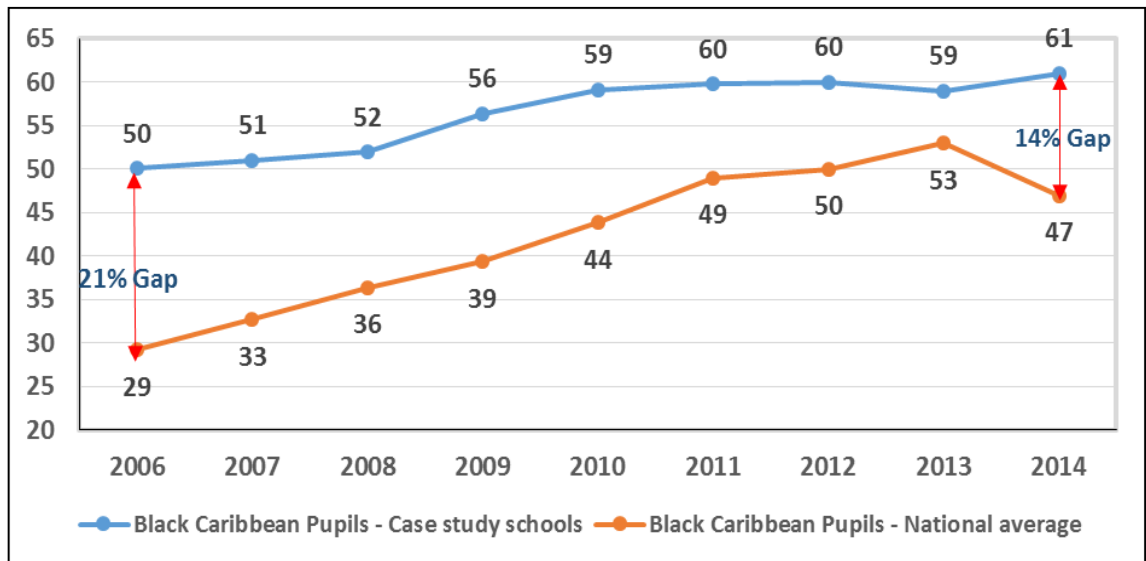
Table 2. KS2 Attainment in the Case Study Schools (Level 4 or above*)

	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.

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 does still tantrum, however is able

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:

'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)**

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 in 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).

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

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**)

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 pace 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:

'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 24×6 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

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.’

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

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.

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.'

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)

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

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

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.

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

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 in a small 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.'

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:

'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.

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.'

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.

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)

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

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

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.

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

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

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

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)**

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.’

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

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?'*

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)**

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)

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

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.' **(TA, School A)**

'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.

Anti-racist work is usually approached through school policies and procedures, through curriculum content and through assemblies 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,

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

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

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:

'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:

'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)**

'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

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

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:

'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.

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.

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)

'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)

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.'*

'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.'

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

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)**

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 who 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:

'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

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

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

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.

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;

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

This research was funded by proceeds of a national conference into '*What Works in Narrowing the Achievement Gap of Disadvantaged Pupils*' on 22nd June 2016. We are very grateful to all who attended the conference. The authors would like to thank the Headteachers, teachers, parents, pupils, school governors, Education Psychologists, SENCOs, church and community leaders who took part in the various activities including the case study interviews and focus groups.

We are grateful for helpful comments on the draft report by the following people:

- Cathy Twist, Director of Education and Learning, Lambeth LA
- Anne Taplin, Rebecca Butler, James McDonald, Andy Hau, Robert Tong, Schools Research and Statistics, Lambeth LA

We would like also to acknowledge that some of the materials in the literature review were adapted from a previously published report by one of the authors and are used with permission.

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.

References

Blair, M. & Bourne, J. with Coffin, C., Creese, A. & Kenner, C. (1998). *Making the Difference: Teaching and Learning Strategies in Successful Multi-Ethnic Schools*. Department for Education & Employment.

Coard, B. (1971) *How the West Indian Child is made educationally subnormal in the British School System*. London: New Beacon Books.

Curtis, P. (2008). Education: Black Caribbean children held back by institutional racism in schools, *Guardian*, September.

Demie, F. and Mclean, C. (2015). *Transforming Education: The Lambeth Story*, Research and Statistics Unit, Lambeth LA.

