**MAYOR OF LONDON**

**Black teachers in London**



September 2006

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# foreword by Ken Livingstone, Mayor of London

In September 2004, the London Development Agency published a comprehensive report detailing the experiences of black pupils, and black boys in particular, in London's schools. That report, building on the work that Diane Abbott MP has been leading on the London Schools and the Black Child initiative, contained a number of key recommendations for action in order to address the continuing crisis for African-Caribbean heritage children in our schools. That report highlighted many issues surrounding the relationships between black boys and their teachers, particularly concerning their perceptions of low teacher expectations.

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The DfES' 2004 Survey of Pupils and Teachers found that 42 per cent of African-Caribbean heritage pupils in London felt that they were respected by teachers, compared to 55 per cent of pupils from white backgrounds and 59 per cent of Asian pupils. Fifty-five per cent of Asian pupils, and 54 per cent of pupils from white backgrounds thought that their teachers were good, compared to 45 per cent of pupils from African-Caribbean heritage backgrounds[1]. These figures are clearly a matter for concern.

In order to improve achievement levels in our schools it is of paramount importance that the teaching profession, classroom staff and governing bodies better reflect the diversity of the communities they serve. It cannot be right that in some of our boroughs 48-50 per cent of the pupils are black, yet only 16-18 per cent of the teachers that teach them are of similar heritage.

Gaining good qualifications is the first stage to securing employment and establishing a skills base for further training and higher education. Without these qualifications, generations of black youth are effectively locked out of the labour market that our capital needs them to be a part of, consigned to low paid, unskilled jobs or, for far too many, caught up in the criminal justice system.

The Cantle Report on Community Cohesion as long ago as 2001 makes the point that there is a need to ensure that the teaching ethos of each school reflects different cultures and goes on to observe that the lack of ethnic minority teachers in schools is clearly a problem[2].

It is also imperative that we do all we can to ensure that all London's teachers are equipped with the skills to teach diverse pupil populations, and the starting point must be in the training that our educators receive.

This report demonstrates that there is still some work to do to make our schools genuinely inclusive for pupils and teachers alike, I am optimistic that progress will continue to be made to make these necessary changes in our education system.

Finally, I would like to thank SERTUC and the teaching unions for their help with this research. I maintain that a major effort will be necessary to address the under-representation of London's diverse communities in the teaching profession. All of the relevant agencies will have to work together around a concerted programme to achieve this objective, and I look forward to working with all relevant bodies to bring about the meaningful changes for black children in London which are so long overdue.

**Ken Livingstone**
Mayor of London

# executive summary

## Black teachers in London
### *Location*
- The highest percentages of black teachers in London can be found in the boroughs of Hackney, Lambeth and Southwark (16-18 per cent), followed by Haringey and Brent (14 per cent). In Lambeth and Southwark, 48-50 per cent of the pupil population is black.
- The highest proportions of teachers of black-Caribbean origin are also in Hackney, Lambeth and Southwark (10 per cent), followed by Haringey and Brent (nine per cent). The proportion of black-Caribbean pupils in schools is highest in Lambeth (21 per cent), followed by the City of London, Hackney and Lewisham (17-18 per cent).
- Lewisham schools have the highest proportion of teachers of black-African origin (seven per cent). The highest proportion of black-African pupils is located in Southwark (30 per cent).
- Five per cent of black teachers in London teach in City of London schools, while 26-29 per cent of pupils in these schools are black.
- Westminster, Camden, Kensington & Chelsea, as well as the City of London, have a black teaching workforce of five per cent or less and a black pupil population of 20 per cent or more.

### *Recruitment and retention*
- Respondents felt that there needs to be more transparency in the recruitment process. LEAs and schools should provide an indication of the number of people interviewed for posts, who the job was given to, how many black teachers are employed as teachers in each borough, and at what level.
- Lack of staff development and promotion are major reasons for black teachers leaving the profession.
- Love and passion for teaching are major reasons for black teachers entering and staying in the profession.
- Racism has a major impact on the every day experiences of black teachers. To encourage more black people to become teachers, racism in schools must be challenged and support mechanisms put in place to enable staff and pupils to counteract racist experiences.

### *Promotion and recognition*
- Respondents felt that 'not knowing the rules of the game' or 'not being in the know' when applying for promotion or when posts are soon to be made available often works against black staff. This information is frequently disseminated at informal meetings outside the workplace where black staff are less likely to be represented.
- Black teachers feel that preference is often given to overseas-trained teachers, who often do not have UK qualified teaching status,

rather than experienced black teachers when posts of responsibility are available.
- The main deterrent to black teachers applying for permanent posts was a lack of confidence that they will get the job – 'we don't think we will get the jobs so we are not going for them'.
- Respondents reported unfairness in the way threshold payments are awarded to staff, with guidelines not always followed. Consequently black teachers feel that they are less likely to be successful in applications.

### Support
- Black teachers are concerned by the lack of support and career progression for many black staff, for example on issues such as access to continuing professional development and knowledge of appropriate courses and development opportunities.
- Respondents felt that an independent support network, offering advice, guidance on professional development opportunities and social interaction for black teachers would be hugely beneficial.

### Preparing future teachers
- Teacher training materials need to be more relevant to preparing students for teaching in the 21st century in a multicultural society. Teacher trainers need to be made aware of diversity and race equality issues to have the necessary impact on future teachers.

### Teaching black children
- Black teachers who have been through the British educational system feel that they understand what is required to effectively engage and nurture black children in schools.
- Black teachers' commitment to teaching children often results in them taking on a heavy workload. This workload is increased where black teachers feel they have to carry the additional burden of raising black pupils' achievement.
- Black teachers felt that all teachers should have responsibility for ensuring they have the required knowledge to deal with multicultural and equal opportunity issues in schools, and to act as role models to all pupils.

## Black teachers and parents
*Relationships with schools*
- Black teachers feel that black parents often 'fear authority', which sometimes leaves them unable to challenge negative aspects of their children's schooling. In some cases this may be due to the parents having suffered at the hands of the education system themselves.
- Black parents feel that schools do not make sufficient effort to communicate with them so that positive teacher-parent relationships can develop. Schools need to develop an understanding of diverse communities to gain an understanding of the perspectives of black parents and to avoid negative stereotypes. Black parents feel that positive communication with schools was the exception rather than the norm, but where it existed it was more likely to come from black teachers.
- Black parents overwhelmingly believed that senior management in schools perceived them negatively, seeing their skin colour first rather than their position as parents.
- Low teacher expectations of black children continue to be a major concern for black parents. Some parents saw educating their children in the Caribbean as the only way to avoid this.

*Understanding diversity*
- The increasing use of overseas-trained teachers with little or no experience of teaching in a diverse environment was a concern to black parents, with a view that some schools continue to display a lack of knowledge and respect for other cultures.
- Black parents feel that resources used in schools should be more reflective of the communities that are being taught. Black parents and teachers advocate the implementation of a more diverse curriculum in school.
- Black teachers and parents highlighted the need for mentoring programmes and role model exercises in schools to reach beyond entertainment and sport idols. Recruiting good black teachers, particularly males, is imperative.
- Parents reported that they have also had good experiences regarding their children's schooling with white teachers, and as such good quality teaching is vital. Good people skills are needed to teach in London, with a liking for all races and a commitment to seeing black children as 'children', rather than as 'black children'.

# 1  background

## Background and aims

This report, commissioned by the Mayor of London, follows on from a major piece of research also commissioned by the Mayor through the London Development Agency to examine the educational experiences of black boys in London, 2000-03 (2004). That report considered in great detail the reasons for the continuing underachievement of black boys in schools when compared to their peers. This report seeks to build on that research by seeking the views of black teachers about their contribution in raising achievement for black children, and also to consider what steps are necessary to address the problems of recruiting and retaining a representative teaching workforce for London.

This study was commissioned with three main aims. These were to examine:

· the factors with the greatest impact on the recruitment, development, progression and retention of black teachers in London
· the views of black teachers and parents as to the factors affecting the educational achievement of black pupils
· the views of black teachers and parents as to the effect that the presence of black teachers in the classroom has on raising black pupil performance.

The intention was also to consider more broadly:

· whether black teachers consider themselves as role models, and if so, for whom
· if there is anything distinctive about being a black teacher and what this means in practice
· black teachers' relationships with parents
· the educational needs of black children and the concerns/priorities of black parents with regard to the education of their children
· black parental involvement in the education of their children.

In addition to the above, the report provides an update on the numbers and distribution of black teachers in London, with comparative data on the distribution of pupils and the general population. The report also includes a review of relevant literature and policy issues involved in the recruitment, retention and promotion of (black) teachers.

# 2 introduction

## Why does the number of black teachers matter?

Teachers make a particular and highly significant contribution to children's understanding of society and their development of social ideas. Because virtually all children attend school for a very large proportion of their time between the ages of five and 16, teachers are the largest group of professionals with whom children most consistently meet in their everyday lives. Pupils will learn important lessons about who has power, authority and prestige from the composition of their school's teaching workforce.

Developing an understanding of the numbers of black teachers in the profession and their location is important if we are to establish where the shortfalls are and how a more representative workforce can be achieved. Making sure the teaching force is simply 'representative' could be seen just as tokenism - making sure there are enough black faces around. But the characteristics of education make the selection of whom we entrust to teach very important. Having a teaching force that better represents society is critical because of the character, ubiquity, pervasiveness, duration and importance of teaching as a social activity. There are three specific reasons why we need more teachers from black and minority ethnic groups:

1 Teachers as a profession must have the capacity to reflect the full spectrum of cultural and social traditions and systems through their collective professional practice. Each individual teacher brings to their work a set of cultural norms and expectations. Good teachers are reflective and self-critically aware of this, but none of us can recognise all the culturally and socially determined preconceptions we carry. It is important the teaching profession as a whole can match the range of cultural and social varieties that our society contains. London has a hugely diverse population with a wide range of cultures, customs, languages, faiths and beliefs. Our educational system needs to be delivered by teams of professionals who can match that range, in their explicit practice and in their subconscious behaviour and attitudes.

Both the formal and the hidden curriculum need to be managed and delivered in a way that reflects the varieties of social practice in our society, and this in turn demands that the teaching profession is drawn fully and explicitly from that range of cultures and ethnicities in our society. With such a range of teachers, we can aspire towards delivering an education that has the subtlety and the nuance to make each individual feel that their cultural set is acknowledged and valued, thus empowering them as a learner. Without such a range of teachers, this cannot even be an aspiration.

2   Racism and xenophobia - individual, institutional and otherwise -
    continue to be major issues in contemporary society. Racism in schools
    needs to be very explicitly and forcefully challenged - partly because
    this is the moment in the development of personal value systems that
    it can be stopped and challenged, and second because of its effects on
    both minority communities and the majority community. Minorities will
    be disempowered and disenfranchised as learners, with all the social
    and economic wastage that this implies. The majority groups will
    develop attitudes of intolerance and an inability to value diversity.

    Tackling discriminatory behaviour is important in classrooms and
    schools, but racism is not always explicit and obvious - or even
    intentional. Racism is a very important concern for all teachers, but
    some of the subtleties of racist practice and behaviour may be more
    obvious, or be more capable of recognition, by teachers who have
    some direct experience of having suffered from racist behaviours
    themselves. Teachers from the majority community, however well
    intentioned, trained and experienced they are in anti-racist work, may
    still be unaware of and unable to identify and analyse much of the
    xenophobia and racism in society.

3   We need aspirational role models for our pupils, particularly our black
    and minority ethnic pupils. We know that our black and minority ethnic
    communities are generally poorly represented in positions of power,
    authority and prestige in our society. We clearly need more police
    officers, social workers, accountants, politicians, senior civil servants,
    captains of industry (and so on) from black and minority ethnic
    backgrounds. But teachers are a particular and special category: they
    are the one face of civil society that every child will meet, every
    working day, through the whole of their formal education. It is
    therefore particularly critical that this 'face' of civil power be seen,
    visibly and explicitly, to represent all of our society. This is where such
    inclusiveness is essential.

The presence of teachers drawn from all the ethnic groups of our society
(and equally, from all the ranges of disability, from all the sexualities, from
all social classes) will mean that from the outset, all pupils - white
majority just as much as black and minority ethnic - will recognise that
members of the minorities have as much power and prestige as any other
citizen. It also ensures that pupils who themselves come from black and
minority ethnic groups will understand that they too can and should
aspire to excellence, esteem and authority.

This is not arguing that we need black teachers for black pupils. Such arguments are sometimes put forward, on the basis that a black teacher better understands the culture and norms of black pupils, and that the black communities should be served by schools specifically staffed with black teachers. There is an on-going debate on this, but it should be noted that most existing black teachers suggest that they do not wish to be stereotyped as 'ethnic teachers', or pigeon-holed into teaching posts that are specifically to deal with minority ethnic pupils. They see themselves first and foremost as teachers. The argument asserted above is that we need black teachers for all pupils, even - perhaps particularly - in areas where there are low proportions of minority ethnic pupils.

There are concerns about the levels of educational attainment of some black pupils in schools: for example, as raised in the 2003 DfES consultation document *Aiming High: Raising the Achievement of Minority Ethnic Pupils.* Speaking to this, the Black Londoners' Forum maintained that:

*Black teachers play a critical role in supporting, encouraging and educating black pupils. They also provide a positive role model and validate black pupil's culture and identity. More black teachers are needed in the UK schooling system and there needs to be a clear strategic focus on recruiting, retaining, training and supporting black teachers.*

In short, black teachers make a huge difference simply by being black teachers in our schools. The challenge now is to ensure that the relatively few black teachers we do have are given all the support and development they need in order for them to fulfil their critical role in our society and to ensure that they are not left behind in the same way too many black children have been.

## Statistical overview of the teaching workforce

### A note on terminology

The statistical analysis that follows is based on various data sources that rely on respondents to identify their own ethnic category. Under the term 'black' we are often able to include those who define themselves as of Black-Caribbean origin, Black-African origin and 'Black Other' origin categories, and those who define themselves as of mixed black and white origin. These are the categories used in the 2001 National Census, and while there may be some debate over their appropriateness, and about the existence of other 'hyphenated' ethnicities (such as 'Black-British'), these categories at least have the merit of being widely used and understood. It should be noted, however, that these identities are self-ascribed, and different identifications may be given by the same individual in varying circumstances.

'Teachers' is not a straightforward category either. In this report we are referring to teachers employed in maintained schools, thus excluding private schools for which data is much more difficult to obtain. Much of the detailed data on teacher ethnicity collated by the DfES subsumes under 'teachers' both regular qualified teachers (full-time and part-time) and 'teachers without qualified teacher status'. While only 3.8 per cent of all such 'teachers' in England and Wales are non-qualified teachers, in London 10.2 per cent are unqualified, and in some London LEAs this is over 17 per cent. Anecdotal evidence suggests that minority ethnic teachers may be overrepresented in the unqualified category, and that as a result the proportion of black qualified teachers may be less than these figures indicate.

'Total Black Origin' refers to the sum of 'Black-Caribbean origin', 'Black-African origin' and 'Black Other origin'. In addition to this group, data is given for each of the three constituent groups. Also provided are two data sets on 'Mixed White and Black-African' and 'Mixed White and Black-Caribbean' groups.

### Sources

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) produce an annual report on *Statistics of Education: School Workforce in England* (London: The Stationary Office). The 2004 edition was published in 2005, and contains national data on teachers drawn from the Database of Teacher Records, the annual 618G survey made of each school and a specific return on teacher ethnicity made by each Local Education Authority (DfES, *School Workforce 2004*, 2005). The data on teacher ethnicity is provided only on a percentage basis, and in the case of different ethnic

groups at the LEA level only to the nearest percentage in whole numbers (though a symbol is used to show returns that are greater than zero and less than 0.5 is employed).

Figures are provided for all of London to the level of a tenth of a percentage point. However, not all teachers provide this information: data was collected for 87.2 per cent of the London teaching workforce (which is higher than the national return rate of 82.3 per cent). This, though, hides considerable local variations: for example, 39 per cent of the workforce in Havering refused to supply information (seven per cent in Bexley, no other LEA greater than four per cent, virtually complete in over 60 per cent of LEAs), and the information was not collected from 52 per cent of teachers in Barnet (38 per cent in Waltham Forest, 36 per cent in Redbridge, 25 per cent in Hammersmith and Fulham, 18 per cent in Southwark, 15 per cent in Bromley, 14 per cent in Enfield, 13 per cent in Camden; all other LEAs less than eight per cent).

The DfES also produce a companion volume *Statistics of Education: Schools in England* (London: The Stationary Office). The web-based version includes additional data not in the printed volume, and Tables 47a and 47b gives the number of pupils in each ethnic group by age and by Local Education Authority in January 2004 (Table 47a Maintained Primary Schools, Table 47b Maintained Secondary schools). These tables allow an analysis to be made of the distribution of the school population by ethnicity across London (DfES, *Schools 2004*, 2005) (http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/VOL/v000495/webtables3.xls). The return rate is virtually complete.

The results of the 2001 National Census include details on ethnicity for each London Borough (ONS, *2001 National Census*, 2003).

### How many black teachers are there?
There were 427,700 full-time equivalent regular teachers in maintained schools in England in January 2004, the most recent complete data, of whom 61,600 (14.4 per cent) were in London. In London there were 49,820 qualified regular full-time teachers, 5,310 qualified regular part-time teachers, 6,470 teachers without QTS and 1,660 occasional teachers. By coincidence, this means that there are also 61,600 teachers in the combined categories of full-time, part-time and non-qualified.

We know from the ethnic details of this combined category of full-time, part-time and non-qualified, that approximately 2,340 are of Black-Caribbean origin, 1,478 are of Black-African origin, 493 of Black Other background, about 185 are mixed White and Black-African, and the same

number are of mixed White and Black-Caribbean origin. This gives an approximate figure of 4,681 black or mixed black teachers in London (though because of the levels of rounding in the statistics, this figure might vary by + or - 155). We do not know ethnicity details of 7,880 of these teachers in London: about 500 to 600 of these might be of black origin.

In percentage terms black staff account for 1.5 per cent of the teaching population in England, and 7 per cent of teachers in London (see Table 1). These figures are indicative of the under-representation of black teachers within the teaching profession. This under-representation is further replicated within initial teacher training (Carrington et al., 2001; McCreith, Ross and Hutchings, 2001; Ross 2002).

In 2001, research indicated that black teachers were less likely to be in positions of authority. While 45 per cent of black teachers have qualified teacher status only four per cent are heads/deputy head teachers (McCreith, Ross and Hutchings, 2001).

**Table 1   London and England: Teacher distribution by ethnicity 2004**

|  |  | London % | England % |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| White | White – British | 69.3 | 90.6 |
|  | White – Irish | 3.0 | 1.1 |
|  | Any other White background | 11.4 | 3.6 |
| Mixed | White and Black Caribbean | 0.3 | 0.1 |
|  | White and Black African | 0.3 | 0.1 |
|  | White and Asian | 0.4 | 0.1 |
|  | Any other mixed background | 0.8 | 0.2 |
| Asian or Asian British | Indian | 2.9 | 1.0 |
|  | Pakistani | 0.9 | 0.5 |
|  | Bangladeshi | 0.8 | 0.2 |
|  | Any other Asian background | 1.2 | 0.3 |
| Black or Black British | Black Caribbean | 3.8 | 0.8 |
|  | Black African | 2.4 | 0.5 |
|  | Any other Black background | 0.8 | 0.2 |
| Other | Chinese | 0.3 | 0.1 |
|  | Any other ethic group | 1.5 | 0.5 |
| ------- | Ethnicity Details provided | 87.2 | 82.3 |
|  | Teacher refused | 2.4 | 2.5 |
|  | Information not yet obtained | 10.4 | 15.3 |
| **Total** |  | **100.0** | **100.0** |

Source:    DfES, School Workforce 2004, 2005

*Gender*

In England, men account for 29.6 per cent of full-time equivalent teachers, compared with 70.4 per cent of women. In London, there are almost six times as many female full time teachers (19,740) compared with men (3,400) (DfES, 2005). The under-representation of male teachers is most stark at the primary level. In 2004, 15.7 per cent of primary teaching staff were men, compared with 84.3 per cent of women. Within the secondary sector, the figures for men and women were 44.8 per cent and 55.2 per cent respectively (DfES, 2005). Although data is not currently recorded that provides details on ethnicity by gender, a national survey of teachers by the General Teaching Council for England (GTCE) in 2003 highlighted the extent of under-representation of Black male teachers, particularly Black Caribbean men (see Table 2).

