

Language Diversity and Attainment in Primary Schools



Language Diversity and Attainment in Primary Schools

Feyisa Demie, Andrew Hau, James McDonald

© The authors. All rights reserved. July 2015

ISBN: 978-1-910428-09-2

Contents	Page
Section 1: Introduction: What does previous research tell us	2
Section 2: The aims and research methods	3
Section 3: EAL, Language, Ethnic Background and Attainment	4
• EAL and attainment in England	4
• EAL and attainment by region	6
• Ethnic background and attainment	10
• Language diversity and attainment	13
• Black African language diversity and attainment	16
• White Other language diversity and attainment	20
• Indian language diversity and attainment	23
• Pakistani language diversity and attainment	24
Section 4: Discussion and implication for policy and practice	26
Appendix	29
References	30

Language Diversity and Attainment in Primary Schools

1. Introduction: What does previous research tell us?

Language diversity attracts much interest among policy makers and educationists and yet little is known about the performance of pupils who speak different languages in British schools. There is a wealth of research into ethnic background and achievement in British schools. The most comprehensive influential policy studies and inquiries into the education of children of ethnic minorities were undertaken by the Rampton Committee (1981), Swann Committee (1985) and Parekh Commission (2000). Each of these appeared to show considerable under-achievement of Caribbean and Other Black pupils, when compared with the average level of achievement of White and Asian children. Some of the findings in these reports are supported by studies in the last two decades and show that pupils from the major ethnic groups tend to have a level of attainment below the average for that of their White peers (Mortimor et al 1988, Demie 2001, Smith and Tomlinson, 1989; Ofsted, 2002a, b; Cabinet Office, 2007; DCSF, 2008b). These documents reflect widespread concerns within the government, academia and schools that a disproportionate number of Black children tend to underperform in public examinations in comparison to their White peers.

In addition to the studies reviewed above, the three most recent significant overviews of research on ethnic differences in levels of achievement have been published by Ofsted (Gillborn & Gipps, 1996; Gillborn & Mirza, 2000), DfE (2009), Bradbury (2011), Strand (2013, 2010 and 2012). These research reports also reviewed the stage of recent changes in the educational achievements of ethnic minority pupils. The results confirm previous research findings which suggest considerable under-achievement of Caribbean and Other Black pupils, on average, compared with White and Asian children. This concern has increased in the wake of recent KS1, KS2, KS3 and GCSE results which show the under-achievement of Black African and Black Caribbean pupils in both primary and secondary schools (DfE 2006; Demie 2001; Strand 2012). This is further supported by recent studies by Dustmann et al (2010) which argued that at the start of school, pupils from most ethnic groups substantially lag behind White British pupils and the gaps decline for all groups through compulsory schooling. The Department for Education (DfE) School Census also suggests that amongst those ending their compulsory education in the UK, Black Caribbean and Pakistani pupils were least successful academically with only 44% of Black Caribbean, 50% of Pakistani, 54% of Bangladeshi and 53% of Black African pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grade A* to C including English and Maths (DfE 2012). However, we need to be cautious as ethnicity categorisation has not always been helpful to study achievement of the performance of all pupils in English schools. Research shows that the worryingly low achievement levels of many pupils in British schools are masked by Government statistics that fail to distinguish between different European, African and Asian ethnic groups (Hollingsworth and Mansaray 2012; Demie 2011; Demie and Lewis 2010, 2011).

Previous research has noted that the recording of ethnicity in England usually refers, confusingly, to a combination of national boundaries (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi) but also colour (Black, White) and more general geographic distinctions, that supersede national boundaries (Black Caribbean, Black African) (see Hollingsworth and Mansaray 2012; Von Ahn et al 2010; Mitton 2011; Demie 2011). Research shows that collapsing into White Other makes comparison problematic as this group contains a range of other European ethnic groups such as Polish, Czech, Portuguese, Spanish, Turkish, Albanian, Russian etc. Similarly the conflation of the Black African, Black Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnic groups is not helpful and tells us little about the role of language. There is therefore a need to unpick how national ethnic categorisations may be used to improve our understanding of the performance of pupils who speak different languages in schools. However, even in the few studies where ethnic differences and educational achievement are considered, the importance of language spoken at home and of

English language fluency in achievement between ethnic groups is rarely reported. Thus, it is not possible to tell from most studies whether pupils who are fully fluent in English from different ethnic groups do better than those who are not fluent in English. Furthermore, previous studies lacked data on differences in performance between the different ethnic groups by language spoken. The few recent studies of attainment and language spoken show that there are significant differences between ethnic categories. For example Demie and McLean (2007) KS2 and GCSE data analysis of Black African ethnic group achievement by language confirm that Igbo, Yoruba and Twi-Fante speaking Black African pupils achieved better than other ethnic groups including Indian and White British at a national level. In contrast, Somali and Lingala speakers tend to have very low attainment compared to other groups. This is further supported by Von Ahn et al (2010:7) analysis of KS2 results that indicate the *“Black African group has some of the highest and some of the lowest achieving groups. For example, the three lowest achieving groups – Lingala, French and Somali speakers tend to have low attainment well below that of the lowest attaining ethnic group overall (Black Caribbean), whilst Igbo, Yoruba and English speaking Black Africans achieve as well as the White British group.”* These research findings also suggest that *“some of the ethnic grouping may be too broad to be useful, and that language data can provide more insight into which pupils may be in need of particular support.”* We would argue that there are large attainment gaps in England when data is analysed further by language spoken in addition to ethnic background.

2. The aims and research methods

Research questions

This research paper considers empirical evidence from England and examines pupil performance differences among the main ethnic groups, by language spoken at home. Three overarching questions guided this research:

- What does the data tell us about the ethnic background, language diversity and attainment?
- Can language data help in unmasking differences in performance by ethnic background?
- What are the implications for policy and practice?

The data and method

The data

The strength of the article is its data source of the National Pupil Database. The National Pupil Database (NPD) is a pupil level database which matches pupil and school characteristic data to pupil level attainment. The sample size of the pupils who completed Key Stage 2 at the end of year 6 in 2012 is 544,220. The data on state schools is highly accurate and has a number of key features. Firstly, the fact that it is a census dataset containing the population of all pupils in state schools is very helpful for a number of different analyses, compared to a dataset based on just a sample of schools. It provides a much richer set of data on school and pupil characteristics. The dataset includes information on language spoken at home, ethnicity, free school meals, gender and results at Key Stage 2.

Measures of pupil background

Pupil Performance - In the English education system, pupils aged 10 to 11 years at the end of Year 6 take the Key Stage 2 tests. These are a series of tests in the individual subjects the pupils have been studying. For the purpose of this paper underachievement is defined as low attainment which is attainment that is below national average or below age-related expectations.

Ethnic Group - Each pupil's ethnic origin was recorded in one of fourteen ethnic groups in England. For details of the ethnic group categories see Table 4 and DfE 2012.

Language Diversity - In England many languages are spoken at home in addition to English, reflecting the different cultures, experiences and identities of the people in the community. Until 2007 there was no nationally collected data of language spoken at home in England. However, from January 2007, where a pupil's first language is not English, schools were asked by the government to record the actual first language. Information from the January 2012 School Census in England indicated that there were about 350 languages spoken in schools. Of these 18 languages are spoken by more than 10,000 pupils, 91 languages spoken by more than 1000 pupils, 156 languages spoken by over 100 speakers, 245 languages spoken by over 5 speakers and 70 languages by 1-4 speakers (see DfE 2012).