Demie, F. (2005). Achievement of Black Caribbean pupils: Good practice in Lambeth schools, *British Educational Research Journal*, Volume 31, Issue 4, pages 481–508, August.

Demie, F. (2003). Raising the Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils in British Schools: Unacknowledged Problems and Challenges for Policy Makers, *London Review of Education*, Vol. 1, No. 3, and p. 229-248.

Demie, F. (2001). Ethnic and Gender Difference in Educational Achievement and Implications for School Improvement Strategies, *Educational Research*, 43, 1, 91-106

DfE (2014). *Permanent and Fixed Period Exclusions in England: 2012/2013* National Statistics DFE SFR 2014.

DfES (2003) *Aiming High: Raising the Achievement of African Caribbean Pupils: Guidance for Schools* London: DfES.

Department for Education and Skills (DFES 2006). *Getting it, getting it right: exclusion of Black pupils: priority review*.

Gillborn, D. (2008). *Racism and Education: Coincidence or conspiracy?*, Taylor and Francis

Gillborn, D. (2002). *Education and Institutional Racism*, Inaugural Professorial Lecture, Institute of Education, University of London.

Gillborn, D. and Drew, D. (2010). 'Academy Exclusions', Runnymede Bulletin, summer edition 2010. pp. 12 – 13 <http://www.scribd.com/doc/35298622/Runnymede-Bulletin-Summer-2010-Final> 6

Gillborn, D. & Youdell, D. (2000). Rationing Education: Policy, Practice, Reform and Equity. Buckingham, Open University Press.

Gillborn, D. and Gipps, C. (1996). Recent Research on the Achievement of Ethnic Minority Pupils, OFSTED Reviews of Research, HMSO, London.

Gillian, K. and Richardson, R. (2003). News and Comments, Race Equality Teaching, Vol.21, No 2, spring, p4-5.

Gillborn, D. & Mirza, H.S. (2000). Educational Inequality: Mapping Race and Class, OFSTED.

Gillborn, D. and Gipps, C. (1996). Recent Research on the Achievement of Ethnic Minority Pupils, OFSTED Reviews of Research, HMSO, London.

GLA (2004). The Educational Experiences and Achievement of Black Boys in London Schools 2000-2003, Greater London Authority, September

MacBeath, J. (1998) Effective Leadership, Responding to Change, Paul Chapman

Macpherson, W. (1999). The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. CM 4262-I. London, the Stationery Office.

McKenley, J., Power, C., Ishani, L. & Demie, F. (2003). Raising the Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils in British Schools: Good Practice in Lambeth Schools, Research and Statistics Unit, Lambeth Education, February.

Maylor, U. , Smart, S. , Kuyok, K.A. & Ross, A. (2009) [Black Childrens' Achievement Programme Evaluation- Report](#) [Report commissioned by the DCSF] , London, DCSF.

OFSTED. (2002). Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils: Three Successful Primary Schools. OFSTED Publications HMI 447, April.

OFSTED. (2002). Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils: Good Practice in Secondary Schools, OFSTED Publications HMI 448, April.

OFSTED. (2001). Managing Support for the Attainment of Pupils from Minority Ethnic Groups, OFSTED Publications HMI 326, October.

OFSTED. (1999). Raising the Attainment of Minority Ethnic Pupils: School and LEA responses, OFSTED Publications HMI 170.

Rampton, A. (1981). *West Indian Children in Our Schools*. Cmnd 8273. London, HMSO.

Strand, Steve. (2012). The White British-Black Caribbean achievement gap: tests, tiers and teacher expectations. *British Educational Research Journal*, Vol.38 (No.1). pp. 75-101.

Swann, Lord (1985). *Education for All: Final Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups*. Cmnd 9453. London, HMSO.

Taylor, M.J. (1981). *Caught Between: A Review of Research into the Education of West Indian Origin, Windsor and National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER)*.

Tikly, L.; Haynes, J.; Caballero, C.; Hill, J.; and Gillborn, J. (2006). *Evaluation of Aiming High: African Caribbean Achievement Project*, Research Report 801, DfES.

Tomlinson, S. (1983). *Ethnic Minorities in British Schools: A review of literature 1960-82, Policy Studies*.

Published by

**Schools Research and Statistics Unit
Lambeth Education and Learning
10th Floor International House
Canterbury Crescent
Brixton
SW9 7QE**

**© The Authors. All rights reserved. March 2017
ISBN: 978-1-910428-16-0**