*Age*

The age profile of teachers from differing ethnic groups tends to vary. The Commission for Racial Equality reported that staff from minority ethnic backgrounds tended to reflect a bimodal age distribution, their numbers peaking at the 25 to 35 year age group, dipping between 35 and 44 and increasing again between 45 and 54 years (CRE, 1988). However, this does need to be considered in the context of changing policy initiatives and the recent commitment to increase the number of those entering teacher training and the teacher workforce. For example, more recent research reveals that black teachers tend to have younger age profiles compared with their white colleagues (see Ross, 2002; NUT, 2003).

**Table 2   Teachers in London – gender and ethnicity**

| Ethnicity | % male | % female |
|---|---|---|
| White | 23.0 | 77.0 |
| Black Caribbean | 18.2 | 81.8 |
| Black African | 33.0 | 67.0 |
| Other Black | 25.8 | 74.2 |
| Indian | 18.9 | 81.1 |
| Pakistani | 24.4 | 75.6 |
| Bangladeshi | 42.9 | 57.1 |
| Any other | 22.2 | 77.8 |
| All teachers | 23.0 | 77.0 |

Source:    GTCE, Survey, 2003

*Black teachers in London schools*
The GTCE (2003) teacher survey further suggests that Black Caribbean
and Black African teachers work significantly more in secondary schools
than in primary schools and that they are less likely to be found in special
schools and other educational establishments (see Table 3) [the figures
for Black Other teachers are too small for generalisations to be made].

**Table 3     Teachers in London - schools and ethnicity**

|                  | Primary | Secondary | Special/ other schools |
|------------------|---------|-----------|------------------------|
| White            | 49.6    | 45.0      | 5.4                    |
| Black Caribbean  | 43.2    | 54.1      | 2.7                    |
| Black African    | 41.6    | 56.8      | 1.6                    |
| Other Black      | 40.4    | 51.7      | 7.9                    |
| Asian            | 57.4    | 40.5      | 2.1                    |
| Any other        | 50.0    | 46.9      | 3.1                    |
| All teachers     | 49.5    | 45.3      | 5.2                    |

Source:    GTCE, Survey, 2003

**Distribution of black teachers and pupils in England and London**
In 2004, black pupils accounted for 21.7 per cent of all pupils in London
(see Table 4). Black-African and Black-Caribbean pupils made up the
highest percentage of black pupils in London, at 10.02 per cent and
6.94 per cent respectively (see Fig.1). Figure 1 below illustrates the
predominance of Black pupils in London schools.

**Figure 1   Number of black pupils of compulsory school age by sector, London, January 2004**
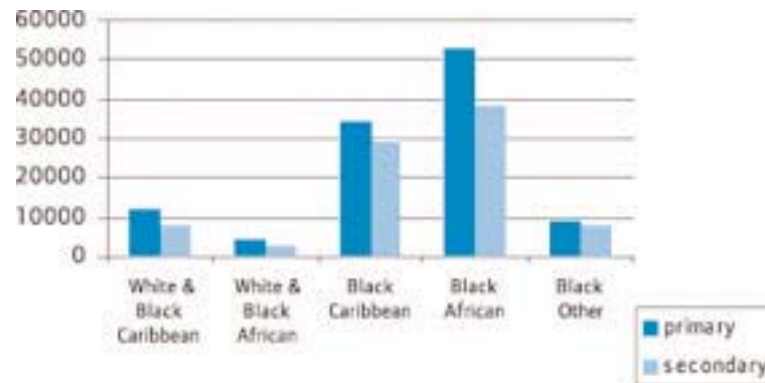


Source:   DfES, 2004

Available data shows the gender distribution by ethnicity for England. Of the black pupil population in England, 11.25 per cent were male and 11.96 per cent were female (DfES, 2004).

London has a higher proportion of black teachers than any other part of England, but by comparing the statistics on teacher and pupil population it can be seen that there are three times as many Black pupils in London compared with Black teachers; a similar rate for England as a whole.

**Table 4   Black and minority ethnic teacher and pupil percentages, England and London, 2004**

|  | England | | London | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | **Teachers** | **Pupils** | **Teachers** | **Pupils** |
| All minority ethnic groups | 9.4% | 19.7% | 30.7% | 57.1% |
| Black groups | 1.7% | 4.8% | 7.6% | 21.7% |

The 2001 Census indicates that 9 per cent of the population of England and Wales is from a minority ethnic background, most of whom (46 per cent) live in London. 61 per cent of the Black Caribbean population of England and Wales and 78 per cent of the Black African population live in London (ONS 2004).

The maps on the following pages show the distribution across London of various black groups of teachers, pupils and the general population. They demonstrate that these groups are not distributed equally through London. The maps also show the very wide variations in numbers. The outer south-west, outer north-west and outer north-east LEAs have very few black teachers. Teachers of African origin tend to be concentrated in schools in the outer north-east (for example, Waltham Forest, Redbridge, Enfield, Barnet), inner north, (like Hackney, Haringey, Islington, Camden, Westminster) inner west (Kensington and Chelsea, Hammersmith and Fulham) and inner south (such as Southwark, Lambeth, Lewisham and Wandsworth). Teachers of Caribbean origin primarily work in schools located in the inner south, north and west London boroughs.
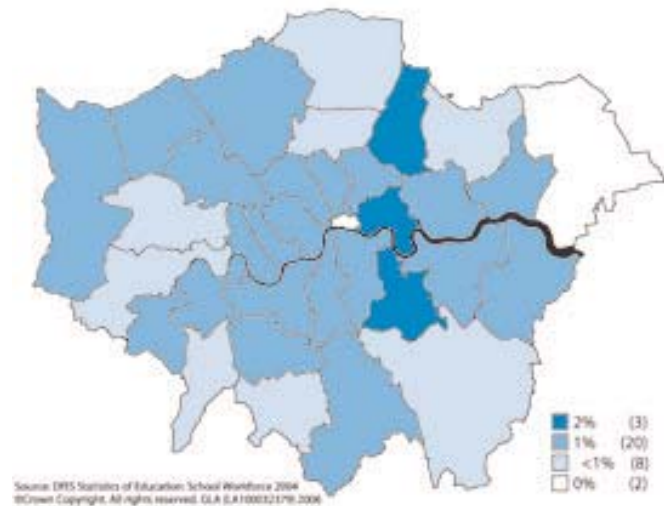
The highest percentage of black teachers (combined total) can be found in the boroughs of Hackney, Lambeth and Southwark (16-18 per cent). Haringey and Brent (14 per cent) and then Lewisham, Newham and Waltham Forest (10-11 per cent) closely follow this. However, when we compare these figures against the black pupil population it is noticeable that black teachers are under-represented in these areas, since black pupils in Lambeth and Southwark LEAs account for 48-50 per cent of all pupils, whereas pupils in Lewisham, Hackney and Haringey account for 37-41 per cent and 31-33 per cent respectively. Black teachers are even further under-represented in areas such as Camden and Kensington and Chelsea, which have a black pupil population of 20-23 per cent but only two to three per cent of black teachers. Similarly five per cent of black teachers are employed in Enfield, which has a black pupil population of 17-18 per cent.

Another example of the under-representation of black teachers in schools is of Black-Caribbean teachers, who represent five per cent of the teaching workforce in the City of London, yet Black-Caribbean pupils account for 17-18 per cent of students in the LEA.

Comparisons between the distribution of black teachers and black pupils in London illustrate the extent to which there are insufficient numbers of black teachers to serve a diverse pupil population in London schools.

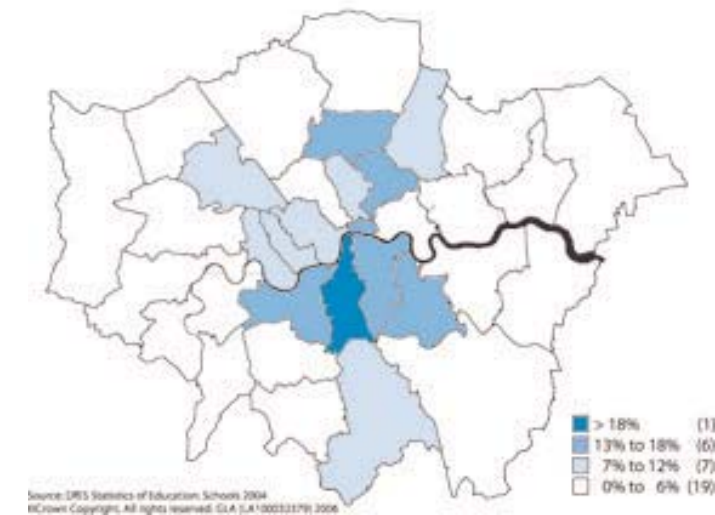## Population of Black Caribbean origin
### Teachers by LEA



Source: DfES Statistics of Education School Workforce 2004
©Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. GLA (LA100032379) 2006

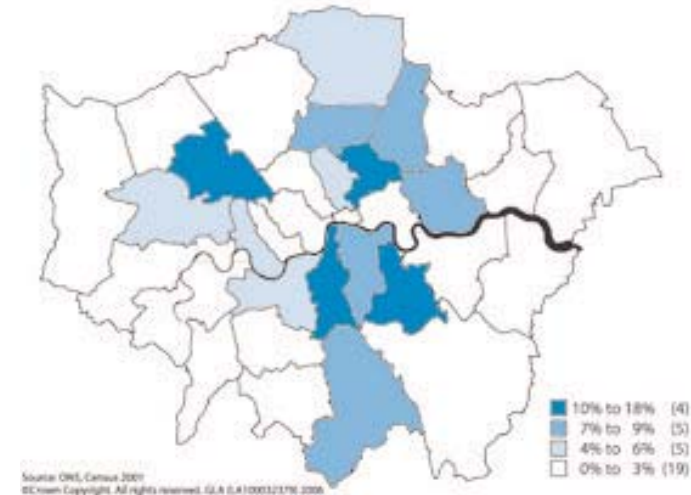| Black Caribbean teachers in each LEA | |
|---|---|
| 10% | Hackney, Lambeth Southwark |
| 9% | Haringey, Brent |
| 6% | Lewisham, Waltham Forest |
| 5% | City of London, Newham |
| 4% | Hammersmith & Fulham, Islington, Tower Hamlets, Wandsworth,Croydon, Greenwich |
| 3% | Ealing, Enfield, Harrow, Merton |
| 2% | Westminster, Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Redbridge |
| 1% | Camden, Kensington & Chelsea, Bexley, Bromley, Hillingdon, Hounslow |
| 0.5% | Havering, Kingston upon Thames, Richmond upon Thames, Sutton |
| **Average 3.8%** | |

### Pupils by LEA



Source: DfES Statistics of Education Schools 2004
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| Black Caribbean pupils in each LEA | |
|---|---|
| 21% | Lambeth |
| 17-18% | City of London, Hackney, Lewisham |
| 13-14% | Haringey, Southwark, Wandsworth |
| 11-12% | Brent, Croydon |
| 9-10% | Hammersmith & Fulham, Waltham Forest |
| 7-8% | Islington, Kensington & Chelsea, Westminster |
| 5-6% | Newham, Ealing, Enfield, Merton |
| 3-4% | Camden, Tower Hamlets, Greenwich, Harrow, Redbridge |
| 1-2% | Barking& Dagenham, Barnet, Bromley, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Richmond upon Thames, Sutton |
| < 1% | Bexley, Havering, Kingston upon Thames |
| **Average 6.9%** | |

### General population by LEA



Source: ONS, Census 2001
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| Black Caribbean population in each LEA | |
|---|---|
| 12% | Lambeth,Lewisham |
| 10% | Hackney,Brent |
| 9% | Haringey |
| 8% | Croydon, Waltham Forest |
| 7% | Newham, Southwark |
| 5% | Hammersmith & Fulham, Enfield |
| 4% | Islington,Wandsworth, Ealing |
| 3% | Westminster, Greenwich, Merton, Redbridge |
| 2% | Kensington & Chelsea, Tower Hamlets, Barking & Dagenham, Harrow |
| 1% | Camden, Barnet, Bromley, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Sutton |
| <1% | City of London, Bexley ,Havering, Kingston upon Thames, Richmond upon Thames |
| **Average 4.8%** | |

## Population of Black African origin
### Teachers by LEA



Source: DfES Statistics of Education School Workforce 2004
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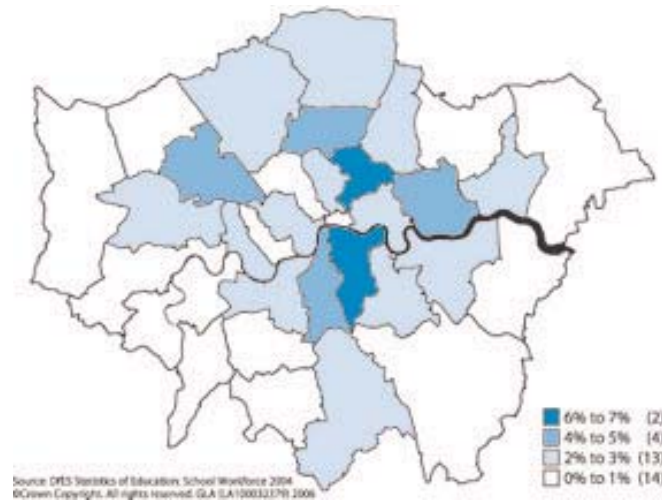
| Black African Teachers in each LEA | |
|---|---|
| 7% | Southwark |
| 6% | Hackney |
| 5% | Lambeth, Haringey |
| 4% | Brent, Newham |
| 3% | Greenwich, Islington, Lewisham, Tower Hamlets, Barnet, Waltham Forest |
| 2% | Hammersmith & Fulham, Wandsworth, Westminster, Barking & Dagenham, Croydon, Ealing, Enfield |
| 1% | Kensington & Chelsea, Bexley, Bromley, Harrow, Havering, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Merton, Redbridge, Richmond upon Thames, Sutton |
| 0.5% | Camden, Kingston upon Thames |
| **Average 2.4%** | |

### Pupils by LEA



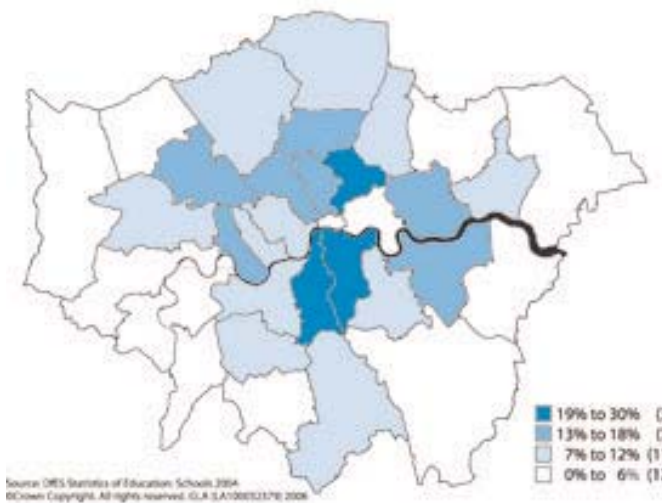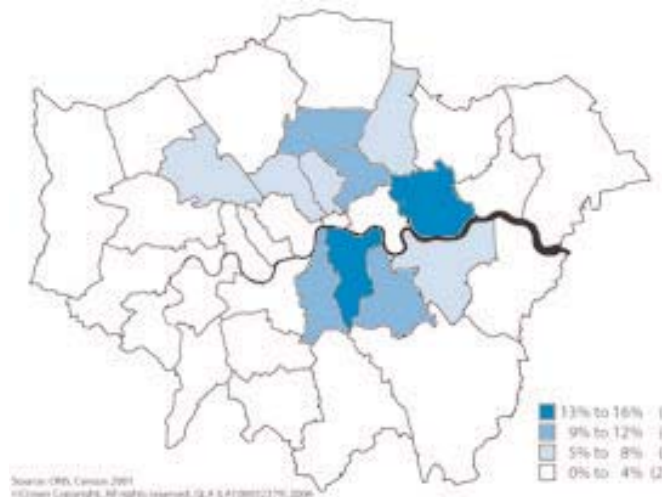Source: DfES Statistics of Education Schools 2004
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| Black African Pupils in each LEA | |
|---|---|
| 30% | Southwark |
| 21-23% | Hackney, Lamberth |
| 17-18% | Haringey, Newham |
| 15% | Islington |
| 13-14% | Brent, Camden, Greenwich, Hammersmith & Fulham |
| 11-12% | Lewisham, Wandsworth, Westminster |
| 9-10% | Kensington & Chelsea, Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Ealing, Enfield |
| 7% | Croydon, Merton, Waltham Forest |
| 5-6% | City, Tower Hamlets, Hounslow, Harrow, Redbridge |
| 3-4% | Bexley, Hillingdon |
| 1-2% | Bromley, Havering, Kingston upon Thames |
| **Average 10.0%** | |

### General population by LEA



Source: DfES, Census, 2001
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| Black African Population in each LEA | |
|---|---|
| 15-16% | Southwark |
| 13-14% | Newham |
| 11-12% | Hackney, Lambeth |
| 9-10% | Haringey, Lewisham |
| 7-8% | Brent, Greenwich |
| 5-6% | Camden, Islington, Waltham Forest |
| 3-4% | Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, Tower Hamlets, Wandsworth, Westminster, Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Croydon, Ealing, Enfield, Merton, Redbridge |
| 1-2% | City of London, Bexley, Bromley, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Sutton |
| <1% | Havering, Richmond upon Thames |
| **Average 5.3%** | |

## Population of 'Other Black' origin
### Teachers by LEA



Source: DfES Statistics of Education School Workforce 2004
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Legend:
- 2% (3)
- 1% (20)
- <1% (8)
- 0% (2)
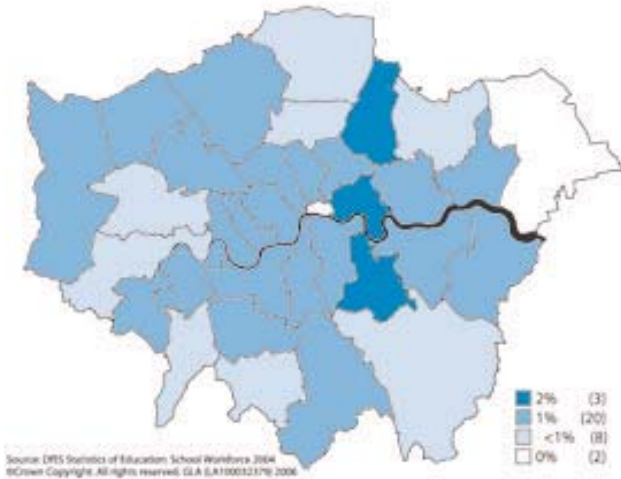
| Other Black Origin Teachers in each LEA | |
|---|---|
| 2% | Lewisham, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest |
| 1% | Camden,Hackney,Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, Lambeth, Newham, Southwark, Wandsworth, Westminster, Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Bexley, Brent, Croydon, Greenwich, Harrow, Hillingdon, Merton, Richmond upon Thames |
| <1% | City of London, Haringey, Bromley, Ealing, Enfield, Havering, Hounslow, Kingston upon Thames, Redbridge, Sutton |
| **Average 0.8%** | |