3. EAL, Language, Ethnic background and Attainment

EAL and attainment

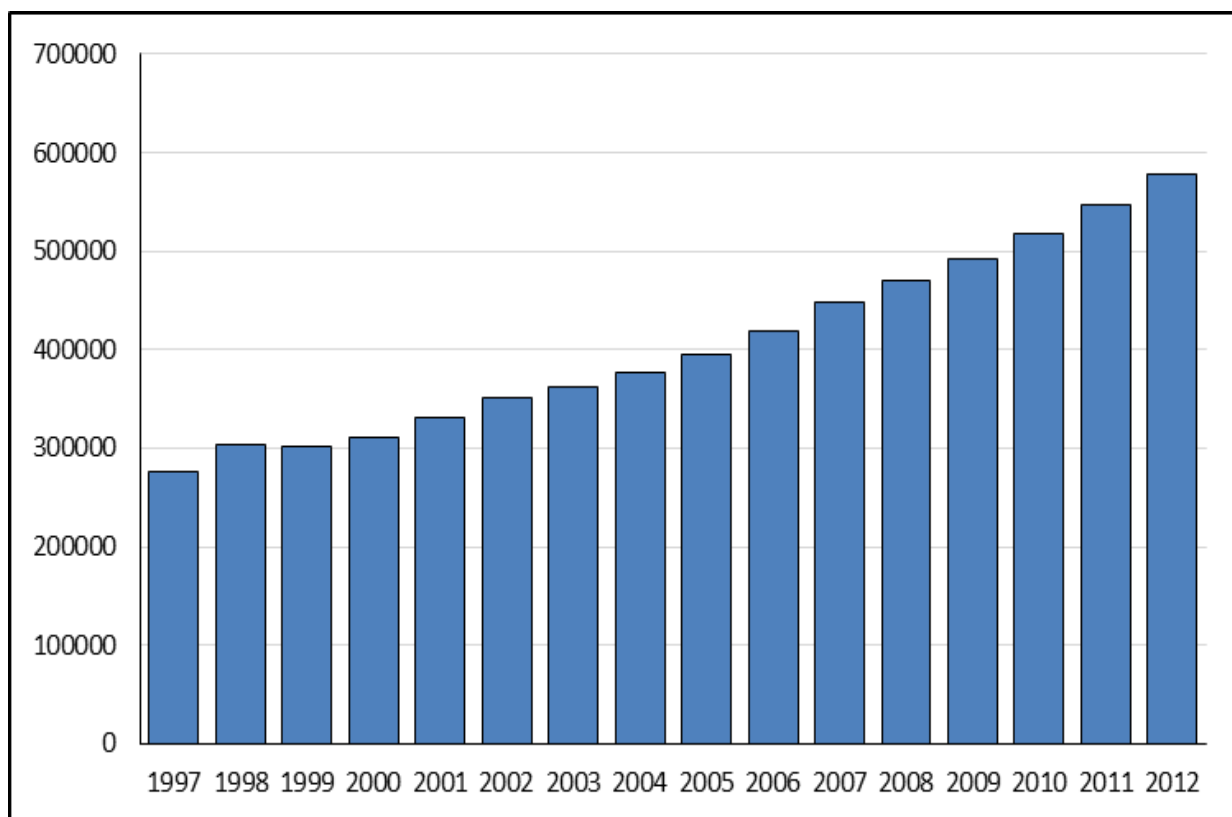
The number of pupils in England with English as an additional language has seen a dramatic increase over the years (Table 1). Across both primary and secondary phases, the number of EAL pupils has doubled since 1997, when just 7.8% of primary school pupils and 7.3% of secondary school pupils spoke a language other than English.

Table 1: Maintained Primary and Secondary Schools in England: Number and Percentage of EAL Pupils 1997 - 2012

	PRIMARY		SECONDARY		TOTAL	
	No. of pupils with EAL	% of pupils with EAL	No. of pupils with EAL	% of pupils with EAL	No. of pupils with EAL	% of pupils with EAL
1997	276,200	7.8	222,800	7.3	499,000	7.6
1998	303,635	8.5	238,532	7.8	542,167	8.2
1999	301,800	8.4	244,684	7.8	546,484	8.1
2000	311,512	8.7	255,256	8.0	566,768	8.4
2001	331,512	9.3	258,893	8.0	590,405	8.7
2002	350,483	10.0	282,235	8.6	632,718	9.3
2003	362,690	10.4	291,110	8.8	653,800	9.6
2004	376,600	11.0	292,890	8.8	669,490	9.9
2005	395,270	11.6	299,200	9.0	694,470	10.3
2006	419,600	12.5	314,950	9.5	734,550	11.0
2007	447,650	13.5	342,140	10.5	789,790	12.0
2008	470,080	14.4	354,300	10.8	824,380	12.6
2009	491,340	15.2	362,600	11.1	853,940	13.1
2010	518,020	16.0	378,210	11.6	896,230	13.8
2011	547,030	16.8	399,550	12.3	946,580	14.6
2012	577,555	17.5	417,765	12.9	995,320	15.2

The rapid rise in the number of pupils with EAL in primary schools especially (Fig 1), should be examined more closely. If EAL is identified as a reason for underperformance, then the increase in the EAL population will impact upon attainment.

Fig 1: Number of Primary School Pupils with English as an Additional Language 1997-2012



The 2012 census recorded that schools in England had 544,220 pupils sitting Key Stage 2 tests in Year 6. Of these, 16.1% were recorded as having English as an additional language, whilst 83.9% spoke only English. (Table 2).

Table 2: KS2 Attainment of EAL/non-EAL Pupils in Maintained Primary Schools in England 2012

	Reading 4+		Writing 4+		Maths 4+		RWM 4+	Mean Ave Points Score	Total Pupils
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%			
EAL	71918	81.9%	68269	77.8%	71743	81.7%	70.6%	27.52	87805
Non-EAL	398752	87.4%	372777	81.7%	385411	84.4%	75.0%	28.31	456415
ALL	470670	86.5%	441046	81.0%	457154	84.0%	74.3%	28.18	544220

Nationally at Key Stage 2, pupils with English as an additional language achieved less well at Reading Writing and Maths than those with English as their first language. However, the gap in performance between EAL and non-EAL is noticeably smaller for Maths (2.7 percentage points) than for Reading (5.5 %) and Writing (3.9%).

EAL and attainment by region of England

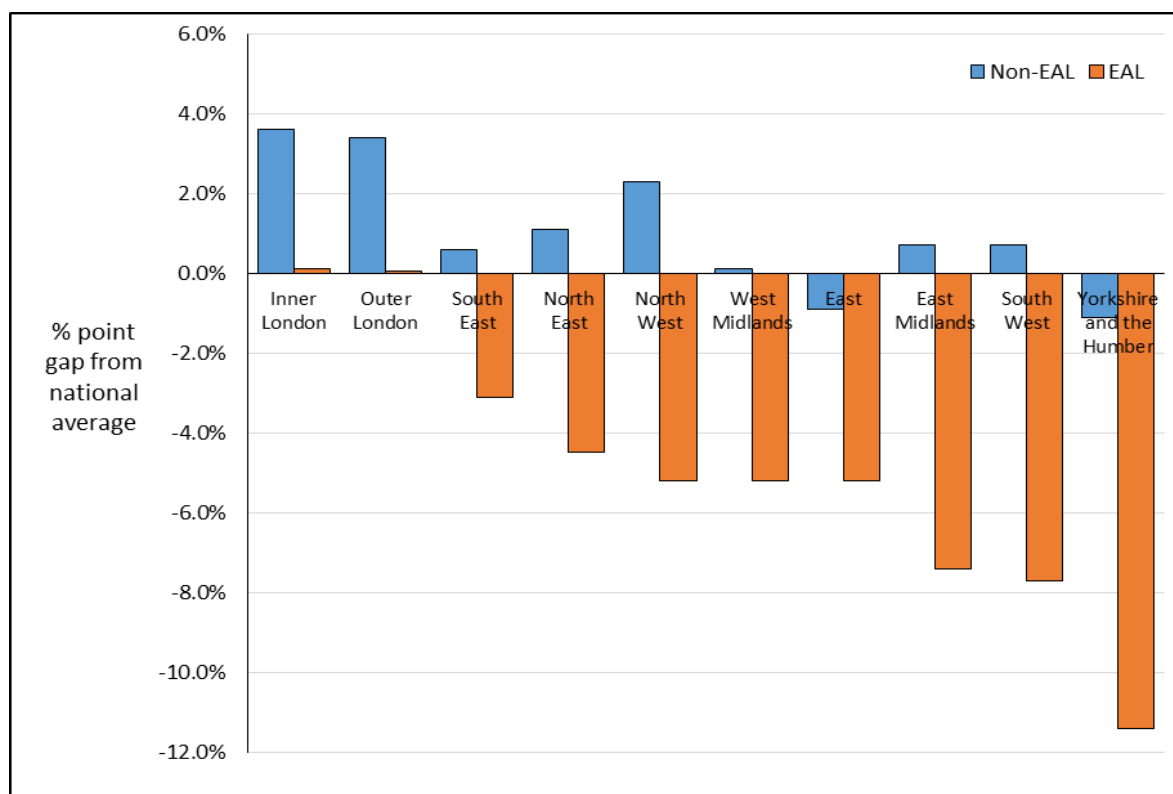
Using the empirical data from the 2012 NPD, the achievement of Key Stage 2 EAL pupils was examined by the region of England they live in (Table 3).