### Pupils by LEA



Source: DfES Statistics of Education: Schools 2004
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Legend:
- 6% (1)
- 4% to 5% (2)
- 2% to 3% (11)
- <1% (19)
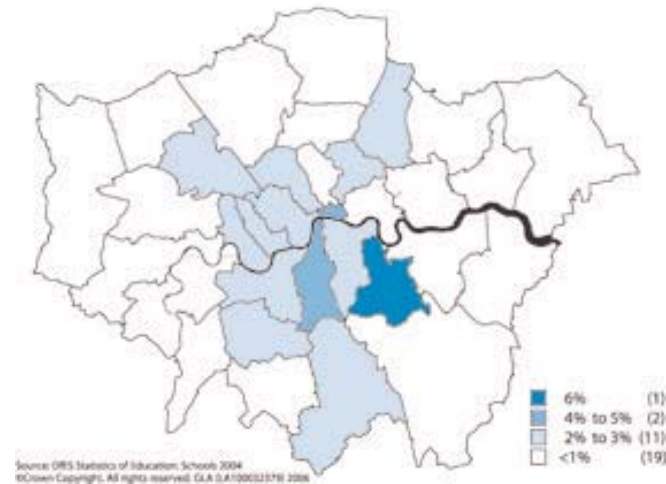
| Other Black Origin Pupils in each LEA | |
|---|---|
| 6% | Lewisham |
| 5% | City of London, Lambeth |
| 4% | – |
| 3% | Southwark,Wandsworth, Croydon |
| 2% | Camden, Hackney, Hammersmith & Fulham, Westminster, Brent, Merton, Waltham Forest |
| 1% | Haringey, Islington, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Enfield, Greenwich, Harrow, Hounslow, Redbridge |
| <1% | Bexley, Bromley ,Havering, Hillingdon, Kingston upon Thames,Richmond upon Thames, Sutton |
| **Average 1.84%** | |

### General population by LEA



Source: ONS, Census 2001
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Legend:
- 2% (3)
- 1% (8)
- 0.5% to 0.9% (7)
- <0.5% (15)

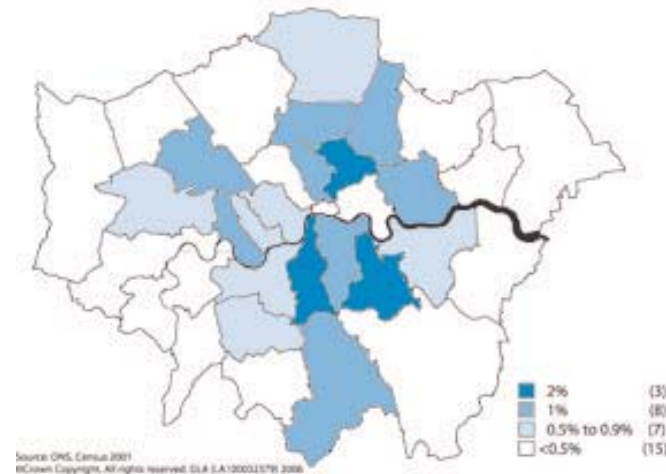| Other Black Origin Population in each LEA | |
|---|---|
| 2% | Hackney, Lambeth, Lewisham |
| 1% | Hammersmith & Fulham, Haringey, Islington,Newham, Southwark, Brent, Croydon, Waltham Forest |
| <1% | Camden, City of London, Kensington & Chelsea, Tower Hamlets, Wandsworth, Westminster, Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Bexley, Bromley, Ealing, Enfield, Greenwich, Harrow, Havering,Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kingston upon Thames, Merton, Redbridge, Richmond upon Thames, Sutton |
| **Average 0.84%** | |

## Population of total Black origin

### *Teachers by LEA*
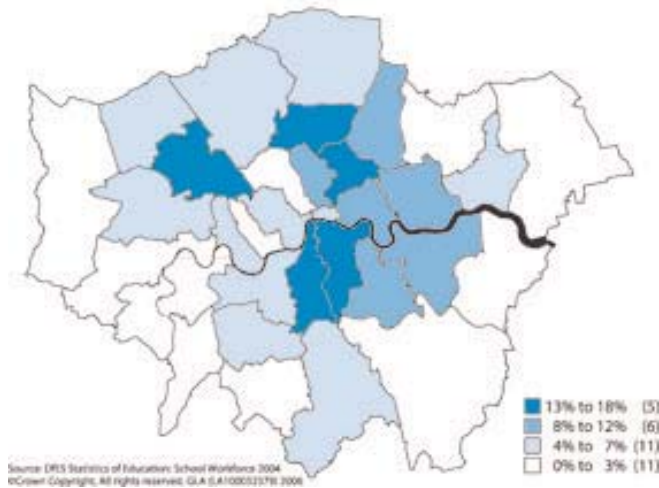


| Total black origin Teachers in each LEA | |
|---|---|
| 16-18% | Hackney, Lambeth, Southwark |
| 14% | Haringey, Brent |
| 10-11% | Lewisham, Newham, Walthan Forest |
| 8-9% | Islington, Tower Hamlets, Greenwich |
| 6-7% | Hammersmith & Fulham, Wandsworth, Barnet, Croydon |
| 5% | City of London, Westminster, Barking & Dagenham, Ealing, Enfield, Harrow, Merton |
| 2-3% | Camden, Kensington & Chelsea, Bexley, Sutton, Bromley, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Redbridge, Richmond upon Thames |
| 1% | Havering, Kingston upon Thames |
| **Average 7.0%** | |

### *Pupils by LEA*



| Total black origin Pupils in each LEA | |
|---|---|
| 48-50% | Lambeth, Southwark |
| 37-41% | Lewisham, Hackney |
| 31-33% | Haringey |
| 26-29% | City of London, Brent, Hammersmith, Islington, Newham, Wandswoth |
| 20-23% | Camden, Kensington & Chelsea, Westminster, Croydon, Greenwich, Waltham Forest |
| 17-18% | Ealing, Enfield, Merton |
| 11-14% | Tower Hamlets, Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Harrow, Redbridge |
| 9% | Hounslow |
| 5% | Bexley, Brent, Hillingdon |
| 3-4% | Havering, Sutton, Richmond upon Thames, Kingston upon Thames |
| **Average 18.8%** | |

### *General population by LEA*



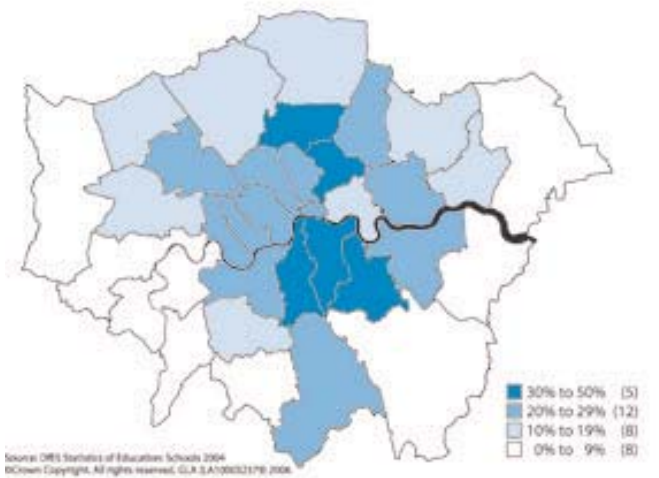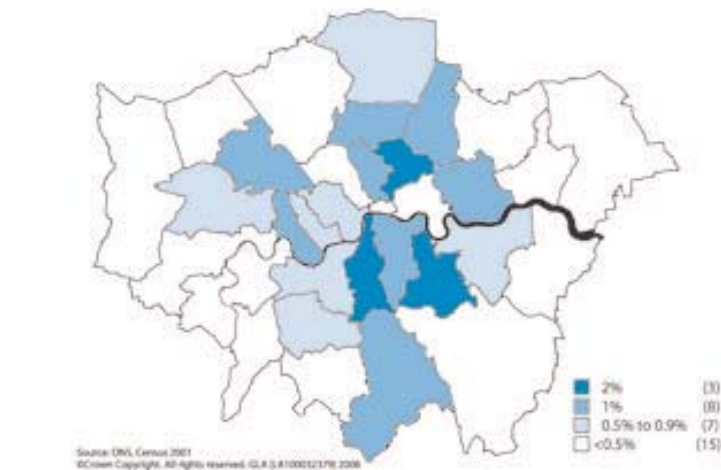| Total black origin Population in each LEA | |
|---|---|
| 25% | Lambeth, Southwark |
| 21-23% | Hackney, Lewisham, Newham |
| 19% | Haringey, Brent |
| 13-14% | Croydon, Waltham Forest |
| 11-12% | Islington, Greenwich |
| 9-10% | Hammersmith & Fulham, Enfield, Camden, Ealing, Wandsworth, Westminster |
| 7-8% | Merton, Kensington & Chelsea, Tower Hamlets, Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Redbridge |
| 6% | Harrow |
| 3-4% | Hounslow, City of London, Bexley, Bromley, Hillingdon, Sutton |
| 1-2% | Kingston upon Thames, Havering, Richmond upon Thames |
| **Average 11.22%** | |

## Teacher training

The Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA - since September 2005; formerly the Teacher Training Agency - TTA) is the national agency for England responsible for attracting people into training to teach, and for the quality of teacher education. It also has responsibility for working with schools to enable them to develop and train their staff.

The TDA uses the term 'minority ethnic groups' to refer to all minority ethnic groups as classified by the 2001 Census. These include those under the black or Black-British, Asian or Asian-British, Mixed and Chinese or Other Ethnic Background categories (see Appendix 1 for details). The figures reported in this section reflect these categories.

### *Recruitment and retention of minority ethnic trainees*

In 2003, seven per cent (2,637[5]) of new entrants to Initial Teacher Training (ITT) courses were from a minority ethnic background. As part of its commitment to achieving a more representative teaching workforce (TTA 2003a) the then TTA (2003b) set a national target of recruiting and retaining nine per cent of trainees from a minority ethnic background by November 2005-06, which has now been reached[6]. In London, the TDA negotiates separate voluntary targets with each university or partnership training provider reflecting a demographic profile calculated depending on provider location and opportunity to recruit locally.

The dropout rate of teacher trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds (9 per cent) is greater than White trainees (5 per cent - www.tda.gov.uk). In view of the difficulties experienced in attracting and retaining minority ethnic trainees, the TDA allocated £1.5million in 2002, per year for three years, to support initial teacher training providers (ITTPs) to enable them to recruit and retain trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds. Providers receive initial payment for attracting these trainees and a subsequent payment once they complete the course. In 2003/04, this amounted to £90 per retained trainee achieving Qualified Teacher Status (TTA 2004).

*Successful strategies*

The TDA has been able to identify key strategies employed by ITTPs who have been successful in increasing recruitment and retention among trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds. These are:

- reviewing data on enquiries, applications, acceptances and registration; identifying any areas for further investigation
- reviewing their recruitment process informed by the experiences of minority ethnic applicants
- identifying why applicants from minority ethnic backgrounds were not successful and considering the implications for their recruitment
- exploring the reasons for minority ethnic applicants not registering for courses
- encouraging all trainees to declare their ethnicity.

focus groups I: black teachers

# 3 teaching as a career: recruitment and progression

The following pages explore the reasons black teachers enter the profession, the type of schools they are attracted to work in, and the type of experiences they encountered with regard to recruitment and career progression. The section concludes by examining black teachers' access to continuing professional development courses.

## Reasons for entering the teaching profession

*'To contribute my skills, experience and to help pupils in an aspect of their educational development.'*

Four main reasons were identified for entering teaching. These were:

- A lifelong ambition to teach children and an enthusiasm for learning, coupled with the desire to 'make a difference in all children's lives'.
- The ability to combine raising a family with teaching.
- By chance, having started out in other careers.
- Encouragement by others.

Other reasons, but nonetheless important, included:

- Being inspired to enter teaching by their own experience of black teachers.
- A response to the lack of black teachers in the educational system.
- The notion of being a role model to black pupils.
- A commitment to 'empowering' black children to 'fight the negativity' in schools.
- The appeal of positively contributing to raising the achievement of black pupils.

*'I had retired and I wanted to do something different. [...] I looked at social services, caring, all sorts, and I thought let's go into the classroom because at the time there was a lot of media coverage of African-Caribbean children underachieving, so that was my motive.'*

*'One of my biggest objectives really coming into the profession was to be a role model, to relate something to those children, kind of to the service in a way.'*

### Schools that black teachers are attracted to work in
#### Encouraging academic and life skills

The main priority for choosing a school was to be able to make a difference to the educational outcomes of all children, and is reflected in black teachers being located in schools with a higher percentage of black pupils and schools with more diverse populations. A common thread that ran through all of the comments made is the notion of 'empowering' black children to achieve, and it is for this particular reason that some black teachers opt to work in predominantly black schools.

*'I feel very comfortable being in a school with quite a high majority of black children and I suppose I've got a desire to raise the level of achievement amongst as many of the children that I come into contact with as much as possible, be they black, white or indifferent. But I suppose more important, because black children are underachieving, I make a conscious effort to actually focus a lot of my choice on those schools that have a high percentage of black children.'*

The intention is to help black children to acquire, not just an education that facilitates the acquisition of academic qualifications, but one that enables them to 'understand the system they are living in'. It is clear that these teachers want to uplift black children and see this as an essential element of their role. They make reference to 'my children', 'our children' and wanting to enable black children to make positive academic/life choices, while at the same time nurturing a positive self-identity among vulnerable black pupils through a collective struggle that also involves giving 'something back' to the wider black community. Having (in some cases) been through the British educational system themselves, they understand what is required to effectively engage and nurture black children to achieve.

#### The role of ethnicity

In choosing schools, black teachers want an environment in which they feel comfortable. One teacher summed this up as being a school where:

*'...I think my skills are going to be used, where I think I'm going to learn and where I'm going to get the help and support that I need to be able to give help and support.'*

Feeling comfortable is partly underpinned by a teacher workforce that was representative of wider society and one to which they could relate. A teacher who had recently left a multicultural school to work in a borough 'where there is not so much of a multicultural mix' suggested that the wrong choice had been made.

*'I want to be in the mix. I want to be in a school where there is a huge mix of different people. I just feel that my skills are better used there. [...] I really feel that at a well-mixed, multicultural school there are a lot more things and you learn so much. As a teacher you learn so much from those children. So I think not being there, I really do miss not being in that mix.'*

The notion of making the wrong choice was reinforced by working with staff who 'use words like "coloured"' and being the 'only person that says anything about it'. Other teachers echoed similar sentiments about predominantly white schools being 'uncomfortable' environments for black teachers; hence some preferred a 'reasonable' balance of black and white. Arguably, if predominantly white schools are 'uncomfortable' for black teachers they are likely to be experienced as such by black pupils.

## Recruitment

Respondents had mixed experiences of recruitment. While some encountered 'no problems' in securing permanent posts, several found it difficult, suggesting that their face does not fit in with the type of person that some school governing bodies want to employ. Consequently, many had started their teaching careers as supply teachers. One teacher reported working for nine years before she found a permanent teaching post.

*'I think governing bodies know the face of the school that they want, that public face, and I think it takes them to go across years and years of tradition to take that kind of step. To say, "yes, I am happy to have a black head teacher or black deputy". Some governing bodies of some schools are still uncomfortable with black head teachers. You have to look at how our governing bodies are made up, and [if] the parents in the school are uncomfortable with that, the community might be uncomfortable with that.'*

Some believed that they were recruited by schools to give the impression that the school was representative of wider society when it was not, and at the same time to avoid being reprimanded by Ofsted.

*'Ofsted was coming so they knew our recruitment was going to be a problem, so they have now got four black teachers.'*

Other obstacles included the selection and interview process. There were concerns that when black teachers are being interviewed, interviewers are often overzealous in their approach and concern in ensuring that the black staff appointed were 'good enough'.

*'I was Key Stage 2 and I was going to be the school maths co-ordinator and I had nine people interview me, the divisional inspector, the opted out inspector, the maths inspector and various other people. But it's good in a sense that you know what you are doing. You have got to do your preparation and be really, really, really prepared and just do the groundwork really if you want it.'*

Even when considered 'good enough', many black teachers were still not appointed to desired posts.

*'It's very rare you see black head teachers getting the good suburban schools because you never get through the door. It doesn't matter how good you are or how experienced you are. I mean you just don't even get to the interview stage because the bit about being Caribbean or African or Asian gets in the way. And it doesn't matter your experience, your qualifications or how good you are. So I think there are many obstacles besides doing a good job on the day.'*

This contributed to them feeling that they were 'going to have to work harder than their colleagues to get those jobs'.

Teachers were uneasy that schools being 'mindful of their public face' were denying pupils access to quality black teachers. Many were concerned about the extent of influence of governing bodies in appointing black staff to senior posts.

*'I still think it has a lot to do with the power base not just within the school but more importantly with the governing body and the local authority, because any senior post there is usually a panel that is representative of all three sections. And yes, in some schools you can be heavily influenced by the senior management as to which candidate will get the job even before they come through the door, regardless of whether they have got the wider knowledge, or the qualifications or the experiences. It ultimately boils down to those governors and that panel making that decision.'*

*'This is my fourth headship [...] and certainly what I've seen is that the obstacles come [...] certainly from governing bodies. The amount of times when I've been trying to recruit black staff and you have the entire governing body almost looking in your face and saying: 'not in our school'. Even when they're the best candidate!'*

This led some to call for transparency of the recruitment process, with LEAs providing an indication of the number of people interviewed for

posts, who the job was given to and how many black teachers are employed as teachers (and at what level) in each borough. There were also queries as to why Ofsted did not appear to be monitoring this as a priority.

The perception that some schools did not want to employ black teachers is perpetuated by the fact that black staff were usually employed on short-term contracts.

*'[...] There are only three [permanent] black teachers in my school. We have other black staff, they [seem to] come in and out.'*

There is also a feeling that, once recruited, schools find it difficult to give experienced black teachers posts of responsibility and/or to promote them, with preference often being given to overseas-trained teachers who do not have UK qualified teaching status.

*'They employ people from New Zealand or Australia who actually do not know the job. So they come in, we bring them up, we teach them in how the system works and then they give them the proper job. This lady, she just came in [...] she did not have any qualified teaching in the state system in this country and she was given the post of literacy co-ordinator, which is what I went in for, and she was given the post on some kind of chance interview. We took them to tribunal because they [the school] refused to let us put in an application, because if they had done that they would have seen our qualifications and experience.'*

Such experiences only serve to reinforce black staff feeling that they do not 'fit in'. Black teachers' experiences of promotion and progression are discussed in more detail below.

### Support
Support from within the school (or rather a lack of) was identified as a major issue. Several teachers highlighted a lack of encouragement/ support from particular individuals (of varying ethnicities). Few had coaches or mentors and, for one head teacher, his mentor was not particularly supportive as he 'only had a limited number of hours' to provide support, after which the head teacher was left on his own to cope.

Common experiences among black teachers included:

· Schools only being concerned about their ability to do the job, as opposed to their well-being as individuals.
· Negative approaches to managing staff... 'here's your classroom, here's your timetable, now don't bother us [when things go wrong]'.

· Feeling unsupported when finding themselves struggling to cope with difficult classes.
· The type of support for black staff depended on the type of school they were located in.

It was argued that unless black teachers who find themselves in those challenging situations are 'strong enough to face the situation (ie challenges of racism) and do something about it' they would become less enthusiastic about teaching and eventually leave. Arguably, this is another reason for some black teachers not wishing to go for middle or upper management positions.

Notwithstanding, there was evidence of black staff being supported by [white] senior managers and also of black staff being supported and unsupported by black managers.

*'I can't say that all managers have found me problematic. I can't say that at all. You know I've worked under people who have really seen my merits, and it's been really progressive.'*

*'I've worked under a black manager and it was the most stressful debilitating period of my time in teaching, but then I've also worked for a black head teacher and it was the opposite. He really recognised what I could do.'*

### Career progression
It is important to note that while promotion and progression are discussed here separately, several teachers used both terms interchangeably during discussions pertaining to their career progression.

#### *Promotion*
As with recruitment to first teaching posts, examples were given by a small number of classroom and senior management staff where they were promoted at the first time of asking. In accomplishing this, they acknowledged receiving much needed support, which primarily came from white head teachers.

*'When I got my first post I was promoted within the first year. I did things that others weren't doing. My head teacher was totally behind me.'*

*'He [the headmaster] said: 'you would make a great headmistress, you have got all the attributes. You have got the leadership qualities. You know your facts, you know your subject areas and the children respond to*

*you'. And he said: "Why not?" And then he said to me: "I'm going to be your mentor and make sure you become a head".'*

A few gained recognition after demonstrating their ability in challenging inner-city schools.

*'It was a hard school. I worked very, very hard. The children were from the inner-city, they were hard children who would sort of go out of class and things like that, speak back to the teachers, etc. [But] I wasn't afraid of teaching my own children, my own African- Caribbean children. The head admired that, senior management admired that and I was promoted because of that.'*

Key characteristics for black teachers gaining promotion included:

· Not being afraid of teaching and raising the achievement of black children and having self-belief in their abilities as good quality teachers:
  *'Life has been difficult, it has not always been working with black staff and black heads, but what I have is the teaching skills, the teaching style and the drive for education, so that promotion comes naturally.'*
· Motivation and will-power to succeed and overcome obstacles such as lack of support:
  *'It took me eight years before I got my deputy headship [...], which was very disheartening and if it wasn't for my own self-motivation to get there, to prove to myself that I can do it [...] it really was self-motivation coupled with developing the career profile and the qualifications necessary for me to achieve a senior management position, which I took on board as I went along.'*

Interestingly, once promoted it was evident that these senior teachers sought to encourage other black teachers by engendering confidence/self-belief in them to apply for promotion. It was argued that this type of additional support was essential, particularly where a black teacher had had their confidence shaken, otherwise it was felt that the profession and black pupils would lose good quality practitioners.

*'You apply for something and you don't get it so you don't apply for a while. You don't want to go back into it.'*

The views outlined above need to be contrasted with those of black teaching staff who experienced difficulty when seeking promotion. Many staff recounted instances of applying for promotion and not being successful. For these staff negative perceptions of 'race' and concerns

about the ability to 'fit in' featured highly in decisions about who was promoted. The feedback they received, and the seeming preference for other candidates, led them to believe that black staff were not considered 'good enough' to occupy such positions, not even in schools located in boroughs with a high density black population.

*'I was acting deputy head at one of my schools and I went for the deputy head's post and narrowly missed out to a white male.'*

Such perceptions were reinforced in schools where black staff were predominantly employed in lower scale positions and/or as support staff.

*'The issue in primary schools, and I'm sure they would be in secondary schools, tends to be that those adults from black and ethnic minority communities tend not to have so high profile jobs, for example, they may be cleaners, they may be office managers and so on, and so that speaks volumes. What is the role of such people? They cannot be teachers.'*

It is not being suggested that black staff should be promoted without having the necessary skills and abilities. However, it is important that they understand why they were not considered the best candidate for the job and what needs to be done in order to give themselves a better chance of being promoted when they next apply.

*'I've had a few headship interviews and they've been fine, but when I get my feedback I haven't got them. My last feedback was a school in [name of borough - high density black population] and they phoned me and I asked why I didn't get the job, just talk me through it. He talked through all the questions, yes answered that and they particularly liked this and they particularly liked that, and then there was nothing. He just said 'you will definitely be a head eventually, there's a school out there for you'. There was nothing he could say. He just said: "Oh the governors decided to go for a different applicant". There was nothing specific [...]. If he had said "Oh, you need a little bit more experience or you know..." - but there was nothing. He was "Oh no, no everything is fine". So if everything is fine, why haven't I got the job? They chose a white person [from a predominantly white area].'*

While for some black staff climbing the ladder was considered important, they also wanted to acknowledge that not everyone desired to step away from classroom teaching to enter the 'harsh realities' of management for black teachers. Indeed there were several who indicated that they preferred to be in the classroom, largely because this is the area where

they felt they would have the greatest impact on improving the educational performance of black pupils.

However, there was an underlying sentiment in some of the views expressed by head and deputy head teachers that the main deterrent to many black teachers applying for particular permanent posts (at whatever level) is their lack of confidence that they will get the job. This view was supported by some class teachers who had, for example, remained teaching in the same school for a number of years despite not having particularly positive experiences rather than look for an alternative. As one said: 'We don't think we will get the jobs so we are not going for them'.

*Progression*

For these black teachers progression was perceived in terms of receiving financial or promotional recognition. Some teachers clearly desired progression and recognition through gaining specific posts of responsibility. However, much anxiety was expressed at not having their experience and expertise recognised by senior management. One teacher who had been in the educational system for well over ten years considered their lack of progression to 'at least' a deputy head teacher as an 'underachievement'.

Factors against progression for black teachers:

- The power of head teachers to chose who is promoted and the question of 'face-fitting' determining the level of support that is offered.
- Progression hindrances where the post involves a large degree of external liaison outside the school.
- Inability to get time off to attend courses during school time/schools to provide cover
- Lack of leadership support - comments from senior teachers such as 'I don't see why you need a degree, you just need more INSET [training]' were not untypical, nor was the inability to gain time off, in one case despite 'never having taken a day off'.
- Not being 'in the know' when posts of responsibility are coming up before they are advertised. Often, discussions take place outside formal work settings where black teachers are less likely to be represented. By the time information reaches black staff, it is too late and therefore other candidates have an unfair advantage.
- Lack of knowledge of career pathways and expectations of particular posts.

Interviewed teachers often reported successfully covering posts and facilitating increased pupil attainment, where colleagues had failed, but not receiving recognition for this.

*'That has always been our role, saving. I am going through that right now myself, teaching a GCSE subject. I am not getting appointed for it. He [the head] has got arguments as long as your arm as to why I can't get appointed. In Year 11 I have got 20 children, when they took the exam, nine of them got through A-C passes. I had 10 children with a D. My subject was the only one that every single child turned up to lessons. He had to recognise that.'*

Such experiences as the one cited above underline perceptions of black people always 'having to prove' themselves capable 'over and over again' and still not gaining any recognition.

### Threshold payments

'The aim of the performance threshold is to encourage and reward good teaching. It gives experienced and effective teachers at the top of the classroom pay scale (M6) access to the upper pay scale, the first of which (UPS1) represents a consolidated pay increase of over £2,000 per annum.' (www.teachernet.gov.uk). To be eligible for assessment, teachers have to have a good honours degree and seven years teaching experience, or nine years experience if they do not have a degree. Teachers have to make an application for assessment.

Career progression seems to be complicated further by a lack of recognition of expertise through threshold payments. Teachers complained about the unfairness of the way in which threshold payments were allocated to white and black teachers and the influence of head teachers in these payments. Most suggested that threshold recognition was dependent on head teachers liking black staff. This was yet another area where black staff felt that poor relationships with head teachers, rather than their ability to do their job, had a negative impact on their progression. Several highlighted the seeming inability of black teachers to cross the performance threshold. The following comments give an indication of the level of angst that was present in the discussion groups in regard to this issue.

*'After seven years you can apply for the threshold payment. There are written guidelines for the payment but heads don't stick to the written guidelines, it's whether they like you or not. At the end of the day it's the head that makes the final decision.'*

*'This is one part of the remuneration package. As far as I am concerned you have reached the seven years, you are in an inner-city school where it's tough going day in and day out. And you are turning up Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday for 194 days. You are entitled to that money. But heads use it as a whipping stone for most black teachers. They don't get it. They will not get it the first time, they might get it the second time, but your first time applying 90 per cent won't get it.'*

### 'Significant others'

An emerging theme in the discussion groups was of the impact of 'significant others' in enabling black teachers to secure promotion and progression. In attaining promoted posts senior teaching staff reported receiving encouragement from one or several individuals in particular. These 'significant others' were from a range of ethnic backgrounds and were crucial in helping teachers negotiate obstacles hindering promotion and progression. For example, one headteacher recounted her experience of being supported by a white HMI, whose support proved crucial.

*'She did a career development [plan] with me and she sat me down and talked me through it and she told me that it was going to be hell. She said: "you are going to have a terrible time out there for all these reasons", and she was frank and upfront. But she said "these are the things you can do" and she actually set them out for me. She said: "everybody is going to look at you and think you're not any good and you've got to stand up for yourself, you've got to be confident, you've got to fight. What you need to do is arm yourself. Don't just be happy that you've got your B.Ed, go out there do lots of different things so that you will always have the answer for them. Get extra degrees, do every post in the school that you can think of, don't settle for doing Section 11, don't be pushed into arts and crafts [...] be brave and get out of this doss hole because you'll be there forever." And I did and then she said: "you'll be a head before you are 28 if you want to be". And I was. That one person having a little chat with me and saying "you can do it", made the difference.'*

Another teacher suggested that she would not be a deputy head if she had not been encouraged by a black head teacher to go for promotion.

*'I worked with a wonderful black head and she's my mentor even now. She guided me through and I think without her I would have left teaching a long time ago. Even now when I'm feeling quite adrift I go to her and we talk about things and she's an excellent listener. She doesn't tell me I need to do this, but she asks me some of the right questions to give me the right sort of answer.'*

Black teachers spoke of supporters playing a number of roles, including:

· Help in recognising potential, giving confidence to applicants and advice on right timing of application for career.
· Giving advice on using time and resources effectively and ensuring applications for the right jobs.
· Providing help with filling the gaps in knowledge of 'not knowing the game' and not having access to the right support networks.
· Being 'sounding boards' on the realities of teaching, particularly in leadership positions.

## Continuing professional development (CPD)

Some teachers spoke of being 'greatly' supported to go on training, for example:

*'The head was excellent, she sent me on courses, and she moved me around Key Stage 1 and foundation because I wanted that experience.'*

*'I can say hand on heart in [inner London borough] they are very fair and they allow you the opportunity for advancements, make the time available, supply the cover.'*

Anecdotes were also shared of informal support being given, for example, by a head of department or another teacher to aid their development with regard to behaviour management techniques.

While some staff seemed to obtain access to a range of staff development courses, others reported obstacles to accessing CPD. These included:

· Lack of transparency about available funding for staff development.
· Lack of awareness of suitable courses. For example, black teachers may miss out on courses run by organisations such as the NUT if they have not registered themselves as black, or if union affiliation is not with the NUT.
· Perceived differential treatment between black and white staff in being allowed to attend courses.
  *'Some people seem to get on the courses, but some people do not. You ask them (head teachers) and you get told different things while the others are still attending the courses.'*
  *'Sometimes what I've learned, having talked to the teacher, is that the head teacher is very controlling and she doesn't want to let the black staff go off on training. She says things like: "Oh what about your classroom? It's untidy"'.'*

Although black staff remain concerned that courses are directed to them on account of their ethnicity, it was felt that there is still the need for such courses to be brought to their attention, otherwise they may miss out on opportunities to enhance their career development.

It is evident that black teachers want courses that will facilitate their development as teachers and in turn aid their progression. Such courses may be subject specific (eg ICT) but they might also include the expectations of being a deputy head, or be more general, such as how to fill in an application form when applying for different posts. The expectation is that such courses would be attended by like-minded people of all ethnic groups who would be supportive. A more general concern is that good courses that are specifically aimed at developing black teachers or emphasise diverse cultures should have the same status as other courses. These staff would also be more appreciative of courses that focus on diversity if they concentrated less on 'problems' and more on seeking solutions.

Deputy head teachers talked about continuing professional development courses they had undertaken (see literature review) that had helped to enhance their progression to head teacher. Such courses gave them the opportunity to meet other senior staff from black and minority ethnic backgrounds who could empathise with their experiences and offer advice and support regardless of whether or not they were intending to seek promotion.

In addition to providing support, these courses allowed these staff to recognise where they needed further training or even a 'broader view of teaching' (eg in other schools) before they can progress. Crucially, it provides black staff with wider insights as to why they may not be 'the best person' for the job at that point in time and how it can be addressed. As one teacher said: 'I don't want to be knocked back because I haven't got the skills'.

Wider circulation of course information, together with the facilitation of black staff to attend such courses, is vitally important because at times it is only when someone attends a course that they recognise that they need support.

*'(Sometimes) you don't actually know what kind of support you need until it hits you. I mean I didn't know that I needed that support from a course that I did. Once I'd got the support I realised that this was what I had needed. I needed that extra oomph.'*

Furthermore, even if the support is not required at that point in time, as one teacher noted: 'at least they know it's there' for the future.

# 4  teacher training, teaching and teacher retention

Experiences of teacher training are briefly explored here together with an indication of the experiences that black teachers saw as being pertinent to their everyday experiences of teaching. This is followed by an examination of the factors that are likely to contribute to black teachers leaving and/or being retained in the profession.

## Teacher training
### *Teacher educators*
Some of the more recently qualified teachers complained that some teacher training institutions, both within and outside London, appeared less willing to recruit black students onto their courses.

*'I applied for the PGCE and went for the interview. When she saw my face, because my name is very English, it was a picture.'*

Even when accepted onto the course, the tutors seemed to scrutinise their work more than other students, resulting in the belief that being successful on the course was 'going to take that little bit more effort than for everyone else'.

In addition to feeling scrutinised and isolated in the teacher training institution, one teacher illuminated how she felt rejected by the classroom teacher in whose class she was undertaking her teaching placement.

*'She didn't want me and it was blatantly obvious. She didn't want me to observe her teaching and that was a major part of the teacher training. She didn't want me in her classroom and it got to a point where I thought I'm driving 25-30 miles to come and sit down here and do nothing and waste my time away. I had to complain about it. She wouldn't even let me have a look at the curriculum scheme of work. She said it was a secret.'*

Student teachers also felt they received differential support from teacher educators on account of their ethnicity, but not wanting to jeopardise their course outcome, they rarely complained.

### *Course material*
It was felt that course material did not appear to be aimed at preparing students for teaching in the '21st century or a multicultural society'. This was not just about poor preparation for teaching black and other minority ethnic pupils. Courses did not encourage students to challenge stereotypical perceptions about diverse ethnic groups. Some of the training resources provided no practical guidance on how to deal with

specific situations regarding pupils of diverse cultural backgrounds (see Literature Review for further discussion).

Experiences such as the above led to calls for the increased recruitment of black staff into teacher training. Teachers also argued for teacher trainers to be made aware of diversity and race equality issues, which in turn would impact on their training of future teachers (see also 'Parents' section later in this report).

## The 'realities' of teaching

A number of positive aspects about teaching were identified in the section that examined black teachers' reasons for entering teaching. Notwithstanding, the difficulties that many encounter once employed make them question why they are still teaching. These difficulties were identified as real concerns, the main one being racism. Teachers often felt they lacked support from line managers and encountered instead 'a lot of prejudice and racism'.

### Racism

Experiences of racism and the likelihood of encountering racism in school environments is compounded by being one of a few black staff (in some cases the only one) and having to teach and 'survive' in an 'unwelcoming environment'.

*'Survival is really sat squarely on the shoulder of the black teacher, their background, their self-experience, and their ability to survive this environment.'*

*'I think that a lot of people in management don't have a clue about black people. They don't understand us and they don't even try to relate.'*

A respondent summed up what was meant by racism:

*'There is a lot of bullying that takes place and I would defy anyone to say otherwise. It is there and it is that which controls the power base, which you cross at your peril. You cross it and you know it is best to leave that school within 12 months because life would be made uncomfortable for you. For example, you are given the most onerous duties, work done by you is heavily scrutinised, you are given a rough ride and the usual response is simply turn your back and go elsewhere.*

Black teachers recounted several instances of where they felt their work was overly scrutinised (because of their ethnicity) when compared to other staff. They also reported being bullied and their authority and

ability undermined by senior management staff. Staff also reported feeling 'devalued'. For example, they were not consulted/informed about matters, felt 'underestimated' and were treated unfairly. Some described being told off in front of pupils and other staff by the head teacher and their work being removed from displays. Reports from black head teachers reinforce these views, but more importantly illustrate that even senior level black staff are not exempt from experiences of racism. A head teacher who found her ability and expertise questioned by white parents asked her LEA 'how many other [white] head teachers are [spoken] to like this?' She felt that she had been interrogated in this way because she was the only black head teacher in the borough.

As a result of this type of discrimination black teachers, especially senior female teachers, feel they constantly have to prove their capability.

*'On a daily basis you have to be that much better because of the expectations of other people and it's very difficult to separate those expectations in terms of your ethnicity, your gender, your [perceived] youth [...] because we don't fit the archetypal senior leader in school. In lots of ways we're not male, we're not white. It's just having to overcome those things on a daily basis.'*

Ineffective leadership and management teams appear to do little to support the black teacher, and where the black teacher is the head teacher, support (eg from governing bodies, staff, parents) is often not forthcoming.

Black teachers identified a number of other areas that they saw as being peculiar to their experience as black teachers. These are explored below.

*Classroom behaviour*
· Poor pupil behaviour is a major concern and is not helped where there are no clear lines of discipline or structures in place to deal with indiscipline.
· Black teachers feel they are expected to manage behaviour because they have high expectations of behaviour and learning. Thus they are often given the 'most difficult' classes (usually ones that supply teachers reject), which require them to demonstrate good behaviour management strategies.

*Curriculum*
· As with student teachers, qualified teachers also indicate that often they are delivering an unengaging curriculum in class sizes that are 'far too big', which also makes it difficult to impart knowledge.

- Some schools have negated their responsibility in providing access to an inclusive curriculum.
- Whether or not issues of multiculturalism and equal opportunities are addressed is often dependent on the head teacher's perspective and/or support.

*Staffing*
- Black teachers are equally concerned about the poor representation of black staff in teaching at the higher levels.

*Commitment and workload*
Some black teachers were concerned about the reasons why colleagues entered the profession. Interviewed teachers were concerned that the profession must have individuals working within it that 'care' about children, not just their academic performance. They wanted schools to be staffed by teachers who are *'prepared to work hard, give their time, expertise and are prepared to learn the profession and work with kids no matter how difficult they are'*. It is argued that this type of commitment is essential if teachers are to enable pupils (especially black pupils) to counteract some of the disadvantages (for example, low income families, lack of education) they enter school with that may affect their learning. However, it often results in black teachers taking on an increasing workload, as one teacher explained:

*'I was working late in the evenings, helping the students by providing space for them to come and do some extra work to help them with the coursework and things like that. I was getting home quite late and taking home a lot of work because of all the marking.'*

Despite their anxiety about workload black teachers 'love being in the classroom', especially when they see 'a child's face light up when they get something' and they understand they 'can do this'. But, they dislike the fact that teachers (as a group) are blamed for 'everything'.

*'If they pass their exams they're too easy, if they don't pass their exams we're not teaching them. And that is really demoralising. Really demoralising.'*

Many black teachers are frustrated by the realities of teaching. They expressed disquiet that black teachers (and black children) are rarely given 'credit' or 'recognition' for what they do and what they have achieved.

In common with other teachers black teachers resent the volume of paperwork and 'juggling' with 'initiative after initiative', which impacts on their workload and sometimes their ability to enable children to learn.

**Teacher retention**

As well as eliciting their everyday experiences of teaching, respondents were asked to elaborate on the factors that had contributed to their retention and those that might persuade them to leave teaching. The suggested reasons for leaving are discussed first.

*Reasons for leaving*

The discussion groups included a small number of individuals who had considered leaving teaching but had opted to remain, and a few who had previously left teaching and had since returned. Teachers drew on these insights and gave examples of experiences highlighted by colleagues who had left to give an indication of the factors that they regard as being most likely to contribute to black teachers leaving.

The main concerns related to disenchantment with a lack of staff development and promotion.

*'In the 16 years I have been in the current school there has not been any development of black staff.'*

*'In my school I certainly know of about 40 staff [over the years] that left and when they left they had never got promotion, positions of responsibility.'*

*'I left that school because I felt undervalued [...] and not even being offered promotion, not even being suggested. You've been there such a long time; you've got all these skills, why don't you go for this job? I don't remember ever having a conversation in all the schools I've been in. I never remember ever having a conversation anywhere, regardless of my qualifications, in any of those schools.'*

This disenchantment was evident for a number of reasons:

- A number of instances were highlighted where, after successfully covering a senior post, it was then allocated to another teacher. This is not necessarily regarded as an issue of competence, as invariably black staff often find senior positions in other schools.
- Many complained of schools (and LEAs) not valuing experienced black staff and that when appointed to senior positions their position and status was undermined.
- Attention was drawn to black staff being bullied by senior management staff. A head teacher who had been bullied expressed that she intended to leave the profession in the summer.