Table 3: KS2 Achievement of EAL Pupils by Region of England

Region	% Pupils EAL	RWM 4+		
		EAL	Non-EAL	Gap
Inner London	54.4%	74.4%	77.9%	-3.5%
Outer London	39.5%	74.3%	77.7%	-3.4%
South East	10.1%	71.2%	74.9%	-3.7%
North East	5.3%	69.8%	75.4%	-5.6%
North West	11.9%	69.1%	76.6%	-7.4%
West Midlands	18.5%	69.1%	74.4%	-5.3%
East	9.9%	69.1%	73.4%	-4.4%
East Midlands	10.5%	66.9%	75.0%	-8.0%
South West	4.9%	66.6%	75.0%	-8.4%
Yorkshire and the Humber	14.8%	62.9%	73.2%	-10.3%
All England	16.2%	70.6%	75.0%	-4.4%

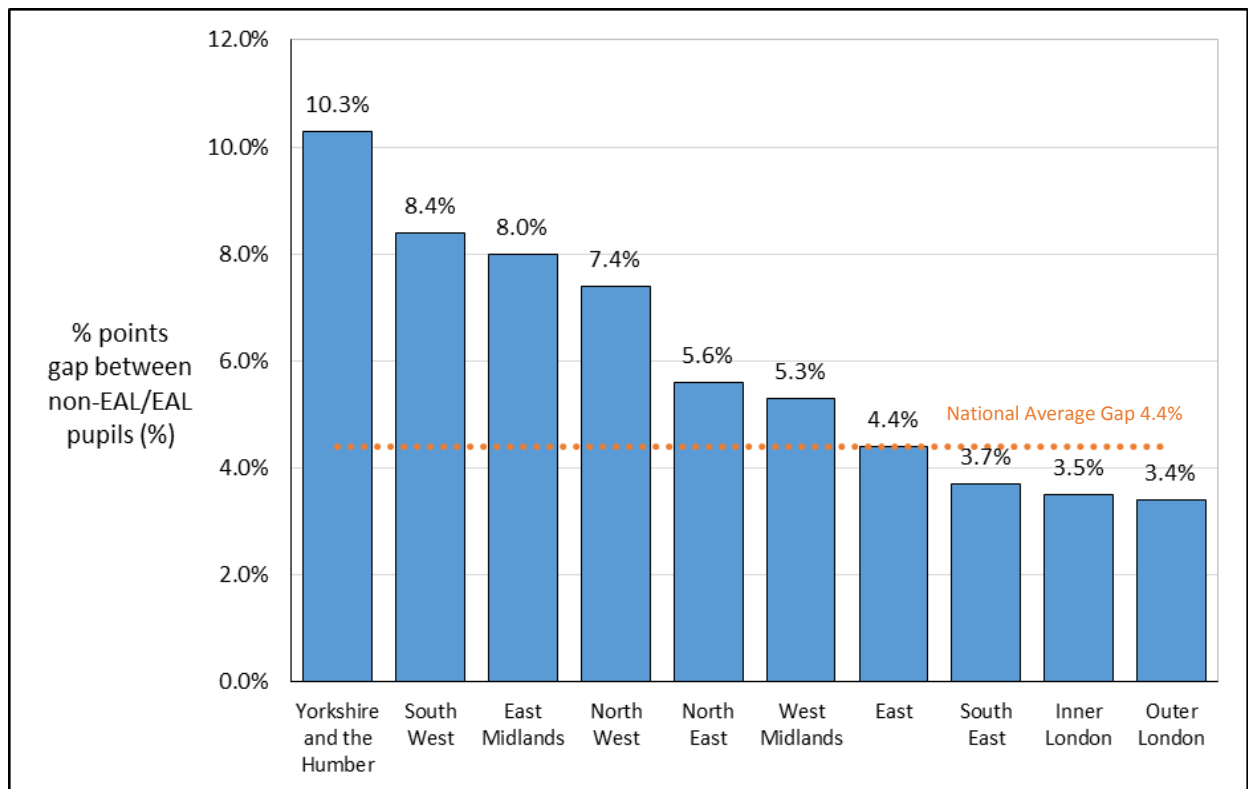
Inner London has the highest density of EAL pupils in England (54.4% of Inner London pupils are EAL). EAL pupils in Inner London appear to perform better than EAL pupils in other parts of the country (Table 3). 74.4% of EAL pupils in Inner London achieved expected levels or better at Key Stage 2, very much in line with the national average for all pupils. It is expected that EAL pupils overall do not perform as well as their non-EAL peers, but the gap in achievement between EAL and non-EAL pupils in Inner London was amongst the lowest in the country, with only a 3.5 percentage point difference, whilst the average gap for all of England was 4.4%. EAL pupils in Outer London performed similarly to those in Inner London and with a similar gap.

Fig 2: EAL and non-EAL Achievement by Region at KS2 2012



EAL pupils from all other regions (except Inner London and Outer London), were performing below the national average for achievement at Key Stage 2 (Fig 2). EAL pupils living in Yorkshire and the Humber were the lowest achieving with only 62.9% achieving level 4 or more, 7.7 percentage points lower than the national average. Yorkshire and the Humber also showed the biggest gap in achievement between EAL and non-EAL pupils (Fig 3). The gap in Yorkshire and the Humber is nearly twice as big as most other areas in England. EAL pupils in the East Midlands (66.9%) and the South West (66.6%) were also amongst the lowest achieving, which may require further examination as the non-EAL pupils in these regions were achieving above the national average.

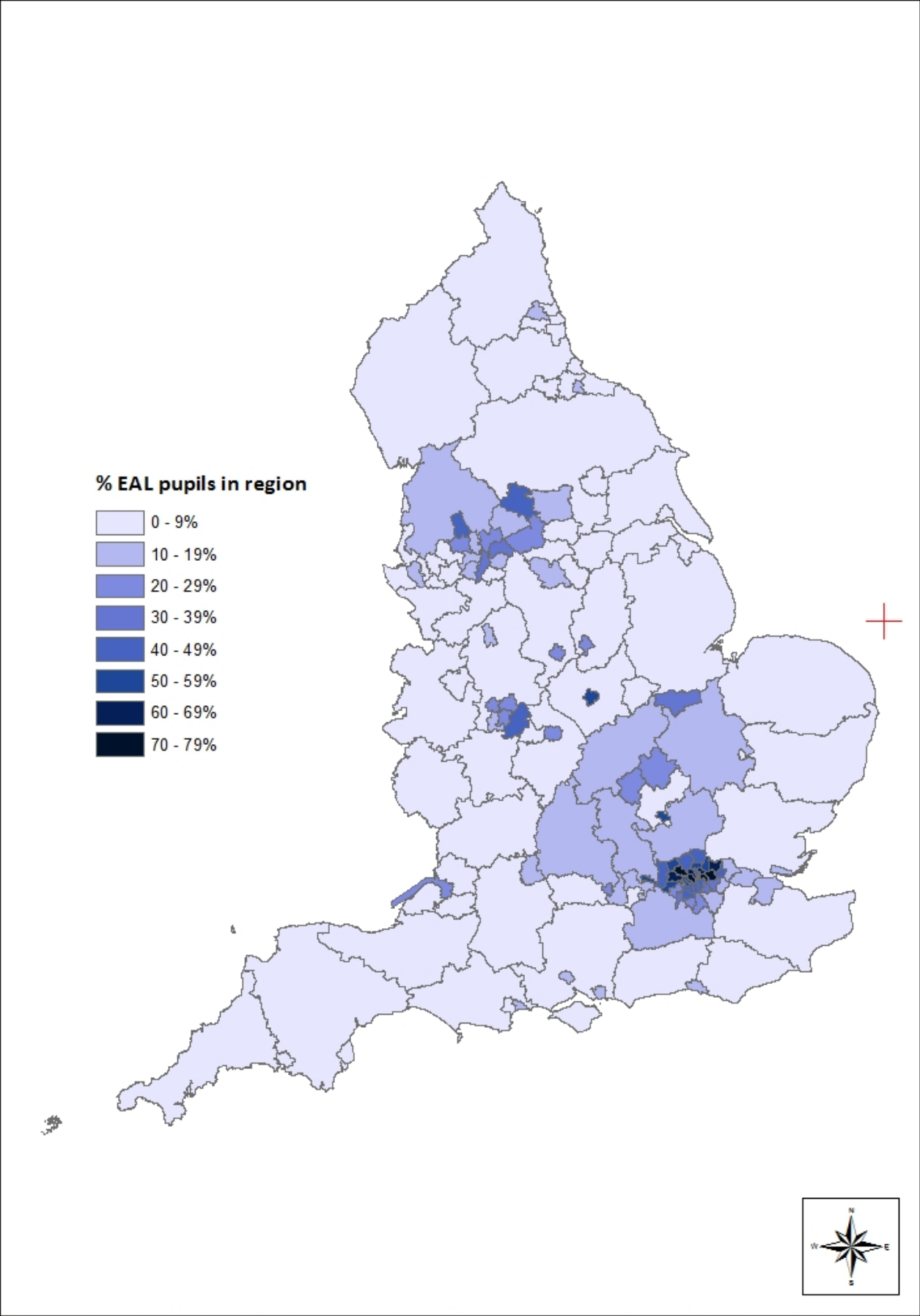
Fig 3: Achievement Gap between EAL and non-EAL Pupils by Region at KS2 2012



Maybe significantly, the percentages of EAL pupils in the regions with the largest gaps are much lower than in Inner and Outer London where the EAL pupil population is much higher (Fig 4 and Fig 5). There does appear to be a correlation between the density of the EAL pupil population and their success at Key Stage 2. Regions with the highest proportions of EAL pupils such as Inner and Outer London, but also the South East of England appeared to have a higher percentage of their EAL pupils achieving expected levels, than for example the East, North-East and South West of England, where EAL numbers were much lower, which subsequently appears to have a negative impact on attainment.