- A student teacher revealed that she did not intend to begin teaching after completing her PGCE because she had been dissuaded by experiences of bullying by her mentor during her school placement.

Other factors for leaving included:

- finding teaching 'stressful' and 'exhausting', similar to all teachers leaving the profession
- trying to juggle several roles at once. For example, one teacher reported acting as ICT co-ordinator and deputy head with responsibility for teaching the 'most difficult casses' and feeling 'unsupported' in the process
- some teachers are equally worn out by having to carry the burden of raising black pupils' achievement.

*'Black teachers tend to burn out because you get fed up with the continual struggle. You get tired and no one seems to understand what you're going through. So all in all you're tired [...] when you think of a black teacher with high blood pressure, that's normal now. We all have high blood pressure, why? Because we're stressed out of our minds. All of this you have to endure each day.'*

It is important to indicate that some teachers pointed out they were reluctant to say the underlying cause for a black staff member leaving was because they were black, but often came round to this way of thinking when they encountered negative experiences.

*'When I kept hearing that certain members of staff had problems with race I would keep my head down and get on with my job. But there were times when things happened, like in one particular school I had a caretaker who came that close to hitting me, I left.'*

For those who had left there was a burden of guilt that they had somehow 'let black kids down'. This was particularly noticeable among black women teachers who saw themselves as 'carers/mothers', responsible for 'my/our' black children.

*Reasons for staying*
*'What keeps me here is the sense that I feel I am playing a role for black people.'*

Although teachers highlighted a number of negative experiences throughout their teaching, most intended to remain in teaching. This

is reflective of their commitment to teaching and educating tomorrow's adults.

In the same way that black teachers are attracted into teaching due to their love of and passion for teaching, they stay for the same reason. One person suggested that after 31 years in teaching the 'buzz was still there'. Staying also enables black teachers to support the educational development of all children, not just black pupils although for some this is an essential element of why they stay.

*'I think it is the children that make you stay, because on a good day there is nothing better than teaching. And I sometimes think if I struggle and I'm 30 odd, how much do you feel when you are five and you are six? You have to walk in and see somebody who looks vaguely like you and who kind of understands, eats your food. I think that's what keeps me going.'*

*'What keeps me there is I want to see children learn. I want to pass on whatever I know to children. I want to see them flourish. It's nice for me. It is a personal thing for me to see a child who did not understand something yesterday, two days later I can see him with a smile on his face because he was able to read a sentence. How can I put that? It's a passion.'*

Black staff are encouraged to stay where the children respect them.

*'I have always had strong respect for the children and I get that back from them and so that is why I have stayed. If those had gone I would have gone too.'*

There was a feeling that individuals who had other careers prior to entering teaching are stronger and have better strategies for dealing with issues that affect their day-to-day practice, and so are more inclined to continue teaching.

Some still had the desire to attain senior positions and this was an incentive for them to stay in teaching.

*'I love the student part of my job, but the management side and the every day grind of keeping your sanity and keeping your self-respect has worn me really thin and if I won the lottery I don't know if I'd be teaching tomorrow. However, I've still got an ambition to get there because I still think we need more black teachers in senior positions.'*

# 5  educating black pupils

This section draws on black teachers' experiences of educating black pupils to provide further insight into the factors that are likely to influence the educational outcomes of black pupils, especially black boys.

*'School is just a microcosm of what is going on in the wider society and it's very handy to blame the parents or blame the school ... but it's far more complex than that.'*

*'It's our society that's to blame because there are expectations of young black males. They're not expecting them to achieve; we're not expecting them to achieve.'*

*'The black children are being marginalised because you know all the intervention is going in but it is not being specifically targeted to their needs, so it is a vicious circle.'*

As the above comments indicate, the causes of the differential achievement of black pupils are complex with no single easily identifiable factor being responsible. A number of factors were attributed as having a positive and negative influence on the educational outcomes of black pupils. While teachers acknowledged that social class plays a role in educational outcome, particularly as it influences access to good schools and educational resources, it was felt that there were other issues that were just as, if not more influential in black pupils' educational experiences. Low teacher expectations were identified as a major concern and these are discussed first.

## Teacher expectations of black pupils
All the black teachers indicated that they have high expectations of all pupils, not just black pupils.

*'It's not a case of lowering expectations, I wouldn't do that, and I would be in the wrong job [if I did]. I haven't lowered my expectations for the last five years and I don't intend to.'*

*'Often something that we might not let go, other teachers might allow. I have often had a situation where I am told: "you are just being too hard". Children need parameters as far as I am concerned and they need to know what the boundaries are. It's about expectations, expectations across the board, not just about doing the work, but how you behave around the school. It's a total thing for me.'*

Having high academic and behavioural expectations is imperative if black pupils are to be enabled to fulfil their potential and give themselves a better

opportunity of surviving once they leave school. Black staff maintained that other teachers generally have low expectations of black pupils' academic potential. These low expectations seemed to be informed by stereotypical views of black people in general being good musicians, singers, dancers and athletes - *'in (my) secondary school black boys were pushed into sports and not given access to academic subjects'* - and societal perceptions of young black males in particular not being able to achieve. The belief that these are the only areas in which black pupils will achieve means less attention is paid to their academic ability or how it might be fostered. If they did not excel academically they were perceived as being destined for a life of crime. For example, one teacher reported hearing an Australian teacher say: 'I can see that child in 10 years in prison'.

Low teacher expectation results in children being given easy and unchallenging work. Black children are then discouraged from doing their best because teachers have said: 'you can't do, you're not bright enough'. It is well documented that low teacher expectations and assumptions about black pupils' ability contributes to a lack of motivation and achievement among black pupils, and their own expectations as to what they can achieve. This is not helped by teachers opting not to nurture their talent and potential.

*'I would give them work to do and they would say to me: "Why do you give us work? None of the other teachers give us work". I drew them aside and I said: "You know something? They don't give you work because they don't care. I care and I want you to be the best that you can be. You have skills, you have talents."'*

Owing to their low expectations of black pupils, other teachers often do not comprehend that *'not all black children or black males are in the category where they're underachieving'*. This may account for the lack of support that some black parents (in the discussion groups) and teachers noted about the experience of clever children.

### Discipline and peer pressure
Ineffective use of discipline by schools was highlighted as significantly contributing to the low attainment of black pupils. Most teachers concurred that black pupils, especially secondary aged boys, sometimes presented them with discipline problems. It was also argued that peer pressure was likely to result in some pupils behaving badly.

'I think the other factors include peer pressure, coming in they had to be seen to want to fit in. So they forget everything they've learnt and they're trying to be somebody else that they're not. A classic example might be,

"I've come here, I've never been rude to a teacher before and I was rude and my mates laughed and I was funny. Now I'm seen as the court jester so I have to maintain that reputation".'

A male teacher suggested that peer pressure led some very able pupils to 'act out' outside of the classroom, whereas inside the classroom 'they are all coming up secretly saying, *"Sir, sir can you help me with finishing this coursework?' We are a language college and boys and languages aren't supposed to mix, but they're all doing it on the sly. They all want to succeed but they can't be perceived as succeeding'*. For this teacher, the 'street' perception that 'learning is not cool' also means that when the boys pass their exams they try and disguise it by using street phraseology such as 'I smacked it, I killed it' meaning that they 'got one over on somebody that is trying to hold them back'.

While teachers objected to the negative influence of 'street' culture on learning, it was suggested that for some black boys 'street' culture might be more important because of how black males are perceived in society, which at times results in them feeling 'uncomfortable about themselves'.

As a result of the behavioural problems exhibited by some black boys they become labelled (sometimes as young as foundation stage) 'the problem' child - *'can you imagine the child is in nursery and everybody throughout the school knows X is this problem'*. Some teachers argued that the labelling of black pupils in this way was counterproductive and encouraged increased surveillance and monitoring of the pupil. It was further argued that not having a strong approach to managing discipline or giving clear behavioural instructions as to expectations of good behaviour did little to address or change unruly behaviour. A teacher illuminated how his school treated the behaviour of black children differently, with the behaviour of girls being perceived as more acceptable.

*'In this school there is a two-tier system, boys are treated differently. A girl is less likely to be excluded for the same offence as a boy. For some reason we tend to knee-jerk where boys are concerned.'*

In addition to having low expectations, it was argued that other teachers are more accepting and less willing to challenge poor standards of behaviour from black pupils (especially boys). It is this differential treatment that black teachers felt was partly responsible for black pupils (especially boys) underachieving. Achievement is not helped where schools have a lax approach to discipline.

*'He [the head teacher] would be on our floor. The children are late to their lesson and the child is strolling to the lesson. The head is there [but] not a word comes out of his mouth. He is not a 'hands on' head.'*

*'A child has to go the exclusion room 15 times before he is even sent out of school temporarily.'*

Examples such as those above underpinned calls for a stronger approach to addressing discipline. It was suggested that the need for firmer discipline is something that wider society and most schools do not understand. Teachers reported similar views being expressed to them by black parents.

Teachers also alluded to other teachers being 'fearful' of challenging black male behaviour or disciplining appropriately, because they are often stereotyped as 'aggressive'. These perceptions are exacerbated by the perceived maturity of black boys. However, as one male teacher noted they are still children and they need discipline boundaries.

*'At the end of the day, we're still dealing with children and people tend to forget that. Once they go into year eight or year nine they forget, we're still dealing with children, who need boundaries and guidelines from us as adults. We can't shirk that responsibility of being adults.'*

Black teachers generally believe in firm discipline and several reported challenging poor behaviour at every opportunity. For one male teacher, it was particularly important to challenge such behaviour from boys because of the societal images that portray black men as 'stupid'.

*'Everywhere we look there's an image that says "I'm black, I'm young and I have to be stupid" and I seriously challenge that as a black man.'*

*'I've got this young man, for example, in year eight and he was creating absolute havoc around the place and I picked him up, I said: "No you're going to have half an hour for lunch, you're going to go to the library for 35 minutes" and from year eight to year 11 he actually ended up getting 11 GCSEs, A-C.'*

### Other factors

Other factors that are thought to negatively impact on black pupil attainment include:

- Having a low self-esteem among black children.
- An unstimulating and ethnocentric curriculum.
  *'It would be nice if the curriculum was well balanced and taught in a way that was more exciting and not so Anglo-Saxon.'*
- Teaching itself often does not take into account the different learning styles that children need if they are to progress. It was argued that children need different learning contexts *'where they can show they can achieve in different ways'.*

Teachers considered it imperative that measures are put in place in what were considered crucial stages of black children's learning where their attitudes to learning are thought to change, and they are perceived to be at greater risk of disengaging from school (eg years five and nine). Indeed some went as far as to suggest that black boys should be allowed to make their option choices in year eight and take their core GCSE examinations earlier so as to ensure they leave school with some qualifications.

### Black teachers on developing relationships with black parents

Black teachers highlighted the many positive relationships that they have with black parents, who are usually pleased that a black teacher is teaching their child. They believe this raises expectations that their children will be taught to a high standard in a supportive, disciplined, or as one parent reportedly called it 'a no nonsense' environment. Black teachers followed up on, for example, late homework and demonstrating to parents that they 'care' about their children's education to nurture positive relationships. For example, *'if there has been an incident I have to make sure that I ring them up even if it's 6pm, if I said: "I am going to do it" then I must do it [...] if you don't do it, it's almost as if you don't care'.*

Good teacher-parent relationships appear to make it easier for black parents to discuss issues regarding their child with a black teacher rather than the head teacher. A teacher explained why: *'I think on the whole there has been a greater trust that I have experienced from parents from minority ethnic communities, and especially women, who have been more comfortable and at ease to come and talk to me'.* The ability to make a connection with black parents, often by sharing similar Caribbean or African background and communicating positively with them helps to develop/maintain good relationships.

A common view was that black parents 'fear people in authority', which sometimes leaves them unable to challenge negative aspects of their children's schooling. Positive relationships with black teachers were particularly beneficial in such situations.

*'The black community doesn't trust schools and because they don't trust schools if the teacher rings up saying, "homework isn't done" or whatever it is, that parent immediately becomes defensive. As opposed to "my son did what? Right, he's going to get …" often it is "but what did he do exactly? I want to hear his side first". If I didn't care, I wouldn't bother, but parents always think, "Right I'm going to get you teacher because you're trying to attack my child, it must be because he is black!" No it's not because he is black, no teacher goes round thinking, I'm going to get this child because he's black. It's more complicated. Black teachers can help in these situations.'*

Thinking that the teacher is 'picking' on their child because they are 'black' can lead to some black parents adopting an 'aggressive' tone/attitude to the black teacher, often doing this in front of their child, who then sees a justification to disrespect the teacher. Unfortunately, such behaviour only serves to further undermine the educational outcomes of black pupils. This is a particular danger where previous teachers have never complained about the child or raised concerns about their educational progress.

# 6  what does it mean to be a black teacher?

### Identity

*'Everybody has got a cultural background. Everybody brings a part of themselves into the mix.'*

Teachers were asked to reflect on whether or not they saw themselves as 'black' teachers, and if they do, what this means in practice. Teachers expressed varying views as to whether they saw themselves as a black teacher. Some were adamant that they are teachers first and foremost. A few expressed disquiet about the question and the implied assumptions (within the question) and assumptions (by others) made on account of them being black. There was even a suggestion that seeing one's self as 'black' is 'bad' with some 'hating' to talk about the fact that they are black. Others argued that whether they liked it or not they would be seen and judged by others in terms of their ethnicity.

Just as pupils sometimes identified black teachers as 'black' teachers and 'treated them differently', so do parents of various ethnic background. For example, white parents reportedly asked a black teacher: 'Do you know what you're doing, will my child learn? How good is your maths?' A black parent also informed a black headteacher that she could not be 'on our side' and that she could not understand 'our [black] problems because you're one of them' (ie white). This view of black headteachers being perceived as white by some black parents was supported by another headteacher who saw her greatest challenges as coming from black parents.

*'You have to prove your blackness to them and once you've done that, then it's cool. But it's having to be all things to all people, but yet try and maintain that you have a vision of leadership and what's right for your school.'*

Black teachers regard themselves as being in a 'very difficult position' because of 'trying to please everybody'. As well as facing challenges from parents, black teachers also feel their ability as teachers is not only questioned by other staff, but they have to prove that they are capable – 'it is almost as if a black person cannot be in a senior position'. One headteacher said:

*'Sometimes it is amusing if someone comes into my office and they're looking for the head teacher and they're looking past me, but there are times when it's wearing.'*

Black teachers who are also in predominantly white schools not only find the experience sometimes lonely but acknowledge that they have to be 'pretty strong' as well.

For some teachers, being 'black' is central to their teacher (and cultural) identity. It is what enables them to make a connection with black pupils and black parents, and enables them to draw on some of the insights they have of being black when teaching black pupils and trying to get them to see why having an education and achieving is important. It was his understanding of the realities facing some black boys when they leave school that made one teacher indicate that he was the only person in his school 'qualified' to impart messages such as the following to black boys.

*'I say: "I'm probably the only person in this school who's qualified to tell you this, because if you start in school and you don't achieve in school then it becomes a black spiral, it goes downwards from there. You can't get a job, you can't get into college, you end up on the dole, you see your mates with something nice and flash or you see someone else with it, you want it, you don't have the means to achieve it, you start doing other things. You then become someone's else's property at the age of 34 or 44, where you're actually asking someone whether you can go to the toilet or not and if they say 'you can't go to the toilet' then you can't go to the toilet. That is how you have to teach [black] kids".'*

A headteacher suggested that when black teachers (including heads) 'acknowledge their blackness they're good for our black children'. The identification with being black and caring about black children means that black teachers are concerned about the achievement of black pupils. This means 'looking out for black children and making sure their interests are served', however, it does not mean that black teachers are necessarily prepared to 'fight every battle'. But instead they will ensure that achievement is 'kept on the agenda' and support black children. Acknowledging one's 'blackness' has also been found to be advantageous when dealing with black parents and trying to support black pupils.

'I'll just be straight with them [parents] and I'll talk to them in a very straight way in a way that others can't do and then they'll come round to my way of thinking. [...] I will just talk about race quite freely and then, because black parents will never say that they think you're being racist, they just think it and then it makes them react negatively but they will never talk about it. [...] whereas I will just say: "this isn't an issue about race, this is an issue about your son not doing x, y and z and I want him to". I will always make it clear that I'm doing this because I'm supporting

the child, and I'm aware what's going on in the black parent's mind so that I can work it through with them.'

### Relationships with students

*'The relationship that we have with the children speaks volumes and to me that is based on our culture, more than our training as teachers.'*

*'They will take you telling them off because they know where you're coming from.'*

It was felt that having a shared sense of identity with black pupils enabled better communication (eg by speaking Patois and 'street' language if necessary) and understanding in terms of cultural expectations. This includes the ability to comprehend what would/would not be expected at home. A few mentioned understanding the meaning of 'kissing teeth' and how other staff might misconstrue it.

While some viewed having a shared identity with black pupils positively and suggested that it can be 'inspirational', it was noted, particularly by staff in a predominantly black boys school, that being 'black' held little/no value with pupils who use 'blackness' as a way of being derogatory to black staff. Perhaps these pupils are disrespectful because as one teacher suggested, black pupils 'are not used to seeing black authority figures'; often their reference point in a school is black cleaning staff. Some black pupils might also find it difficult to relate to black teachers because they are 'seen as middle class people that are completely removed from their environment'.

### Role models

Just as some black teachers were critical of being asked what being a black teacher means, some were equally critical of black teachers being asked what their views were pertaining to being role models for black children. It was argued that black teachers, like other teachers, are human beings and can make mistakes. This could lead to pupils making the same mistakes. It was also true that a few felt that black pupils should be their own 'self model'. One teacher simply wanted black pupils to come into class 'and sit down and look like they want to learn, behave like they want to learn, get something in their heads and then leave'.

There were, however, teachers who considered themselves positive role models for black pupils, especially black boys, and for some this was an important reason for being in teaching. A male teacher dismissed the idea of black boys specifically needing to have positive male role models in

order for them to achieve, as it was felt that female role models could be just as good, if not better role models for some boys.

*'I struggle with that, because growing up in a one-parent family where my mother was the dominant presence I say to some of the kids "my mum was worth 10 men at the time". I actually struggle with that, I think that's more media hype [...] I don't hold sway to the fact that these kids, these black boys have to be taught by black males for them to start achieving.'*

Some teachers were also mindful that by virtue of being black they were automatically situated as role models (whether they want to be or not), especially where they are the sole black teacher in the school. Moreover it was felt that other children might see the black teacher as a good role model and want to aspire to be the best that they can.

### Assumptions

*'For me there is the worry that if you do get a black teacher in a school, a black male teacher, that person is seen as able to deal with all black children, which is something that people should be mindful of. Although you are black you are not necessarily the expert.'*

Many black staff felt that other teachers perceived their blackness as a tool for resolving incidents with black parents and pupils, and managing bad pupil behaviour. Some were aggrieved at this; however, a few saw it as acceptable.

Another not uncommon assumption is the belief that because a teacher is black they should be knowledgeable about and take responsibility for multicultural and equal opportunity issues. A teacher reported being asked during a recruitment interview what her strengths are, and after replying 'maths' was told by her head teacher 'we've got some work to do in multiculturalism'. This would seem to suggest that there is still a need for other staff to recognise that black people are not 'professional ethnics' and that all staff can also deliver these courses too.

### Other teaching staff

*'[Other] teachers have said: "I can't deal with these blacks. I don't understand them their language, their movements and their moods".'*

It was suggested that other staff are often fearful of black pupils (especially boys) and black parents, which results in black staff having to take on this added responsibility - 'Our head doesn't go into her office on her own with a black parent, she always calls another of the senior management team to come in with her'.

An overriding concern is that some other staff have 'racist' attitudes and 'have apprehensions' about black people being successful. It was suggested that black staff are sometimes set up to fail by being appointed by governing bodies that have 'low expectations' of black staff. Consequently, when they are doing fine they are told, 'something is wrong with them'. Moreover if the black head teacher has difficulties they are 'booted out', whereas it was felt that other teachers and head teachers are given more support/empathy by senior management teams when they are experiencing difficulties in the classroom. This was also felt to be true when applying for promotion and progression.