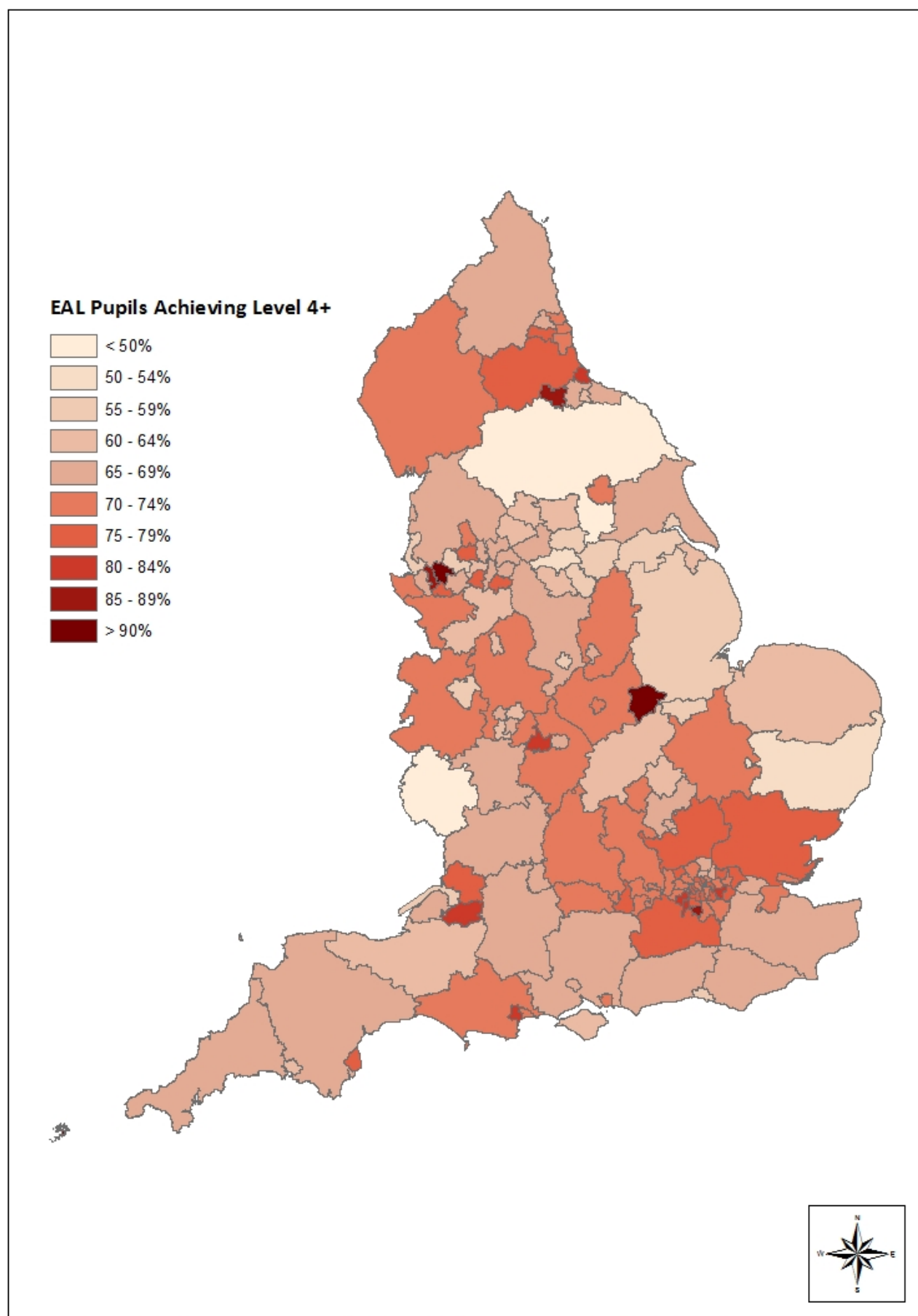
Using EAL status alone is not necessarily an accurate marker for studying the impact on attainment. Knowing that a pupil has English as an additional language has limited use when researching underachieving groups. EAL is a very heterogeneous group made up of pupils from many different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, which are likely to show a wide variation in achievement.

Fig 4: Percentage of Pupils at Key Stage 2 across England 2012



The contractor or end user is permitted to use paper or digital copies of the map solely for the purpose of assisting with the delivery of those goods or services it has been engaged by Lambeth Council to provide. © Crown Copyright and database right 2016. Ordnance Survey 100019338

Fig 5: EAL Pupils Achieving Level 4 + Reading Writing Maths at Key Stage 2 across England 2012



The contractor or end user is permitted to use paper or digital copies of the map solely for the purpose of assisting with the delivery of those goods or services it has been engaged by Lambeth Council to provide.

© Crown Copyright and database right 2015. Ordnance Survey 100019338
ENABLING/00

Ethnic Background and Attainment

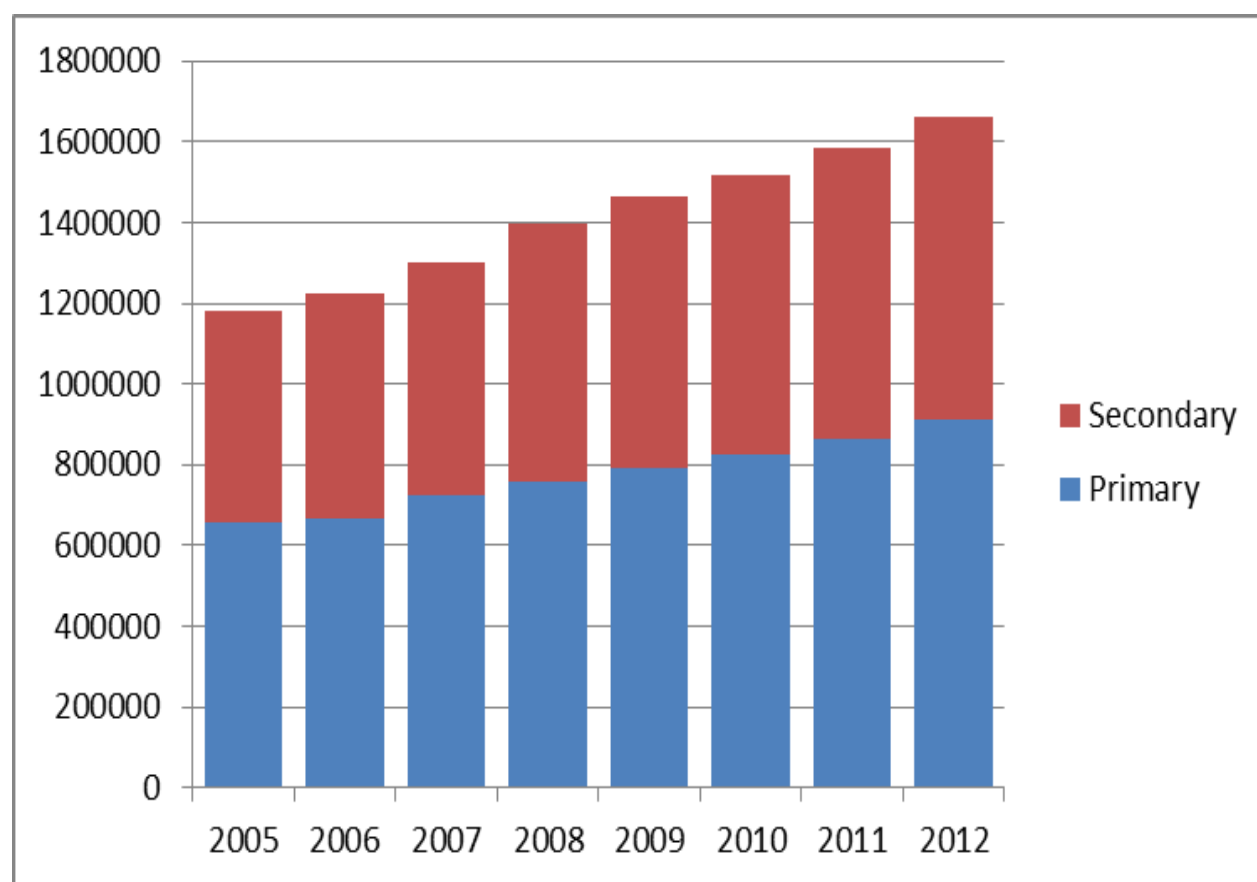
Schools in England show a wide range of ethnic backgrounds amongst the pupil population. Nationally, there is a high proportion of White British pupils, but also significantly large groups of Indian, Chinese, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Black African, Black Caribbean, White Other and Mixed Race pupils compared to other European countries, as well as lower proportions of other ethnic minority groups.

Table 4 shows that at Key Stage 2, the largest ethnic groups were White British (72.9%) followed by Pakistani (4.1%), then White Other (4.0%), Black African (3.1%) and Indian (2.4%). The ethnic composition of the pupil population has changed over recent years (Fig 6). In 2005, 78.7% of all primary school pupils in the country were White British, but this has steadily dropped to 69.8% in 2014. Meanwhile, the ethnic minority pupil population has grown to 29.5%.

Table 4: Main Ethnic Groups at Key Stage 2 in England 2012

Ethnic Group	No.	Percentage
White British	396851	72.9%
Pakistani	22159	4.1%
White Other	21638	4.0%
Black African	16658	3.1%
Indian	13241	2.4%
Bangladeshi	8971	1.6%
Mixed Other	8327	1.5%
Any other ethnic group	7962	1.5%
Asian Other	7562	1.4%
Black Caribbean	7589	1.4%
Mixed White/Black Caribbean	7096	1.3%
Mixed White/Asian	4836	0.9%
Black Other	3245	0.6%
Mixed White/Black African	2473	0.5%
Chinese	1921	0.4%
Refused	2270	0.4%
White Irish	1645	0.3%
Gypsy Roma	1389	0.3%
Not Obtained	794	0.1%
Irish Traveller	412	0.1%
Total	544220	100.0%

Fig 6: Ethnic Minority Pupil Population in Primary Schools in England 2005-2012



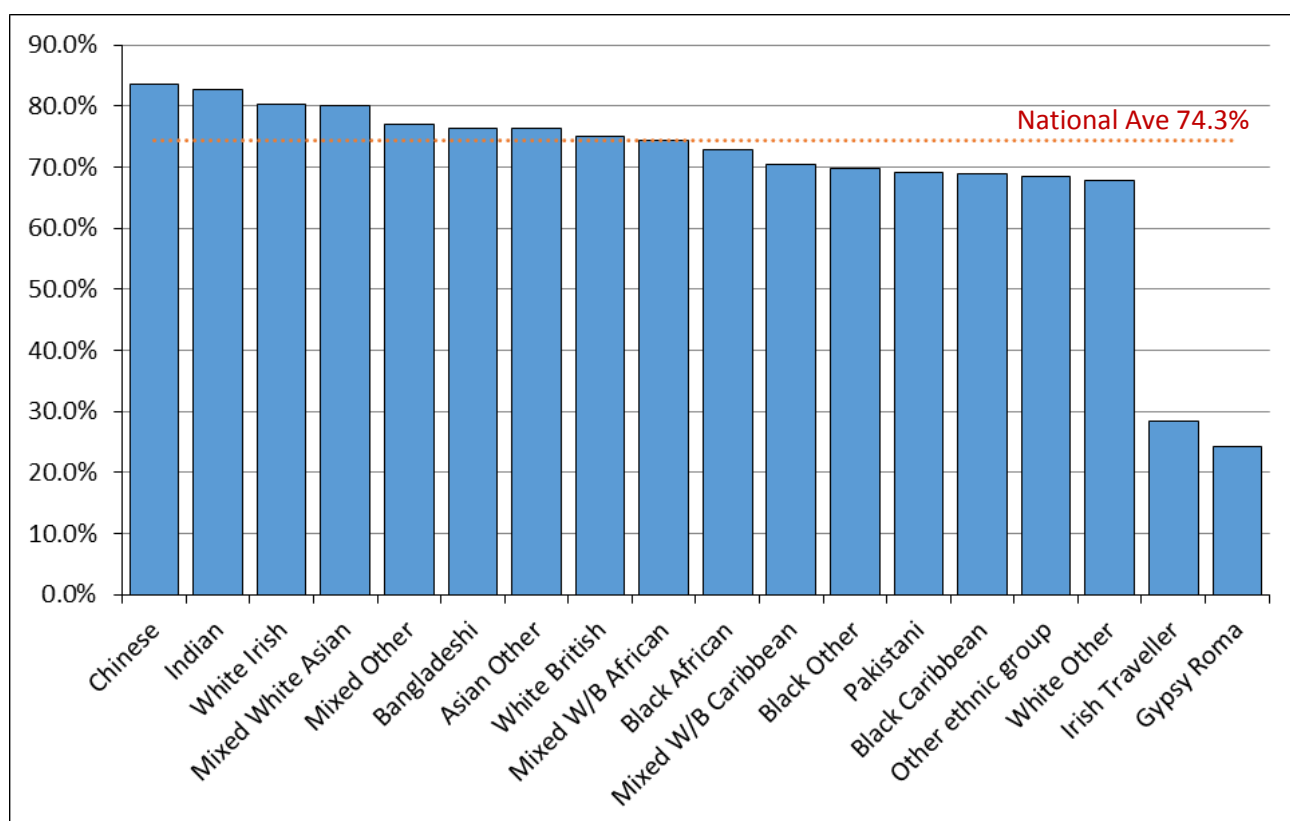
In terms of attainment, the main findings of the data confirmed that there were substantial differences in performance between different ethnic groups at the end of Key Stage 2. In 2012, Chinese and Indian pupils performed the best compared to the national average (Table 5). However, from the main ethnic groups Black African, Pakistani and particularly White Other and Black Caribbean were all underperforming groups (Fig 7). White Irish Traveller and Gypsy/Roma pupils were by far the lowest achieving groups, albeit with smaller numbers.

The achievement of White Other, Pakistani pupils and Black Caribbean pupils are of particular cause for concern. Pakistani pupils are the largest ethnic minority group at Key Stage 2, but are one of the most underperforming groups. Similarly pupils with a White Other background make up 4% of the pupil population at Key Stage 2, but are nearly 5 percentage points below the national average and are the lowest achieving amongst the larger ethnic groups. The achievement of Black Caribbean pupils in England have been a focus of attention amongst policy makers, having consistently performed below expected levels.

Table 5: Key Stage 2 Performance in England by Ethnic Group 2012

Ethnic Group	Reading 4+	Writing 4+	Maths 4+	RWM 4+	APS
Chinese	89.1%	85.8%	94.1%	83.6%	30.69
Indian	90.0%	88.0%	89.6%	82.6%	29.28
White Irish	91.5%	84.9%	88.2%	80.3%	29.24
Mixed White Asian	89.8%	85.5%	87.6%	80.0%	29.2
Mixed Other	88.5%	83.6%	85.3%	77.0%	28.54
Bangladeshi	86.8%	84.8%	84.4%	76.4%	28.02
Asian Other	85.6%	81.5%	86.7%	76.3%	28.59
White British	87.4%	81.7%	84.6%	75.0%	28.3
Mixed White Black African	87.6%	82.2%	82.8%	74.4%	28.23
Black African	85.0%	80.7%	81.4%	72.8%	27.53
Mixed White Black Caribbean	85.2%	79.5%	80.1%	70.4%	27.5
Black Other	84.3%	78.6%	79.2%	69.8%	27.18
Pakistani	82.4%	78.2%	79.5%	69.2%	27.1
Black Caribbean	84.1%	78.5%	78.0%	68.9%	27.05
Any other ethnic group	79.5%	74.9%	80.8%	68.4%	27.3
White Other	79.1%	73.7%	81.7%	67.9%	27.51
Irish Traveller	50.2%	36.4%	46.1%	28.4%	22.28
Gypsy Roma	41.5%	31.0%	38.7%	24.3%	20.74
ALL PUPILS	86.5%	81.0%	84.0%	74.3%	28.18

Fig 7: Key Stage 2 Reading/Writing/Maths Level 4+ by Ethnic Background in England 2012



Various possible explanations were considered for the differences in performance between different ethnic groups. A number of previous researchers have attributed ethnic differences in attainment to factors such as gender, social class and levels of English fluency. Gender is a significant indicator in attainment among school children. Examining attainment data by gender suggests that girls outperform boys in major examinations such as Key Stage 2 and GCSE (Cassen and Kingdon, 2007). Other studies also provide an alternative explanation for the under-achievement of Black Caribbean pupils, including ‘unintentional’ racism (Rampton, 1981 and Swann, 1985); differences in socio-economic conditions (Swann, 1985; Ofsted, 1996); prejudice on the part of some teachers; inappropriate curricula and teaching materials; lack of adequate support to schools and teachers from some Caribbean and other black parents and inadequacy of the understanding of Caribbean and other black children by schools and teachers (Rampton, 1981). Recent research work has brought the link between deprivation and low performance at school back up the agenda and has confirmed the relative low attainment of pupils who are entitled to free school meals (Cabinet Office 2007; Gillborn and Youdell 2002; Demie 2002). However, there were also some striking differences within the main ethnic groups when the national data was analysed by pupils eligible for free school meals. Eligibility for free school meals is strongly associated with low achievement, but significantly more so for White British pupils than any other ethnic groups (Strand 2013; Demie et al 2012). Research on the relationship between fluency in English and attainment in inner London also confirms that language barriers remain one of the key factors affecting the performance of English as Additional Language (EAL) pupils in British schools (Demie 2011 and 2012; Strand 2006 and Strand and Demie 2005). There are no national validated scales that are complementary to the current English assessment scales used in national curriculum (NALDIC 2005) but this study that is based on a well moderated stages of English fluency at a Local authority level by EAL professionals, teachers and LA advisers (see Strand and Demie 2005) confirmed that there is a strong relationship between stage of fluency in English and educational attainment. The results suggest that the percentage of pupils attaining level 4 or above at KS2 and 5 or more A*-C at GCSE increased as stage of proficiency in English increased. Pupils in the early stages of fluency performed at low levels, while EAL pupils who were fully fluent in English far outstripped pupils for whom English was their only language (see Strand 1999; Demie 2013; Demie and Strand 2006 and Strand and Demie 2005). These findings offer much encouragement for policy makers and school improvement practitioners. They demonstrate that once the disadvantage of language is overcome it is possible to attain high levels of achievement for all key stages.