Many were annoyed that other staff were suspicious of black staff congregating together, either formally in associations or informally in the staff room. One group of teachers reported using a range of strategies (eg making contact with other black staff by telephone) to avoid arousing suspicion. It was felt that these staff needed to interrogate their own position and challenge any negative assumptions they may hold about black people.

## focus groups II: black parents

# 7  schools

Having explored the views and experiences of black teachers, this part of the report concentrates on the views of black parents (derived from focus group discussions), including their experiences of schools and their perceptions of the contributory factors likely to affect the educational outcomes of black pupils.

### Choice of schools

Parents in these discussion groups had experience of educating their children in a mixture of schools - private; faith (Church of England and Catholic); single sex; grammar; comprehensive and primary, using a range of sources to make choices. Mechanisms considered important included:

- examination results/league table position
- Ofsted reports
- headteacher leadership, vision and expectations.

High standards of presentation, behaviour and discipline were considered vital in selecting appropriate schools for their children. In some instances excellent discipline overrode academic reputation, with behavioural expectations similar to those at home being a key component.

Single sex girls' schools were particularly attractive because they 'enable girls to achieve more'. Grammar schools offer good academic support and smaller sized schools with fewer distractions. Church schools were considered to be more caring and provide moral education. Private schools, though seen as potentially an isolating experience for black children, were however perceived to combine high expectations and high attainment as well as better equipped to educate very able children that the state system seems unable to cater for. This was particularly important where local state schools were seen as good quality but popularity meant that local children were often unable to gain entry, thereby further reducing parental choice.

For some parents it was important that their children experienced black teachers and a few had chosen schools to enable their children to access such practitioners. Parents were also concerned as to how black children were treated in schools where they are in the minority, and how they 'relate to what is being taught when it is coming from someone from a different background'. Black parents were wary that black children were not seen as a priority for some schools. One parent changed her daughter's primary school because she felt it did not 'know anything about diversity'. Before any school is chosen, black parents feel it important to 'get a feel

for the school'. Visiting the school and communicating with staff is an essential element of this, especially if parents are to ascertain if their children will 'thrive' in such an environment.

## Communication with schools

Private schools seemed to provide the greatest access to senior staff and offered better modes of communication with prompt responses/appropriate dialogue. Primary schools were experienced as much friendlier, welcoming environments by parents.

*'[With] the primary schools [...] there was always a dialogue, and I thought it was amazing for this teacher with 20 kids in the class to write 20 books each day. You really felt that there was a dialogue going on, particularly at primary school level, and it was really important. Then suddenly it all gets cut adrift and at that time when that primary/secondary shift is so difficult for most children anyway, suddenly there is hardly any communication and you rely on the child to do it.'*

Barriers to positive teacher-parent partnerships in education

- 'Closed' institutions, where schools do not make sufficient efforts to maintain dialogue with parents, despite parental willingness to engage in a teacher-parent partnership in education.
- Open communication during school hours only, which presents difficulties for parents who work full time.
- Schools as unwelcome environments:
  *'It can be quite daunting when you go into that forum and very often you are the only black person in that forum and those people sitting around you are already making up their minds. They've got pre-conceived ideas about who you are and what you can do and what you can say and you've got all that bearing down on you before you've, well sometimes they don't even give you a chance to speak.'*
- Lack of information from schools as to pupil progress, making it difficult to ascertain teacher expectations of progress.
- Schools not appearing to view parental concerns seriously enough to communicate with them. For example, not responding to letters/telephone calls/emails, leading to suspicion black children are not a priority for schools. Unwillingness to engage with black parents was a common theme:
  *'I have had a couple of rude teachers. One was saying my child didn't do the homework and so therefore he has got absolutely nothing to tell me about my child. And so I said: "It is nearly Christmas now you have had my child since September and you are now telling me you can't tell me anything about my child because he has not produced a piece of*

*work. If he has not done the work you should tell me. There are rules in this school. One phone call or an email or a letter - I haven't received anything from you. As far as I am concerned because I haven't heard from you I assume my child is doing really well".'*

*Gateways to teacher-parent partnerships in education*
- Positive, pro-active intervention by school leadership: *'When [my son] was looking at options the head called me up and said: "Let's look at what is best for him". We're looking and I'm sitting there and they are running to look at the reference books to get him prepared for A Level and for the entrance exam at Oxford. I couldn't fault them and I have seen them do that with other people.'*
- Positive, pro-active intervention by parents in understanding the system: *'I actually wrote to the head of the year because I had other comments that were made from my daughter's report. I wrote to the head of year with comments about what I wasn't happy about. I didn't understand why this was happening in every single subject area. He did not reply to me so I wrote to the head of the school. She replied the next day and it got addressed.'*

However, for most parents, positive communication was the exception rather the norm and where it existed it was reported to be more likely to come from black teachers.

*'I don't know whether it's because she's black or it's just the way we've formed the relationship but she is very approachable, I have no problems whatsoever contacting her.'*

## Black parents' perceptions of other teachers' perceptions
The difficulties most encountered by parents focused largely on the feeling that senior school staff perceived them negatively, seeing skin colour first and their status as parents second. Parents reported experiencing from teachers:

- Lack of courtesy and an expectation of single motherhood, with married women automatically referred to as 'Miss', or surprise expressed when husbands attend school meetings.
- Expectation that black parents will be unemployed or not working in professional occupations.
- Stereotyped notions of black people as 'aggressive' or more likely to be a threat, particularly when questioning their children's progress.

*'You get that vibe all the time because you know you don't look like them and so they feel naturally you cannot be like me or you are below me.'*
*'(It feels as though) you have got no right to be concerned. "How dare you be concerned about your black son in this school? Who do you think you are? How dare you leave your email address or leave your mobile number?"... for you to tell me why my son was marked late in the class when I know for a fact that he went to school? "How dare you waste our time inquiring about your son?" It has been like that since he got into this school. "How dare you contact us?"'*

Other teachers seem to associate the questioning attitude of working class black parents negatively, whereas the same behaviour exhibited by white middle class parents would be accepted as the norm. These parents believed that some schools are not only fearful of but do not know how to handle knowledgeable articulate black parents. This view would seem to be supported by a teacher respondent who articulated what she had been told by a local education authority manager.

*I'll never forget what one LEA manager said: "That is one of the worst things that you could come across. The worst thing you could meet is a black woman with a degree".'*

Clearly, how teachers view black parents can have a major impact on teacher-parent relationships, and the support that is given to educating black pupils. Black teachers reported that black parents were often not told the truth about their child's attainment levels or behaviour by other teachers because they were fearful 'that a black parent is going to go home and murder their child' if the report was negative. This notion of fear often led to the withholding of information about pupil performance. Such actions reduce the possibility of black children receiving support from the school and the home, as other teachers often wait until parent's evenings to update black parents about child underachievement, and this is often too late to intervene, especially when the meeting comes towards the end of the year.

Perceptions of, and attitudes toward black parents seemed to change in some schools only after it was established that the parent understood the system, valued education (often demonstrated by being a parent governor) and/or had a professional background.

*'When I took my son to his first school, within six months of joining the school I became a governor. I noticed the change with the teacher immediately. I just noticed that she seemed to sort of sit up a bit. And you*

*know she started to listen a bit more to what I was saying about my son and would communicate more.'*

*'I'm a journalist and I know how to get through systems if I want them, but to start with they treated me quite carefully because they just thought "Ooh, she knows how to press all the buttons". Of course eventually, if they don't reply to me I will talk to the head teacher and, even in a big school like my son goes to, he will suddenly pay attention if I start talking to him. Then they get hauled in to explain themselves, they return calls and they deal with me.'*

Once parents have proved themselves capable and knowledgeable this seemed to open 'different' lines of communication. As one parent explained 'once they can see that whoever they think you are, you're not, then they change their measures and take you more seriously'. A parent governor suggested that her objection to her son being disciplined when he was the victim was only addressed after it was revealed that she was a magistrate.

While some parents do experience a change in attitude from some teachers and schools, they are not complacent enough to think that this means acceptance of them as concerned parents, or indeed that this will result in an overall change in the way that black parents are perceived:

*'When you look at the other parents you notice that there are working class parents and there are middle class parents. We're just black parents, no matter; we're just black parents. And that in itself is something; people need to recognise differences and not necessarily use them negatively, but not approach all black parents in the same way.'*

### Effective school strategies for positive engagement with black parents

These were identified as:

- Respecting, welcoming and encouraging (all) parents to come to school and engage with staff in and outside of school hours.
- Organised access to senior staff and classroom teachers, for example, open appointments with the head teacher on a particular day.
- Twenty minute meetings with the head teacher for parents of year seven children - this indicates that the head is 'interested' and can help to stimulate successful school/parents relationships

- Informing parents when children have done good things as well as bad – positive feedback is a cost effective way of rewarding pupils and nurturing their development.
- Good quality feedback that addresses parent's concerns and gives an indication of what needs to be done.
- GCSE-focused evenings for parents to discuss what is required of pupils and parents.
- Issuing a pack confirming GCSE subjects and tier of examination paper to be undertaken – to be sent by post to parents.
- Issuing clear guidance about coursework.
- Informing parents directly by post and/or telephone about meetings, school exclusions, etc – not through pupils.
- Responding promptly to parent letters/others methods of enquiry.

## Good and bad teaching

When making assessments of whether or not teachers and their teaching methods are 'good' or 'bad', parents drew on their own experiences with teachers and those of their children. Parents acknowledged that teaching staff are not homogeneous and made efforts to distinguish between different groups. Often assessments were informed by the ethnicity of a teacher, particularly where a teacher had had a positive impact on their children's educational experience/outcomes.

Parents praised all teachers for the instances of 'good' teaching that their children had received. Often though, good teaching was experienced as a result of pressure on schools and staff rather than something that was expected and received.

Good teachers were defined as teachers who:

- Expressed concern for pupils and a desire to work with parents
- Developed good relationships with pupils (and parents) and being able to communicate well, reassure and offer advice to pupils (and parents)
- Treated pupils with respect, speaking to rather than shouting at pupils; engaging and motivating pupils through the curriculum and making 'boring' subjects exciting
- Took time to get to know pupils as individuals
- Provided appropriate support for pupils to achieve well
- Encouraged pupils to work harder and display good behaviour
- Held high expectations of all pupils
- Exhibited good behaviour management
- Cared for and interacted well with all pupils.

Bad teachers displayed opposite behaviours to the above and in addition were denoted as having:

· Low expectations
· Poor behaviour management skills
· Poor grammar/use of Standard English
· Lack of knowledge about the subject area they have responsibility for teaching
· Lack of knowledge and respect for other cultures
· Inability to set work at an appropriate level for the class and meet individual pupil needs
· Work marked incorrectly
· Lack of feedback on course/homework
· Lack of communication with parents (even when requested)
· Inconsistency in applying school rules
· Showing favouritism to particular pupils (and their parents);
· Stereotyping pupils by race and gender;
· Poor relationships with pupils (eg shouting, not listening, being disrespectful and patronising; lack of motivation/engagement and/or extension of pupil learning.

# 8 black teachers

This chapter focuses on black parents expectations of black teachers and their perceptions of the effectiveness of black teachers in schools.

## Expectations of black teachers

Parents whose children had never been taught by black teachers at either primary or secondary level or who were in schools where there were only a few black teachers suggested that they had no particular expectations of black teachers compared to other teachers.

For some parents, however, there was an expectation that 'good' black teachers will develop a good rapport with black pupils, be positive role models (especially for black boys) and have the ability to show all pupils that black people can achieve academically and take up professional occupations. black teachers are also charged with generating more respect from pupils, taking schools forward, and bringing 'race' to the forefront and/or forcing black history onto the agenda in schools that had previously failed to address it.

## Experiences of black teachers

Parents juxtaposed their expectations of black teachers with their experience in schools. Several parents highlighted the significance/ advantage of having black teachers in school and the immense contribution that they make to the education of black pupils. Arguably, black teachers bring 'something extra' both to their teaching and interactions with black pupils and their parents. That something extra is caring about black pupils and their education.

*'If there is an issue, she will pick up the phone and call me. I remember coming home from church, dishing up dinner and this teacher was on the phone, you know, basically because something had been around that my daughter was upset about and she wanted me to be aware of it. I do honestly believe that she was able to do that because she was black. I've never had that happen before. [...] My daughter was sitting right there when the phone rang and she heard the conversation going on. That's something that teachers should be about. I felt that this person cares about my child for the simple fact that she was able to do that.'*

The notion of caring seems to be the essence of being a black teacher, and was critically important for two parents who are also teachers.

*'When I'm putting on my teacher's hat and I go into a class I see children. It is my responsibility to make sure that I'm imparting the best possible education to each child whether they are white, black, Indian or Chinese. It doesn't matter. But I've found myself in situations where I've had to let*

*them know that I'm a black teacher. I've had children who have been behaving to me disgracefully and I've had to take them aside and ask them why they're doing this, "I'm like your mother".'*

*'One little boy went home and said: "I'm so pleased that I've got a black teacher". I took him to a session so that 15 other teachers could see how well he's done. This was six weeks on the programme, where he hadn't been reading anything and now he's reading level 10 independently. It was amazing. At the end of the session the other teachers were saying: "What did you do?" He felt he could achieve because we put that in him.'*

Overall, black teachers were praised for 'adding value' in terms of facilitating better communications/feedback with black children and themselves as parents, stronger discipline and encouragement to black children to achieve their potential.

### Teacher-parent relationships

For parents, black teachers facilitate opportunities for developing positive teacher-parent relationships, which elicit open, honest and informative communication.

*'When I went in and chatted to her I remember thinking "this is so refreshing" and I said to her lots of things that I wasn't sure about bringing forward. My daughter was in the school for the first time and I had certain concerns and she was happy to listen to them.'*

*For one parent in particular the relationship she had established with her daughter's teacher was sufficient to 'act as a deterrent' against her daughter misbehaving in her lessons.*

*'Personally I've found the relationship has been very, very good because as soon as my daughter started I made an appointment to go in and see her teacher. It's just something we do, and we sat down and talked about her and I made sure she knew who I was and if there were any issues contact me. I don't want it left until the end of term. I'm able to send notes to her. [...] she is very approachable, I have no problems whatsoever contacting her and she will say to my daughter, "You'd better not do that because you know what your Mum's like".'*

### Shared cultural understandings

Parents felt that black teachers were able to understand their children and the background they came from (including parental attitudes towards education and discipline) as they share 'common' cultural values and experiences. As one parent said: 'It is somebody that can understand

where your child is coming from racially, their background, culture, traditions, how we think'. Shared cultural understandings were deemed particularly important in schools with few black pupils, as such understandings can help to provide a 'bond/connection/sense of belonging' and can break down feelings of isolation.

*'She goes to a school where there are very few black kids or black people generally so it's been really important for her that she's had this teacher with her so she feels like she's not so alien.'*

Black teachers have the ability to make the curriculum more engaging because they are able to draw on their own background and relate to black pupils. For example:

*'When my son was being taught RE by a black teacher they looked at the way black churches worship and I don't think that would have got covered otherwise.'*

Shared cultural understandings were also salient with regard to developing good teacher-parent relationships - 'My husband went without me, they had a teacher who was a black man and had a one to one, you know one brother to another'. That being said, it was evident that 'being black' did not necessarily mean that black teachers would have the same understanding as black parents.

'I was pleased because she [black teacher] was a young girl and she was black and a mum. She had a five-year-old daughter, so I thought she would be able to empathise with some of the problems that we have been through and that she would have kind of understanding for what it is like for a parent, but it didn't pan out that way.'

### Recognising educational potential
Parents felt that black teachers appeared to bring a different insight into understanding the behaviour and educational needs of black children, and as such were most consistently credited by parents with recognising the potential of black children. Many parents shared stories about gifted children whose ability went unnoticed until their child had a black teacher. It was argued that black teachers are not wedded to the same stereotypes that other teachers appear to be, and instead of labelling bright children 'disruptive' they assess children's ability first. Black parents noted that their children benefited from having a black teacher who had similar educational experiences as this enabled them to 'empathise' and provide better support as well as guidance.

'If I talk about my daughter who is very academic, it was a black teacher that realised how bright she was. It wasn't the rest of the teachers. I think because she felt very comfortable in her class and she started to perform, she then encouraged her to do that in all her other lessons as well.'

## Loving teaching and encouraging learning

Several parents highlighted the difference teachers, particularly from the Caribbean and Black-African countries, had made to teaching and learning, citing their passion for education.

Black teachers were praised and valued by black parents for:

- Demanding greater respect from pupils and having a stricter approach to behaviour.
- Being more exacting of black pupils through the curriculum.
- Having 'a better understanding of the black child as a whole' and for instilling in pupils' that 'education is important'.
  *'Maths was not one of my daughter's strong subjects. She's quite bright, but if you say to her "this is what I expect from you" she will do this and no more. Now she's had this teacher for maths and she's taking her maths GCSE a year early. I'm completely convinced that this teacher has just been pushing her, pushing her, pushing her because nothing else makes sense. She doesn't even like maths, so how does that work? It's the [black] teacher she's had.'*
  *'I spoke to a young girl who is a friend of my son. She used to truant, she was in drugs, and she did all manner of evil from when she was about 13. She dropped out of school when she got to year nine. She managed to leave school with something like seven GCSEs and she said it was a black teacher, [...] who was the person that really helped her and encouraged her. He went to her home and said: "Listen you have to do this, come back to school". And this was a girl from a different community.'*

## Supporting learning

Parents valued the mentoring role that black teachers had taken on with their children.

The black teachers that have been in my children's school, one of them has almost acted as a mentor to my daughter in particular and I didn't have any expectations that she would do that. I think for my daughter it has really been important that there has been a black teacher.'

### Role models

Black teachers were seen as good role models for all black pupils but more so black boys with experience of few positive black male images.

*'At the moment my little boy is suffering from very low self-esteem because he doesn't see black people around him in a way that is positive.'*

*'I have seen and experienced a lot of motivation given by black male teachers in school to my son in particular.'*

# 9  black pupils

This chapter explores in greater detail some of the factors that black parents highlighted as negatively impacting on the experiences of black pupils in schools and affecting the educational outcomes of black children.

## Black pupils – teacher expectations

Low teacher expectations were the biggest concern for parents of black children. Typical comments included:

*'If you're child isn't a high flier, is very average, they are not going to push them.'*

*'I don't know what it is, but there isn't a high expectation that our children will achieve.'*

*'I do think they think black children are uneducable.'*

A common theme reported was an inability of schools and teachers to stretch gifted students. One parent reported that a child aged eight with a reading age of 15 had a book confiscated as she was judged to be 'too far ahead', rather than having her efforts praised. Other parents reported having children tested privately to challenge low GCSE paper entries by schools. These parents were fearful of low teacher expectations becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy:

*'[...] What I found was that the marking system, where my daughter had done a piece of work where I personally could see it was totally unacceptable, totally unacceptable, yet the teacher had put: "Well done". Now, of course, if I didn't see that my child would think "I'm doing all right" if the teacher says well done. It's the expectation they're giving my daughter.'*

While some parents were despondent that low teacher expectations would ever be addressed, a few saw sending their children to be educated in the Caribbean as the answer to low teacher expectations. This type of intervention, together with other measures was regarded as inevitable because if allowed to flourish, low teacher expectations would consign their children to a life of underachievement.

*'I am still of the belief that when I send my son to school he is going to be miseducated.'*

*'Unfortunately, if we leave it to the system our kids will always be the post office worker, the train driver, dissatisfied with their life.'*

### Teacher treatment of black pupils' behaviour – perceptions

Parents felt that negative societal characterisations of black men has contributed to black boys being perceived by teachers as aggressive and problematic.

*'My son is now very tall, six foot. He's suddenly grown a foot in the year and they talk about his size and his physicality. They were all sitting round in a classroom the other day and a [white] boy came in and slapped him around the face. [But] the focus of attention was that my son lost his temper and retaliated and how strong he was, not on the fact that this boy walked in and did an unprovoked assault on him. And when I wrote and went up to draw this to their attention, these boys both got exactly the same punishment.'*

Interestingly, parents not only found that teachers responded to the behaviour of black boys differently than other boys, but that black girls were also treated differently owing to the fact that teachers, despite considering black girls 'mouthy', found them 'less problematic' than black boys and 'more work orientated'.

Parents of gifted children were concerned that the tendency by gifted children to ask numerous questions in lessons was perceived wrongly as intentional disruption, and consequently such behaviour was treated more harshly – 'You know my son is always being told "you need to keep quiet" because he always asks what is going on'.

#### *Exclusion*

Some parents saw schools as being unable to manage the 'lively', 'boisterous' behaviour of black children and invariably used expulsion as a behaviour management strategy. Parents felt that black pupils were unevenly excluded when other pupils were equally to blame – '[...] was excluded while the other girl got a suspended detention!'

Parents were also of the opinion that exclusion is used too often without talking to parents or even notifying them of the school's intention. Sending letters home with pupils was considered pointless, as invariably they did not receive them. It was inferred that exclusion is used, more often than not, to avoid dealing with issues in school such as low teacher expectations, racism within the school, high staff turnover and poor pupil support, some of the factors parents identified as resulting in poor pupil behaviour. Inevitably, being excluded often means that black children are being 'mentored' on the streets instead of in the classroom.

## Racism

By and large racial stereotypes of black people as 'uneducated' and 'underachievers' resulted in some teachers not believing that black children can be clever (eg a gifted child was asked if she really was from Jamaica). As a result of negative perceptions of black pupil ability some parents found it difficult to communicate their concerns about their children and the work being set as not motivating or challenging them sufficiently.

Notions of black boys as 'lazy' were not only reflected in low teacher expectations, but also seemed to contribute to black boys receiving less support with regard to their education. So that even 'the cleverest black boys' were reportedly leaving schools without qualifications. Several parents expressed concern that negative school experiences would serve to undermine the self-esteem of those black boys who it was argued do not have a positive self-identity of being black.

The parent accounts illustrate the extent to which they consistently challenged negative stereotypes of black people (especially men) in their attempts to get an appropriate education for their children. Parents were upset that teachers seemed oblivious to the racial pressures that black boys experienced from other communities surrounding some of the schools they attended and from the wider society. For example, police stop and search, racial abuse and discrimination that may have happened on their way to school in the morning or outside the school gates. Such experiences might in turn negatively impact on the behaviour of these pupils and their engagement with school. It is precisely because parents understand the ways in which their children's school experiences are conditioned by everyday experiences of racism that they strive to facilitate their understanding of what it means to be 'black' in Britain, and the importance of having a good education - 'I said: "You must remember you are black, you have to be a bit cleverer, one above them".'

## Attitudes towards learning

Parents (like black teachers) worried that some black children (predominantly boys) are not 'passionate' about or committed to learning because they did not consider it 'cool'. Children seemed to associate being 'bright' with being a 'boff' and most did not aspire to be 'boffs' as this would count against them 'fitting in' with the crowd. Parents felt black children's peer groups were likely to impact on them viewing education negatively (eg refusing to do homework) and possibly 'getting into the wrong crowd' where some boys were thought to be 'out of control'.

Parents were dismayed by the extent of influence on some children that MTV Base and other music outlets seem to have. These were felt to

present negative ideas of black men and women (eg wearing 'big chains', using 'foul language') and pander to existing racial stereotypes (eg as gangsters, drug smugglers). Such images do little to encourage pupils to learn - 'They aspire in a materialistic sense but not academically'.

Another factor that appeared to influence the negative attitudes of some black pupils (boys and girls) to learning was their perceptions of the way in which teachers treated them unfairly. Several parents recounted instances of racism where their children felt their teachers did not listen to them. This primarily related to when they asked questions in lessons that teachers failed to answer, when they were accused of doing something wrong when another child was at fault, and when they felt they were being 'picked on/victimised' by teachers for retaliating against another child. Parents felt such experiences were largely responsible for some children disengaging from school and, in the process, acquiring even more negative labels.

*'In the end they start not bothering to come to school because nobody is listening to them and, so why should I bother? And so then they bunk off and they play truant and it gets worse. And they are being tarnished with a bad name for being a bad kid or being an unruly kid when it's really not their fault.'*

### Curriculum
*'How do we expect our children to have values in themselves if they don't know who they are?'*

Many parents (like the teachers interviewed) thought the curriculum offered in schools was too prescriptive, with pupils of all abilities finding it 'boring'. Parents of gifted children were concerned that their children often did not get an appropriate curriculum to meet their individual needs. One parent commented that her (gifted) daughter had opted out of school thinking it a 'waste of time' and had taught herself the science module and then sat her GCSE exam. The curriculum was also thought inappropriate for black boys as it was 'like a straight jacket' that 'restricted' the development of their minds and inhibited creativity. Again it was felt that the curriculum was not harnessing the creative talents that some boys seemed to exhibit outside of school at the end of the day.

There was a consensus that the curriculum offered in schools needed to be made 'interesting and fun' and that it ought to be broadened to take account of black history and the achievements of black people. It was argued that black pupils were often presented with a one-sided picture of black people as 'slaves', and that such caricatures negatively impacted on

black children's engagement and learning. A further contention was that pupils were also likely to perceive black history negatively where it was evident that those responsible for teaching it were themselves disinterested. Black teachers highlighted similar concerns in their discussion groups.

Black parents were in favour of black history being embedded in all areas of the curriculum (eg geography, science, maths) and not just offered in one month of the year.

They also saw the need for resources used in schools to be more reflective of the pupils that are being taught in Britain's multiethnic society.

## 10 the way forward: the need for black teachers

### Role models

Parents and teachers argued for inspirational role models in schools especially to counteract negative representations of black people in society. Black boys were thought to need good male role models as many have absent fathers. This was thought to be a role that black male teachers could usefully provide and one that was likely to have a positive influence on the educational outcomes of black children.

*'My son recently managed to leave school and do well and one of the things he mentioned to me, only recently he said to me: "Mum I'm going to be a maths teacher". "Why do you want to do maths?" "Well I've seen how Mr... helped me and supported me. If it wasn't for him I wouldn't be doing as good."*

Notwithstanding, it was evident that not all black teachers regard themselves as role models and/or consider this a role they should perform. Moreover parents saw themselves as the first and 'most important' positive role model for their children. It was also felt that black pupils who are interested in learning can be role models for each other. It was anticipated that this in itself 'will make them want to learn and to achieve more'.

Both teachers and parents highlighted the need for mentoring programmes and role model exercises in schools so that pupils look beyond TV celebrities and sports stars to individuals who have been successful in other ways (eg academics, financiers, accountants, teachers, head teachers, etc).

### Black (Male) Teachers

*'I think it's definitely important that there is a presence so children can have an identity and not feel that they are different and singled out.'*

*'I'm from south London and in my children's primary school there isn't one black teacher, not one!'*

Black and minority ethnic groups continue to be under-represented within the teaching profession. Most of the respondents supported the recruitment of more black people into teaching, particularly black men who are desired to be positive role models for black boys - 'I think they will be stronger and the children will be a bit more respectful, they wouldn't think they can get away with as much with a black male in front

of them'. But before this can become a reality two questions would need to be addressed and they are:

· How are we going to get black men into schools, so that black men in schools are the norm?
· How many black men have the qualifications to get into teaching?

Some felt that in order to get sufficient numbers of black men into teaching, black children now being born would have to be nurtured into seeing teaching as an appropriate profession to enter. This would mean a long wait if the absence of black men in teaching is to be addressed. In the interim, it was suggested that offering teaching as a GCSE subject might go some way towards developing an awareness of teaching and what it entails, and encouraging black pupils to consider becoming teachers.

While many parents and teachers called for the recruitment of more black people into the profession, it was noted that these teachers should be of a high standard - 'It's not just black teachers but good black teachers' - and prepared to commit themselves to teaching for the long term. Both groups expressed concern at the number of 'good' quality practitioners that would be attracted into teaching. There was a feeling that recruiting a 'few extra' black teachers would not solve existing problems in schools. Parents also felt that some schools would not be prepared to have too many black staff in senior positions.

*'You'll get to a certain point where you get a few to the top, but only a few, not so many to make things look kind of good.'*

*'In [name of borough] there are more than 80 primary schools, there are two black headteachers! I've been involved as a governor for 15 years now and that's not what I would call progress [...] In fact the 'indigenous' are virtually the kind of minority, so to have only two black head teachers [is a disgrace].'*

Parents and teachers were equally concerned that some schools seemed unable to presently retain good black teachers. This led some to argue for an increase in black senior management staff (especially head teachers) rather than classroom based staff, as they would be able to provide more effective support to current staff. Schools would also need to support black teachers to access appropriate continuing professional development and to achieve promotion.

Although several of the parents were parent governors, they were not keen to become teachers themselves. As well as being 'stressful',

professional parents felt that teaching lacked status and was therefore not an attractive profession to enter. Those with friends or family members who were teachers argued that the stress and strain of being perhaps the only black teacher was another deterrent to entering teaching.

A few parents were, however, unconvinced by the argument of the need for more black teachers or that having black teachers in schools (whether or not they taught black pupils) would necessarily make a difference to the educational outcomes of black pupils.

*'I don't think we should be recruiting more black teachers for the sake of it, just so there's a bigger presence of them because it's the quality at the end of the day that's going to make the difference.'*

*'I can say my best experiences have been with the white teachers who have listened to what I have to say and have tried to put things straight whereas I have had the opposite response from this black teacher. And so I am not saying it is black and it is white. I am saying that in this system, it's about the way the children are educated, it's about the individuals that educate them, and it's about the training that they are getting.'*

Parents who had family members who are teachers were also wary of too much pressure (ie expectations) being put on black teachers (especially those in isolated situations) just because they are black.

'It's very hard being a black teacher. My sister-in-law is quite a senior black teacher in London and being the only black teacher means a lot of black kids come to her with expectations and concerns and she's exhausted. She never gets lunch because they're always at her door needing help and encouragement.'

*'My sister is a teacher and there is a lot of pressure. It's not just the children, it's also other teachers expecting her to do this and that, and parents come in and go straight for her because she's a black face.'*

Teachers and parents were adamant that what is needed to enhance the educational attainment of black pupils is 'good schools' with 'good quality' teachers regardless of their ethnic background; reiterating that a correlation should not be seen between 'good teaching' and skin colour. Another important consideration in an area as diverse and multi-cultural as London is having teachers that are not only 'good academics', but have good 'people' skills that includes a liking for all 'races', and a commitment to seeing and treating black children as 'children' rather than as 'black children'. These teachers would also be required to not be afraid of

challenging black pupils who 'push the boundaries', if not, the educational consequences are likely to be detrimental.

Notwithstanding the above, perhaps the most persuasive argument for increasing the number of black teachers is to ensure that black children are educated 'fairly' and counteract negative stereotypes and low teacher/school expectations.

*'If there are more black teachers within the school who are black themselves they can identify with my child. I would like to think that they have clarity about who they are and what they're seeing in front of them. They're not seeing a black child; they're seeing a child.'*

## Concluding comments

This report has shown that black teachers and particularly black male teachers are needed for all schools and all pupils, and not simply for schools with a high number of black pupils. This is essential if black pupils are to have access to good quality practitioners who have the ability to make a difference to their educational outcomes.

If a more representative teaching workforce is to be achieved in London, we need to ensure that Black teachers are in positions of responsibility and are not seen as being only able to teach black children and/or manage their behaviour, or that just because they are black that they are the experts on cultural diversity and have all the answers to raising black achievement.

It is known that minority ethnic groups are attracted into and retained in teaching by the desire to 'give something back to the community' (GTCE, Maylor, Dalgety and Ross 2003). This was also evident in the teacher discussions. When addressing the question of what it means to be a black teacher, what seemed to come through several narratives is this sense of 'social responsibility' felt by black teachers for black children. That is 'never giving up on a black child, no matter how bad' they are. While some teachers may relish this responsibility, it can lead to some black teachers feeling 'guilty' and remaining in the same school (eg 16-18 years) because the 'need' (ie black children) is there, rather than developing their career elsewhere. Indeed, several made reference to the burden of representation. However, as one teacher pointed out, black teachers 'cannot be effective if they feel guilty'. This would seem to suggest that measures would need to be put in place to ensure that black teachers do not become ineffective because of any guilt or sense of responsibility they may feel they have to the wider black community.

There is also evidence that where some black teachers are promoted to senior management, they face racist assumptions that they are not as capable or as competent as their peers. There is a strong perception among black teachers that being a black teacher means having to work twice as hard, be twice as good and undergo greater surveillance than other teachers. Clearly, this is not the type of message that is likely to attract or indeed retain new black recruits into the profession.

Recruitment inequality, combined with an absence of senior management support, feelings of isolation and a lack of career development/ progression for many black teachers in London, may result in more black teachers being discouraged from teaching in London schools and at worst leaving the profession altogether. These are further reasons for the employment experiences of existing black teachers to be addressed.

If more black people are to be encouraged to enter and be retained in teaching, racism in schools needs to be challenged and support mechanisms put in place to enable black staff and pupils to counteract racist experiences. Racism in initial teacher training similarly needs to be challenged. Teacher training could benefit from effective school mentors and the recruitment of more minority ethnic teacher educators.

The other area that requires attention includes offering better incentives (eg bonus schemes) that both reward black teachers for their perseverance in the face of adversity and encourage new entrants to take a more long-term view of teaching, particularly where they are located in very challenging schools. Encouraging black teachers to develop middle and senior management skills at an early stage of their career could also facilitate retention.

Parents valued the high educational expectations that black teachers bring to their teaching and their commitment in ensuring that black pupils achieve to the best of their ability. Black parents similarly have high expectations and chose 'good' schools for their children. They wanted schools to work with them to help their children succeed, but did not feel they could always rely on schools to do the best for their children and so were prepared to be let down. For many parents secondary schools in particular present a constant battle as they fight to ensure that the individual needs of their children are met so they can fulfil their potential. For those parents, however, who lack the confidence and wherewithal to help their children to achieve their high expectations, it is less likely that the educational outcomes of their children will be positive, unless schools support them in their endeavours.

It is worth noting that many parents were frustrated with the continuing search for answers to explain the underachievement of black pupils.

*'I am sick and tired for the last 30 years, they are telling us the same nonsense, our kids are going through the same system and not achieving, our black Afro-Caribbean boys only 27 per cent of them are achieving five or more GCSEs and we're still sitting down having these debates.'*

*'All this stuff about boys' education was identified 40 years ago. Why are we still talking about the same things and writing endless reports? [...] We need to deal with the actual issues and confront the actual issues. I think some of the actual issues are about the racism that is going on.'*

Despite these apparent frustrations it is essential that notions of 'achievement' and 'underachievement' continue to be explored and contextualised, and solutions sought.

# 11 recommendations

### Meeting the needs of diverse communities

1 Race/cultural awareness training should be mandatory for students and qualified teachers in London in order that teachers are equipped to teach a diverse pupil population. All teachers coming to teach in London should be required to undertake appropriate courses on race and diversity and to commit to adopting anti-racist teaching and practice. Newly qualified teachers should also have undertaken at least one teaching placement in a multiethnic London school. Newly qualified teachers without such experience, and experienced teachers wishing to move to teach in London, should demonstrate their commitment to teaching in diverse communities and be provided with mentoring and the opportunity to reflect and assess their experiences in the early stages of their London appointment.

2 Ofsted should be required to build into inspection regimes schools' implementation of race equality and diversity initiatives for both staffing and pupils.

3 All teacher educators (including school-based trainers) need to be made aware of diversity and race equality issues to have the necessary impact on future teachers. The training materials used also need to be more relevant in preparing students for teaching in the 21st century in a multicultural society and delivering a culturally diverse curriculum.

4 All school leadership programmes, such as the Headteachers Induction Programme, should include modules on recruiting black and minority ethnic teachers and leading diverse workforces.

### Recruitment, retention and progression

5 Londonwide guidance pertaining to the recruitment, development, progression and retention of black teachers needs to be developed across schools and LEAs.

6 Strict targets should be set and closely monitored for each LEA to recruit teachers that are representative of local communities.

7 Transparent recruitment processes should be implemented by schools and LEAs, providing an indication of the number of people interviewed for posts, who the job was given to and why. This should be monitored by Ofsted.

8 The status of all teachers, the positions they occupy, pay levels, rate of progression, their experiences and retention rates should be monitored closely by LEAs by ethnicity.

9   Closer examination is required of the threshold assessment process (by schools and LEAs) and the number of unsuccessful black applications monitored by schools and LEAs.

### Support

10  An independent network for black teachers needs to be established in London. Network opportunities would need to be facilitated for black teachers to get together and access support. This is particularly important for black teachers who feel isolated in schools.

### Race equality

11  An audit of the education system, similar to the Macpherson Report and including initial teacher training, is needed to consider how best to address issues of racism and integration of black staff in schools.

12  School Governors in London should be required to undertake race equality training within three months of appointment, including training on 'ethnically blind' appointments, equitable promotion procedures and effective monitoring of applicant ethnicity for all posts, including internally.

13  Diverse governing bodies, representative of local communities and the pupil population, should be obligatory and part of the inspection regime. This would give parents greater confidence that schools are concerned about the education of all children in their care. It would also engender confidence among teachers that schools, and not just those in high density areas, would consider their recruitment applications favourably.

14  The Commission for Racial Equality and Ofsted should closely monitor school compliance with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000) with regard to teacher recruitment and promotion/progression in particular.

### Teacher-parent relationships

15  Schools should have a 'diversity-link' teacher in each school who has responsibility for liaising with parents of black and minority ethnic children and discussing their children's educational needs, as well as the school's policies. This would enable better relationships between parents, teachers and schools to be developed, and could assist where relations between parents and classroom teachers have suffered. LEA/EMAG funding should be set aside for such a post.

# 12 literature review: black teachers in London

Key themes emerging from research are summarised in the section on the Overview of the Literature and the section on Policy & Related Initiatives primarily considers government strategy and commitment relating to or impacting on black teaching staff.

## Overview of the Literature

Literature examining the experiences of minority ethnic staff has focused on a wide range of topics from reasons for finding teaching unattractive to reasons for leaving training or the workforce. It should be noted that who is included under the term minority ethnic groups or black[7] varies across studies. Despite these differences this research does have in common that they are recording the experiences of minority ethnic groups.

## Reasons for entering

Individuals from black groups were likely to enter teaching because they considered that it provided them with an opportunity to contribute positively to the black community (Maylor, Dalgety and Ross 2003). In particular, they indicated awareness of the wider debates about the differential achievement of black pupils and regarded teaching as a direct way of trying to implement change in this area (Gibbes, 1980; Blair & Maylor, 1993; Maylor, Dalgety and Ross 2003). The desire to act as a role model was an incentive for some (Blair & Maylor, 1993; Dhingra & Dunkwu, 1995; Ross, 2002) although this needs to be considered in relation to the various ways in which black staff construct and explain their identities and the ways in which their 'blackness' is interpreted and positioned by others (see below: In-school experiences).

## Reasons for not going into teaching

In 2002, Ross reported that students from minority ethnic backgrounds were not entering teaching at the same rate as their White counterparts despite holding relevant qualifications (Ross, 2002). Dhingra, & Dunkwu, (1995) carried out research, which examined the views of 105 Asian and African Caribbean students' about the teaching profession. The students, selected from primary and secondary schools, further education institutions and a teacher training institute, cited concerns about racism, the absence of existing black teachers as role models as reasons against entering teaching. Poor promotion prospects, low pay and lack of career advice were also cited as deterrents.

Other research has revealed that some black students do not go into teaching because they feel the focus of the curriculum is too Eurocentric and does not sufficiently reflect the experiences of those from black and minority ethnic communities (Osler, 1997; Ross, 2002).