Language diversity and attainment

The above analysis on performance by ethnic group is invaluable in improving our knowledge related to a pupil’s background and achievement, but it is useful to be cautious when using the national School Census ethnic categories. Even in the few studies where ethnic differences and educational achievement are considered, the importance of language diversity in achievement between ethnic groups is rarely reported. Ethnicity is clearly an important category which is connected to language, though obviously does not map straightforwardly onto it. As Von Ahn et al noted *‘while many languages “attach” to particular ethnic groups ... knowing a person’s language does not tell us about their country of origin or ethnic heritage’* (2010, p. 6).

Table 6 shows language spoken for pupils nationally at Key Stage 2. After English speakers (82.4% of KS2 pupils), the most common groups were the Asian languages of Panjabi, Urdu and Bengali respectively. This was followed by sizeable groups of Polish, Somali, Gujarati, Arabic, Tamil, Portuguese and French speaking pupils.

Table 6: Main Language Groups (1000 speakers of more) in England at Key Stage 2 2012

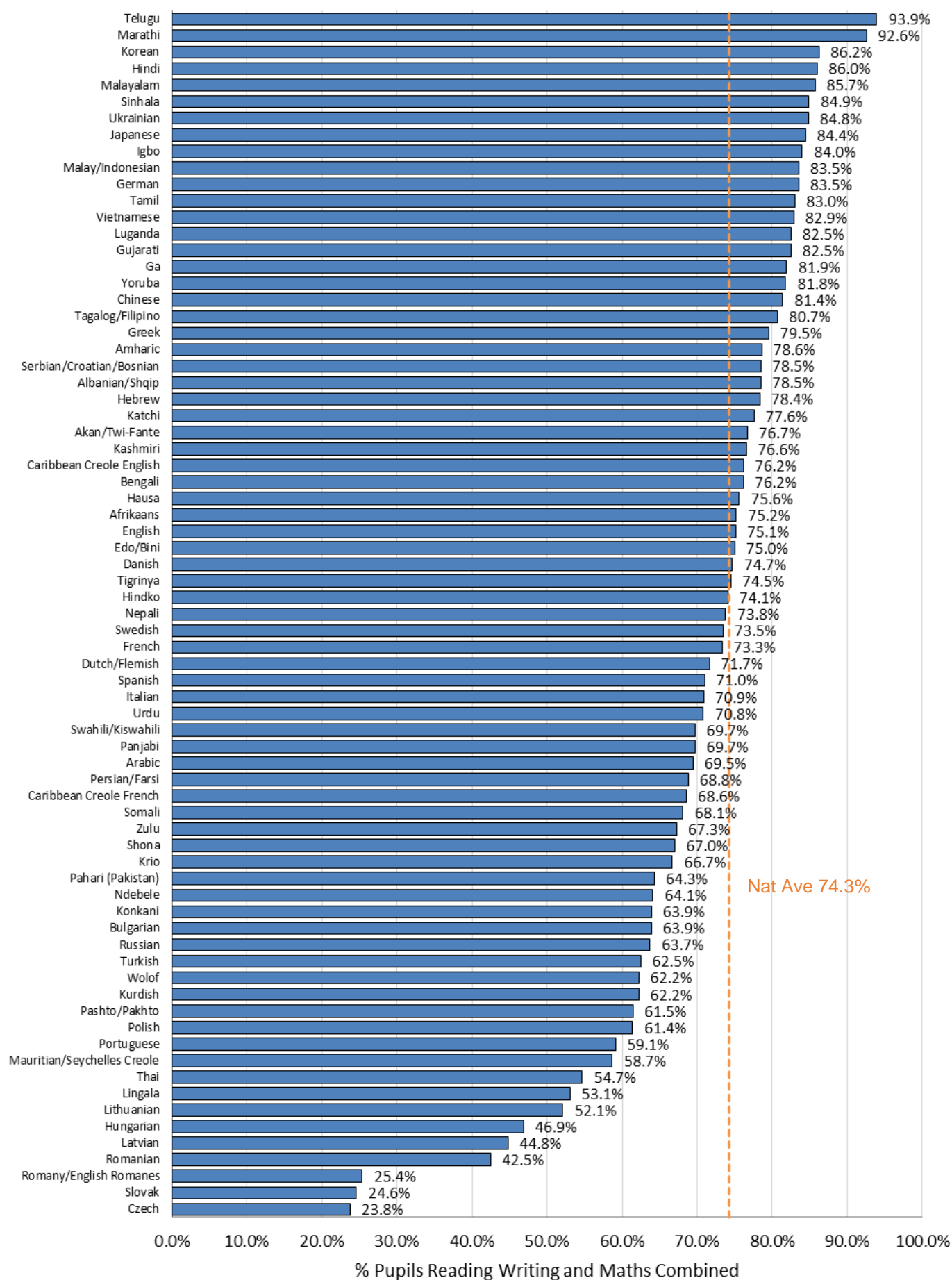
Language	Main Ethnic Groups	Reading 4+	Writing 4+	Maths 4+	R/W/M 4+	APS	Pupil No.
English*	White British Black Caribbean Black African	87.4%	81.8%	84.5%	75.1%	28.3	448324
Panjabi	Indian Pakistani	82.8%	78.5%	80.3%	69.7%	27.2	11500
Urdu	Pakistani	83.1%	79.5%	80.7%	70.8%	27.4	10487
Bengali	Bangladeshi	86.8%	84.6%	84.3%	76.2%	28.0	8202
Polish	White Other	73.4%	66.9%	81.6%	61.4%	26.8	4847
Somali	Black African	81.3%	75.1%	80.8%	68.1%	27.0	3893
Gujarati	Indian	89.8%	87.9%	89.4%	82.5%	29.0	3691
Arabic	Any Other Group Black African	79.9%	75.4%	83.6%	69.5%	27.5	3477
Tamil	Asian Other	89.3%	86.4%	92.0%	83.0%	29.8	2261
Portuguese	White Other Any Other Group	75.5%	67.9%	71.4%	59.1%	26.1	2246
French	White Other Black African	85.1%	81.1%	82.3%	73.3%	27.8	2077
Turkish	White Other	75.4%	71.5%	79.7%	62.5%	26.6	1891
Yoruba	Black African	90.3%	88.0%	87.5%	81.8%	28.7	1525
Albanian/Shqip	White Other	87.7%	84.3%	86.8%	78.5%	28.2	1385
Chinese	Chinese	87.8%	83.8%	93.6%	81.4%	30.5	1380
Spanish	White Other	83.4%	76.1%	82.6%	71.0%	27.6	1264
Tagalog/Filipino	Asian Other	88.7%	86.7%	88.0%	80.7%	28.6	1153
Pashto/Pakhto	Asian Other	74.7%	69.1%	73.7%	61.5%	25.9	1076
Persian/Farsi	Asian Other	79.2%	76.0%	82.0%	68.8%	27.4	1019
National		86.5%	81.0%	84.0%	74.3	28.2	544220

The 2012 NPD records 208 different languages (including English) spoken by pupils at key stage 2. Of these, 94 languages were spoken by 20 or more pupils. (See Appendix A).

Only 35 of the language groups were above the national average for pupils achieving expected levels (Fig 8). The highest performing language groups were the Indian languages of Telugu (93.9%) and Marathi (92.6%) speaking pupils who were nearly 20 percentage points higher than the national figure. In fact, four of the top five achieving language groups were Indian languages. Also achieving well were Korean (86.2%), Hindi (86%), Malayalam (85.7%), Sinhala (84.9%), Ukrainian (84.8%), Japanese (84.4%) and Igbo (84%), all being ten percent or more higher than the national figure.