**Teacher Training**

Research commissioned by the TTA (see Carrington et al. 2001)to examine the reasons for withdrawal from ITT courses for both minority and majority ethnic groups found that family and personal factors were the most prevalent reasons for withdrawing for both groups; though family factors were more important for those from minority ethnic backgrounds. It reports that none of the minority ethnic trainees cited racism as a sole determining factor in their withdrawal. Some individual narratives did however, report perceptions of unintentional racism and, in some instances, difficulties experienced on the course were exacerbated by these perceptions and further stimulated the desire to withdraw. Other research has also revealed particular concerns about race-related matters. For example, Siraj-Blatchford (1991) reports that minority ethnic students experience racism from fellow students during teaching practice and Osler (1997) indicates apprehension on the part of minority ethnic students on whether White tutors could necessarily understand or sympathise with their experiences. Consequently, they were reluctant to raise issues around 'race' even with tutors they liked and respected. Students also expressed concern about school placements being situated in areas of high racist activity but did not feel able to share these worries with their tutors (Osler, 1997).

Suggestions have been made that Initial Teacher Training Providers (ITTPs) ought to pay more attention to the experiences of minority ethnic students during their placements as well as provide a more rigorous employment of race equality and equal opportunity policies and a more thorough examination of race-related matters as a part of the course content (Ross, 2002; Osler, 1997). This might include practical examples of ways to handle racist incidents, including those directed at them as members of staff (Osler, 1997).

The TTA/TDA (TTA 2003 a,b) has sought to address minority ethnic recruitment to and withdrawal from initial teacher training through implementing a range of strategies in order to both increase the numbers of students from minority ethnic backgrounds beginning training courses, and to ensure their successful completion since their own figures have indicated that students from minority ethnic backgrounds are almost twice as likely to withdraw from training courses compared with White trainees www.tda.gov.uk).

**In-school experiences**

*Identity*

Black staff tended to represent varying views of their ethnicity reflecting both the diversity within groups categorized as 'black' and the notion that identities are not fixed and are often fluid and changing. Their

'blackness' did not necessarily guarantee better relationships with Black pupils who often accused them of 'acting White' (Osler, 1997; also see Fordham, 1996).

While some black staff perceived themselves as role models to black pupils, others completely rejected the idea of being positioned in this way (McKenley & Gordon, 2002; London Development Agency, 2004). The extent to which they viewed themselves in terms of being *black teachers* also varied with some Black staff citing other elements of identity as more salient to them (London Development Agency, 2004).

As was noted earlier, some black staff became teachers out of a specific desire to support the achievement of black pupils (see above, Reasons for entering) and felt that they worked hard to challenge the stereotypical views and low expectations held by other staff towards pupils from black and minority ethnic backgrounds. However, they also reported that White colleagues tended to *expect* them to take responsibility of the needs of black pupils and parents on account of the shared Blackness of both parties (Osler, 1997; London Development Agency, 2004). Osler (1997) also reports that black staff find themselves being called to legitimize the actions of colleagues which they suspect might have discriminatory origins. This often extended to expectations that black staff were automatically imbued with an extensive knowledge and expertise in areas of multiculturalism and race equality (Blair & Maylor, 1993).

### *Staff development and promotion*
Asked whether they felt that black and minority ethnic school leaders faced different challenges to their peers, participants in the NUT's 2003 survey of minority ethnic staff, responded that they felt that they constantly needed to prove themselves and work harder than their counterparts. Staff in the NUT survey also reported feeling increased surveillance and the expectation of failure from other colleagues. Other research reveals black staff felt officers and colleagues within their LEA overlooked their success even when their achievement was clearly evidenced through performance tables or outstanding Ofsted reports that had been achieved in especially difficult circumstances (McKenley & Gordon, 2002).

While minority ethnic staff did actively seek promotion, many felt that they did not secure positions commensurate with their qualifications and experience (Powney et al., 2003) and were not supported or encouraged to advance their career by headteachers or senior management teams (CRE, 1988). This was corroborated by recent findings that staff from minority ethnic backgrounds were less likely to pass the performance

threshold, a standard which is awarded by school management, compared to their White British colleagues (Taylor, 2005). Vacancies were perceived as more likely to go to White staff despite the fact that as mentioned earlier, black staff felt they had to work harder than them (Bariso, 2001). While these inequalities caused some to leave their school (Jamdagni, Phillips-Bell & Ward, 1982) others complained that promotion was only made possible if they were willing to accept posts in race-related areas of multicultural education or teaching English as an Additional Language or those which were not school-based (Osler, 1997; London Development Agency, 2004).

Black staff who had attained senior positions reported feelings of isolation through often being one of very few staff from minority ethnic backgrounds in such roles. This was often compounded by the added burden of responsibility experienced through the high expectations from those within black communities and black colleagues in lower positions, who while being supportive also anticipated real change within their schools now that they had attained management positions (Osler, 1997).

Ross (2002) corroborates this research and indicates that black staff face difficulties gaining promotion. He describes the grade distribution of teachers by their ethnic background and found that black teachers tend to occupy lower scale or mainscale posts rather than those at senior management levels.

### Black Teachers' views of London
In a 2002 IPSE survey of teachers in 22 LEAs, respondents were asked about their intention to leave London within five years, in the more distant future, or to stay in London for the rest of their working life. Black and (particularly) Asian teachers are more likely to see themselves as staying in the locality.

**Figure 2   Expectations of remaining in London throughout working life**
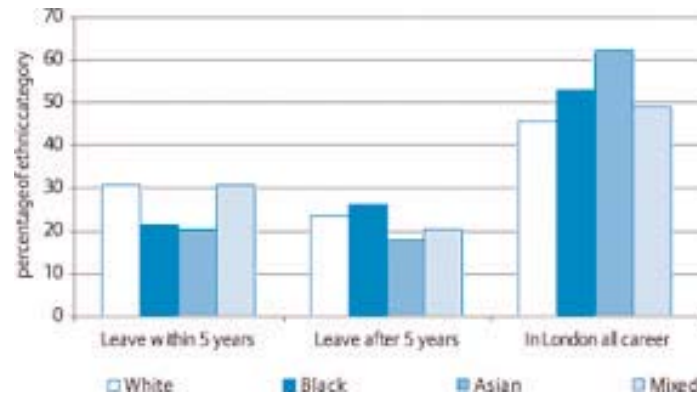


Source:        IPSE, 22 LEAs, 2002

Black and Asian teachers appear to be more firmly rooted in London, and less inclined to move from London than white teachers. However, this may - at least in part - be simply a reflection that a higher proportion of black and Asian teachers were recruited from a London childhood, and/or trained in London, and are thus more likely to stay in London. What the figure above may be showing could simply be a reflection of life-histories, rather than any characteristic of ethnicity. There is a tendency for those from ethnic minority backgrounds not to move out of their local communities, where they often feel a higher level of community support, have a greater sense of security and safety, and may have more supportive family networks that they might have in a different area, with a lower proportion of ethnic minority inhabitants. This has been characterised by theories of 'choice' and 'restraint' (Lakey, 1997; Ratcliffe, 1999). If there is a tendency for movement not to take place, this may be greater than the number of ethnic minorities leaving the profession, so London may in fact maintain its ratio of ethnic minority to white teachers.

What factors are incentives to stay in London? This was examined in the 2003 five-LEA survey (2003). Teachers were asked to score a series of factors as being either incentives to stay in London ('strong', or 'some'), or incentives to leave London ('strong' or 'some'). Table 5 shows these in rank order for each ethnic group.

This table shows that broadly all teachers, of whatever ethnic group, have a very similar view of what constitutes the factors that makes London attractive and unattractive. All, for example, rate London's cultural opportunities the highest. But black teachers tend generally to be more positive about London than White teachers - particularly on a clutch of

factors relating to the cultures, multiethnic/multilingual character, and to the cosmopolitan character of London. And, though all groups find the cost of accommodation a disadvantage, it appears to be rated less of a disadvantage by black teachers. However, pupil behaviour is seen as rather more of a disincentive to teach in London than it is by other groups. But on many other issues, there is remarkable unanimity, both in ranking and in the rating attributed to various factors.

**Table 5   Factors that are incentives to stay in London, and to leave London**
Teachers were asked to score each of the following potential factor as a strong incentive to stay in London (1) to a strong incentive to leave London (5). This table gives the mean score for each ethnic group (White=1909, Black =74, Asian=77)

| **Abbreviated forms used in table** | |
| --- | --- |
| Teaching in a multiethnic, multilingual environment | teaching multiethnic |
| Teaching in an area of teacher shortage | teacher shortage area |
| Pupil behaviour | pupil behaviour |
| Location of my partner's job | location partner's job |
| Job opportunities for other family members | job opportunities for family |
| Location of my children's schools | location children's schools |
| Location of my friends | location of friends |
| Location of my family | location of family |
| Cost of housing | cost of housing |
| The accommodation I currently live in | current accommodation |
| The quality of education for my own children | quality of my children's ed |
| Living in a cosmopolitan area | living in cosmopolitan area |
| Cultural opportunities | Cultural opportunities |
| Shopping facilities | shopping facilities |
| Public transport | public transport |
| The environment I live and work in | environment live/work |

| | White teachers | Black teachers | Asian teachers |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Incentives to stay in London** | | | |
| 1.6 | | 1.64 cultural opportunities | |
| 1.7 | | 1.74 teaching multiethnic/lingual | |
| | | 1.79 living in cosmopolitan area | |
| 1.8 | | | 1.89 cultural opportunities |
| 1.9 | | 1.95 location of friends | |
| 2.0 | | | 2.05 teaching multiethnic/lingual |
| | 2.07 cultural opportunities | | |
| 2.1 | 2.13 location of friends | | 2.12 living in cosmopolitan area |
| | | | 2.15 location of friends |
| 2.2 | 2.20 shopping facilities | 2.01 shopping facilities | 2.09 shopping facilities |
| | 2.27 living in cosmopolitan area | 2.27 location of family | |
| 2.3 | | 2.35 location children's schools | |
| 2.4 | 2.40 teaching multiethnic/lingual | 2.40 public transport | 2.41 location partner's job |
| | 2.41 location partner's job | 2.43 location partner's job | 2.51 location of family |
| 2.5 | 2.69 job opportunities for family | 2.52 current accommodation | 2.56 current accommodation |
| | 2.59 current accommodation | | 2.59 environment live/work |
| 2.6 | 2.64 public transport | 2.63 job opportunities for family | 2.60 job opportunities for family |
| | 2.65 location children's schools | 2.64 environment live/work | 2.68 public transport |
| 2.7 | 2.65 location of family | 2.69 quality of my children's ed | |
| | 2.77 environment live/work | 2.74 teacher shortage area | 2.75 location children's schools |
| 2.8 | | | |
| 2.9 | 2.94 quality of my children's ed | | 2.96 quality of my children's ed |
| 3.0 | 3.03 teacher shortage area | | 3.03 teacher shortage area |
| **Incentives to leave London** | | | |
| 3.5 | | | 3.56 pupil behaviour |
| 3.6 | 3.69 pupil behaviour | | |
| 3.7 | | 3.73 pupil behaviour | |
| 3.9 | | 3.98 cost of housing | |
| 4.1 | | | 4.14 cost of housing |
| 4.3 | 4.30 cost of housing | | |

Key:      Blue text = Statistically significant difference between ethnic groups
Source:   IPSE, Retention, 2003

### Black Teachers views of Professional Development

This tendency for teachers of all ethnic backgrounds - black, white and of Asian origin - to have very similar views on many aspects of professional life was confirmed in the General Teaching Council survey conducted in the late autumn of 2002 (GTCE, Survey, 2003). An analysis of this showed that on very many issues, very similar opinions were held. The final section of this report focuses on where there were variations between the views of black London teachers and other London teachers.

One of the most significant differences was in response to questions asking about what motivated teachers to firstly enter the profession, and secondly to stay in teaching. The responses were broadly similar: the striking exceptions were that black teachers tended to give as a significantly more prominent reason their desire to 'give something back to the community'. There was also a greater tendency to have been inspired by a particular teacher in the course of their own schooling. The table that follows gives the seven most often cited reasons by all teachers, distributed to show the responses of different ethnic groups of London teachers.

## Table 6   Motivation to become a teacher: London, certain ethnic categories

| White British | Black Caribbean | Black African | Black Other |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | *60.0 Giving something back to community* |
| 51.5 Working with children/ young people | 52.0 Working with children/ young people | | |
| | | 41.9 Working with children/ young people | 40.0 Role is creative/mentally stimulating/challenging |
| | *39.0 Giving something back to community* | | |
| 35.9 Role is creative/mentally stimulating/ challenging | | *33.9 Giving something back to community* | 33.3 Love of my subject |
| | | 32.3 Role is creative/mentally stimulating/challenging | |
| | 27.6 Role is creative/mentally stimulating/challenging | | *26.7 Inspired by a good teacher* |
| *24.2 Giving something back to community* | 25.2 Inspired by a good teacher | | |
| 23.6 Love of my subject | | | 20.0 Working with children/ young people |
| 23.4 Role is dynamic & varied | | | |
| 18.8 Positive personal experience of school | 19.5 Love of my subject | 19.4 Love of my subject | |
| *18.2 Inspired by a good teacher* | 17.1 Role is dynamic & varied | 17.7 Role is dynamic & varied | |
| | 14.6 Positive personal experience of school | 17.7 Positive personal experience of school | |
| | | 12.9 Inspired by a good teacher | |

Source:    GTCE, Survey, 2003

# 13  methodology

A statistical overview of the teaching, pupil and general population was undertaken to illuminate numbers and locations of black teachers and pupils across England and more specifically in London.. The study was also conducted using qualitative methods, namely focus groups and interviews. The qualitative data was collected between May and July 2005. Focus group discussions were held with black teachers (including head/deputy headteachers) and parents. Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with a small number of teachers who were unable to attend the discussion groups.

### Teacher discussion groups and interviews

Eight discussion groups were conducted with a total of 57 respondents. Three individual interviews were conducted with two teachers and a learning mentor. This yielded a participation total of 60. Profiles of respondents are indicated in the following tables.

| SEX | Number |
|---|---|
| Female | 47 |
| Male | 13 |
| **Total** | **60** |

| AGE | Number |
|---|---|
| Less than 30 | 1 |
| 31 to 35 | 4 |
| 36 to 40 | 12 |
| 41 to 45 | 14 |
| 46 to 50 | 6 |
| 51 to 55 | 12 |
| 56 and over | 1 |
| Missing data | 10 |
| **Total** | **60** |

Respondents worked across 20 London local education authorities (LEA), including the boroughs with the highest representation of black teachers. Two of the LEAs were situated in areas with a low proportion of minority ethnic groups and teachers. One teacher is employed outside London but had previously worked within London. Some of the respondents had experience of working in more than one LEA. One respondent is currently working across three LEAs.

The respondents were evenly spread across the primary and secondary sectors; 44 per cent in each. Two percent worked in pupil referral units and a further 10 per cent preferred not to disclose their employment phase. In order to protect their anonymity and confidentiality some also

chose not to reveal the name of the schools they work in. For those where data was provided it is possible to establish that most worked in schools that were below the national average in attainment at both primary (SATs) and secondary level (GCSE).

The respondents were employed in various positions of responsibility. These are indicated in the table below.

| POSITION | Number |
|---|---|
| Teacher | 20 |
| Acting/Deputy | 4 |
| Assistant/Acting/Head | 6 |
| SENCo | 4 |
| Assistant/Head of Year | 5 |
| Co-ordinator | 2 |
| Head of Science | 1 |
| Head of Languages | 1 |
| Head of Maths | 1 |
| Supply | 2 |
| Other - position not specified | 11 |
| Missing data | 3 |
| **Total** | **60** |

Respondents had experience of teaching ranging between less than five years to over 26. The length of time teaching is depicted in the table below.

| Length of time teaching | Number |
|---|---|
| 5 years or less | 11 |
| 6 to 10 years | 9 |
| 11 to 15 years | 13 |
| 16 to 20 years | 9 |
| 21 to 25 years | 4 |
| Over 26 years | 9 |
| Missing data | 5 |
| **Total** | **60** |

Eighty-nine percent of the respondents were trained to teach in the UK. Two percent had UK and overseas teacher training. The routes that were undertaken to enter UK teaching are indicated in the following table.

| Route into UK teaching | Number |
| --- | --- |
| Certificate in education | 8 |
| B.Ed | 13 |
| PGCE | 28 |
| OTT | 2 |
| More than 1 qualification | 4 |
| Other | 1 |
| Missing data | 4 |
| **Total** | **60** |

### *Parent discussion groups*

Five discussion groups were conducted with a total of 26 parents. Profiles of the respondents are indicated in the table below:

| Parents | Number |
| --- | --- |
| Female | 22 |
| Male | 4 |
| **Total** | **26** |

Background information supplied by the parents indicates that between them they had responsibility for 42 children; 21 female and 16 male. Five respondents did not provide age or gender details of their children. Twelve of the children were attending primary schools and a further 25 were attending secondary schools.

### *Analysis*

The NVivo qualitative software data analysis package was employed in the organisation and analysis of the qualitative data. This made it easier to identify the categories and terms used by the respondents and emerging patterns and themes to be coded, and for the coded data to be rigorously analysed (i.e. within case and between cases, see e.g. Miles and Huberman, 2002; Ryan and Bernard, 2003). The data was analysed with a view to identifying and contrasting the main sources of recruitment, development, progression and retention of black teachers and the factors affecting the educational achievement of black pupils, and black parents experiences in supporting the education of their children. The rigorous analysis ensures that the findings and research process are more transparent and accessible to scrutiny.

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# appendices

**1   Minority ethnic group categories referred to by the TTA/TDA:**
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British -Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Other Asian background

Black or Black British - African
Black or Black British - Caribbean
Other Black background

Chinese or Other Ethnic background

Mixed - White and Black African
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean
Mixed - White and Asian
Other Mixed background

**2   Endnotes**
1    DfES London Challenge: Survey of Pupils and Teachers, 2004
2    Community Cohesion: A report of the Independent Review Team
     chaired by Ted Cantle (Home Office, 2001)
3    Home Office Race Equality Strategy, 2005
4    Newly Qualified Teacher Survey, 2005, Teacher Training Agency (now
     Training and Development Agency for Schools)
5    Of those declaring their ethnicity.
6    It should be noted that despite having reached this target in teacher
     training, within the teaching population minority ethnic groups only
     account for 4.7 per cent of the profession.
7    For the purposes of this Literature Review 'Black' refers to individuals
     identifying within 2001Census categories of Black or Black British
     and, the Mixed categories of Mixed White & Black Caribbean and
     Mixed White & Black African.

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này bằng ngôn ngữ của mình, hãy
liên hệ theo số điện thoại hoặc địa
chỉ dưới đây.

### Greek

Αν θέλετε να αποκτήσετε αντίγραφο του παρόντος
εγγράφου στη δική σας γλώσσα, παρακαλείστε να
επικοινωνήσετε τηλεφωνικά στον αριθμό αυτό ή ταχυ-
δρομικά στην παρακάτω διεύθυνση.

### Turkish

Bu belgenin kendi dilinizde
hazırlanmış bir nüshasını
edinmek için, lütfen aşağıdaki
telefon numarasını arayınız

### Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦੀ ਕਾਪੀ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ
ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਫ਼ੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜਾਂ ਹੇਠ
ਲਿਖੇ ਪਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਰਾਬਤਾ ਕਰੋ:

### Hindi

यदि आप इस दस्तावेज की प्रति अपनी
भाषा में चाहते हैं, तो कृपया निम्नलिखित
नंबर पर फोन करें अथवा नीचे दिये गये
पते पर संपर्क करें

### Bengali

আপনি যদি আপনার ভাষায় এই দলিলের প্রতিলিপি
(কপি) চান, তা হলে নীচের ফোন নম্বরে
বা ঠিকানায় অনুগ্রহ করে যোগাযোগ করুন।

### Urdu

اگر آپ اس دستاویز کی نقل اپنی زبان میں
چاہتے ہیں، تو براہ کرم نیچے دئے گئے نمبر
پر فون کریں یا دیئے گئے پتے پر رابطہ کریں

### Arabic

إذا أردت نسخة من هذه الوثيقة بلغتك، يرجى
الاتصال برقم الهاتف أو مراسلة العنوان
أدناه

### Gujarati

જો તમને આ દસ્તાવેજની નકલ તમારી ભાષામાં
જોઈતી હોય તો, કૃપા કરી આપેલ નંબર ઉપર
ફોન કરો અથવા નીચેના સરનામે સંપર્ક સાધો.