The lowest achieving groups were Czech (23.8%), Slovak (24.6%) and Romany (25.4%) speaking pupils, with very few in these groups achieving level 4. Also low-performing were Romanian, Latvian, Hungarian and Lithuanian speaking pupils with barely half of their pupils achieving expected levels. It is notable that with the exception of Romany, these are all languages associated with Eastern Europe. Of the larger language groups, Polish with 4847 speakers only had 61.4% achieving expected levels and Portuguese with 2246 pupils were lower still with 59.1%.

Fig 8: % Pupils Achieving Level 4+ Reading Writing Maths Combined by Language



The ethnic categories discussed in the previous section can be imprecise for a number of ethnic categories, which are constrained by categorisation of the official data available at national level. When analysing language spoken within ethnic categories, the national data suggests that some of the ethnic groups demonstrate a high degree of linguistic homogeneity. For example, 99% of White British and 96% of Black Caribbean children spoke English at home. 84% of the Bangladeshi ethnic group, spoke Bengali. To a lesser extent, 63% of the Chinese ethnic group spoke Chinese (with 21% recorded as speaking English).

However other ethnic groups are very linguistically diverse. In particular, the Black African and White Other ethnic categories gloss over enormous linguistic diversity as do the Indian and Pakistani ethnic groups albeit to a lesser extent. With this variation in language may come differences in attainment.

Black African Language Diversity and Attainment

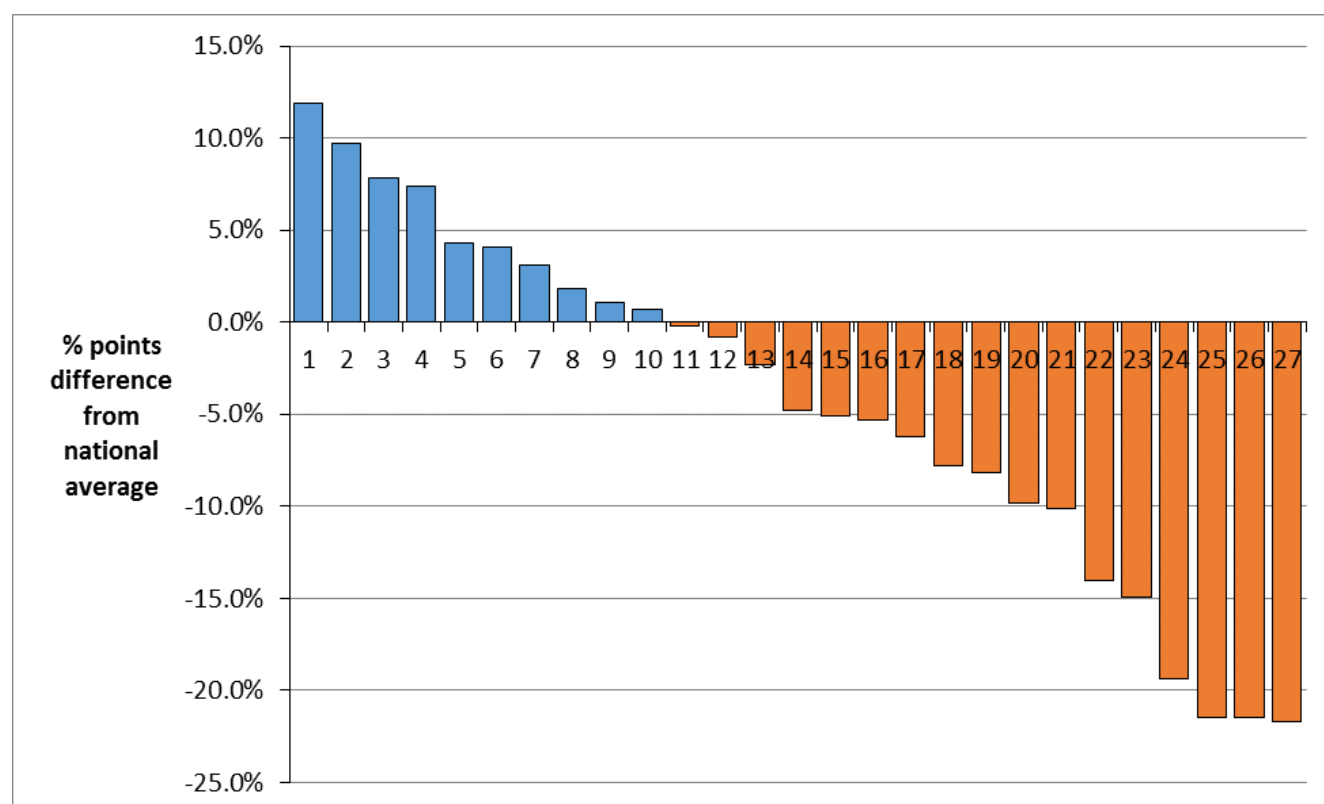
Table 7: Key Stage 2 performance of Black African pupils by language spoken (over 30 speakers)

Language	Reading 4+	Writing 4+	Maths 4+	RWM 4+	APS	Pupil No.	Pupil %
English	89.3%	85.9%	85.0%	78.6%	28.4	4635	27.8%
Somali	81.2%	75.1%	80.8%	68.1%	27.0	3761	22.6%
Yoruba	90.7%	88.2%	87.8%	82.1%	28.8	1415	8.5%
Akan/Twi-Fante	87.2%	85.9%	82.3%	76.1%	27.7	886	5.3%
French	80.3%	75.2%	73.4%	66.1%	26.2	884	5.3%
Shona	82.2%	76.6%	74.3%	66.5%	26.8	517	3.1%
Swahili/Kiswahili	83.5%	81.4%	77.1%	69.5%	27.0	442	2.7%
Arabic	83.4%	79.9%	86.4%	75.4%	27.9	403	2.4%
Igbo	90.2%	90.2%	87.7%	84.0%	29.0	325	2.0%
Lingala	76.4%	66.4%	60.1%	52.8%	24.9	301	1.8%
Portuguese	73.9%	64.6%	64.2%	54.9%	25.0	257	1.5%
Tigrinya	83.9%	81.1%	85.0%	75.0%	27.8	180	1.1%
Luganda	92.1%	90.2%	87.8%	81.7%	28.4	164	1.0%
Amharic	88.2%	85.3%	86.3%	78.4%	29.0	102	0.6%
Dutch/Flemish	76.0%	72.9%	77.1%	59.4%	26.6	96	0.6%
Ndebele	84.2%	80.0%	70.5%	64.2%	26.4	95	0.6%
Krio	78.9%	78.9%	77.6%	64.5%	27.5	76	0.5%
German	86.7%	77.3%	85.3%	72.0%	27.6	75	0.5%
Wolof	79.4%	73.5%	67.6%	60.3%	26.2	68	0.4%
Ga	91.4%	91.4%	94.8%	86.2%	29.6	58	0.3%
Italian	59.6%	61.4%	71.9%	52.6%	24.9	57	0.3%
Edo/Bini	90.7%	81.5%	87.0%	74.1%	28.3	54	0.3%
Zulu	78.6%	78.6%	71.4%	69.0%	26.6	42	0.3%
Caribbean Creole English	84.6%	76.9%	69.2%	69.2%	27.0	39	0.2%
Afrikaans	86.1%	63.9%	72.2%	52.8%	24.9	36	0.2%
Hausa	85.3%	73.5%	88.2%	73.5%	27.4	34	0.2%
Bemba	90.3%	87.1%	80.6%	77.4%	26.9	31	0.2%
All Black African	85.0%	80.7%	81.4%	72.8%	27.5	16658	
All Pupils	86.5%	81.0%	84.0%	74.3%	28.2	544220	

The empirical evidence from English schools in this research showed that the Black African category is one of the most linguistically diverse with 27.8% speaking English as their language at home, followed by Somali (22.6%), Yoruba (8.5%), Akan Twi-Fante (5.3%), French (5.3%), Shona (3.1%), Swahili (2.7%), Arabic (2.4%), Igbo (2.0%) and Lingala (1.8%). Other languages such as Portuguese, Tigrinya, Luganda, Amharic, Krio, Ndebele, Ga, Wolof and Edo/Bini have each between 50 and 300 speakers. There are further languages with an even smaller number of speakers.

In terms of educational attainment, there are significant differences within ethnic categories, when the data is disaggregated by language spoken. The Black African ethnic group contains some of the highest achieving language groups, but also some of the lowest. Although the Black African ethnic group is underperforming at Key Stage 2, Ga, Igbo, Yoruba and Luganda perform significantly above the national average for Reading Writing Maths 4+ combined. However, languages including Afrikaans, Lingala, Portuguese, Ndebele, Wolof, Krio, French, Somali and Swahili are all underachieving (see Fig 9).

Fig 9. Key Stage 2 attainment of Black African languages (Over 30 speakers)



- | | | | |
|------------|-------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Ga | 8. Akan Twi-Fante | 15. Caribbean Creole English | 22. Wolof |
| 2. Igbo | 9. Arabic | 16. Zulu | 23. Dutch Flemish |
| 3. Yoruba | 10. Tigrinya | 17. Somali | 24. Portuguese |
| 4. Luganda | 11. Edo/Bini | 18. Shona | 25. Lingala |
| 5. English | 12. Hausa | 19. French | 26. Afrikaans |
| 6. Amharic | 13. German | 20. Krio | 27. Italian |
| 7. Bemba | 14. Swahili | 21. Ndebele | |

Examining this further, it would seem that the highest achieving Black African language groups have roots suggesting West and East African origin. Many countries in these regions have English as an official language whereas areas such as Central Africa do not (Table 8).

This would seem to have a significant impact on pupil attainment. At Key Stage 2, pupils who spoke languages that were associated with African countries that are part of the Commonwealth, or had English as an official language, seem to out-perform those that did not. Fig 10 shows that with the exception of Krio, Ndebele and Afrikaans, languages originating from countries that are part of the Commonwealth, such as Ga (Ghana), Igbo and Yoruba (Nigeria) and Luganda (Uganda) achieved above the national average. African countries where English is not an official language such as Lingala (Democratic Republic of Congo), Portuguese (Angola), French (Ivory Coast, Senegal) and Somali are all underperforming groups achieving well below the national average.

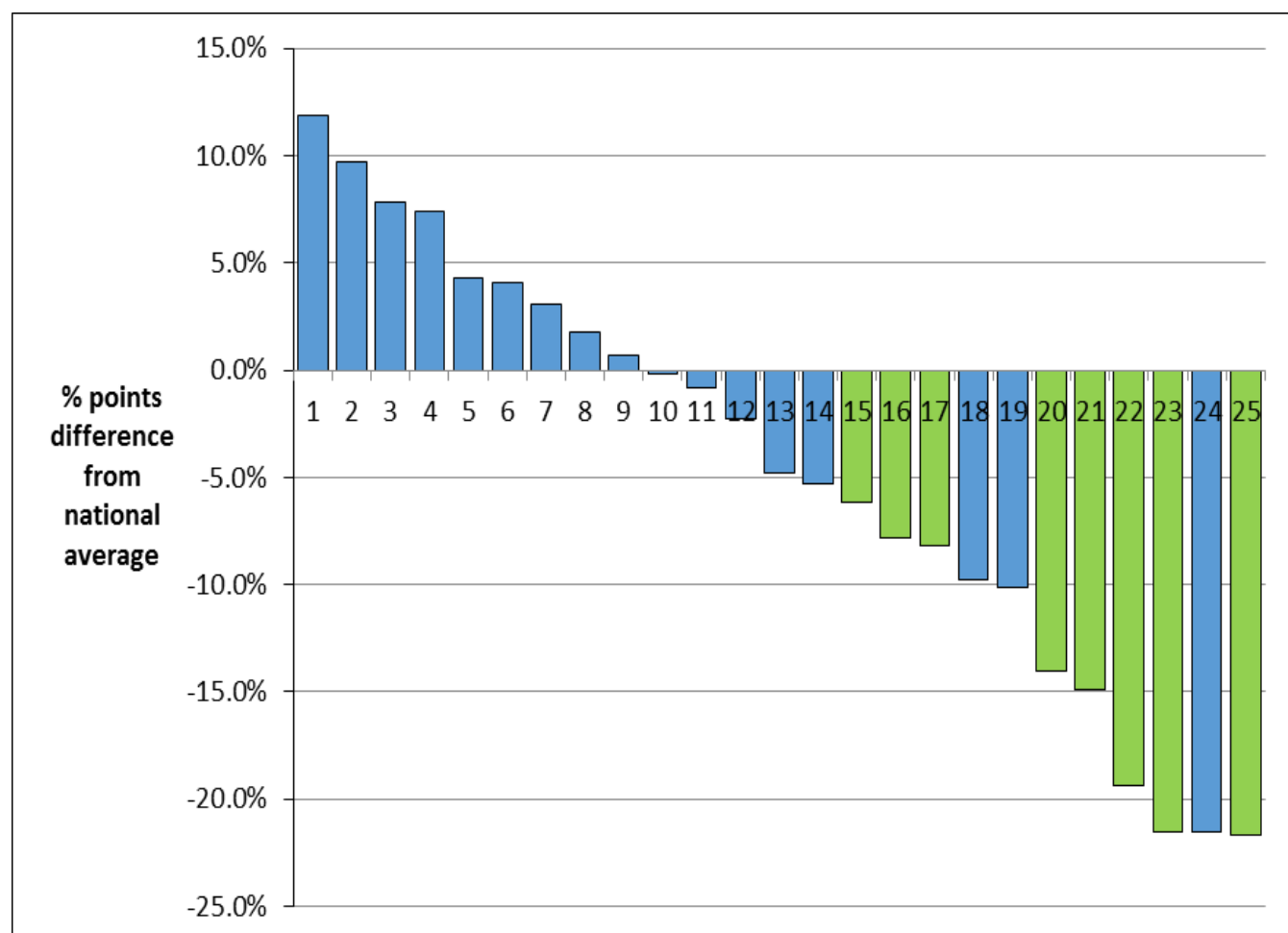
Table 8: KS2 attainment of Black African pupils by language spoken and suggested country of origin

Language	Associated country	Commonwealth / English as an official language	RWM 4+	APS
Ga	Ghana	Yes	86.2%	29.6
Igbo	Nigeria	Yes	84.0%	29.0
Yoruba	Nigeria	Yes	82.1%	28.8
Luganda	Uganda	Yes	81.7%	28.4
English	Various	Yes	78.6%	28.4
Amharic	Ethiopia	Yes	78.4%	29.0
Bemba	Zambia	Yes	77.4%	26.9
Akan/Twi-Fante	Ghana	Yes	76.1%	27.7
Arabic	Various		75.4%	27.9
Tigrinya	Eritrea, Ethiopia	Yes	75.0%	27.8
Edo/Bini	Nigeria	Yes	74.1%	28.3
Hausa	Nigeria	Yes	73.5%	27.4
German	Namibia	Yes	72.0%	27.6
Swahili/Kiswahili	Tanzania, Kenya	Yes	69.5%	27.0
Caribbean Creole English	N/A		69.2%	27.0
Zulu	South Africa	Yes	69.0%	26.6
Somali	Somalia	No	68.1%	27.0
Shona	Zimbabwe	No	66.5%	26.8
French	Ivory Coast, Senegal , Gabon	No	66.1%	26.2
Krio	Sierra Leone	Yes	64.5%	27.5
Ndebele	South Africa, Zimbabwe	Yes	64.2%	26.4
Wolof	Senegal, Gambia	No	60.3%	26.2
Dutch/Flemish	Suriname	No	59.4%	26.6
Portuguese	Angola, Cape Verde	No	54.9%	25.0
Lingala	Congo	No	52.8%	24.9
Afrikaans	South Africa	Yes	52.8%	24.9
Italian	Libya	No	52.6%	24.9
All Black African			72.8%	27.5
National			74.3%	28.2

Source: National Pupil Database (NPD), Department for Education, January 2012

Previous research has confirmed that EAL pupils from African Commonwealth countries, achieve full fluency in English earlier than those from many other countries. This is not surprising as many of the pupils' families particularly from West and East Africa, were exposed to English as the language of government administration and education, since the days of the British Empire (Demie and Hau 2013). This fluency in English would seem to have a major impact in pupil attainment.

Fig10. KS2 attainment of Languages of Black African Commonwealth / Non-Commonwealth Countries



- | | | | |
|------------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. Ga | 8. Akan/Twi-Fante | 15. Somali | 22. Portuguese |
| 2. Igbo | 9. Tigrinya | 16. Shona | 23. Lingala |
| 3. Yoruba | 10. Edo/Bini | 17. French | 24. Afrikaans |
| 4. Luganda | 11. Hausa | 18. Krio | 25. Italian |
| 5. English | 12. German | 19. Ndebele | |
| 6. Amharic | 13. Swahili/Kiswahili | 20. Wolof | |
| 7. Bemba | 14. Zulu | 21. Dutch/Flemish | |
- English speaking
■ Non-English speaking

White Other Language Diversity and Achievement

The White Other ethnic category is also very linguistically diverse with English being the most commonly spoken (27.4%), closely followed by Polish (20.5%), Turkish (6.9%), Albanian (5.6%), Portuguese (5.2%), Lithuanian (4.3%), Russian (2.5%) and Romanian (2.3%) and Spanish (2.1%). (Table 9). In addition a number of pupils speak languages such as Italian, French, Slovak, Latvian, Greek, Hungarian, Bulgarian, Serb-Croatian, German and Swedish.

Table 9: Key Stage 2 performance of White Other pupils by language spoken (over 30 speakers)

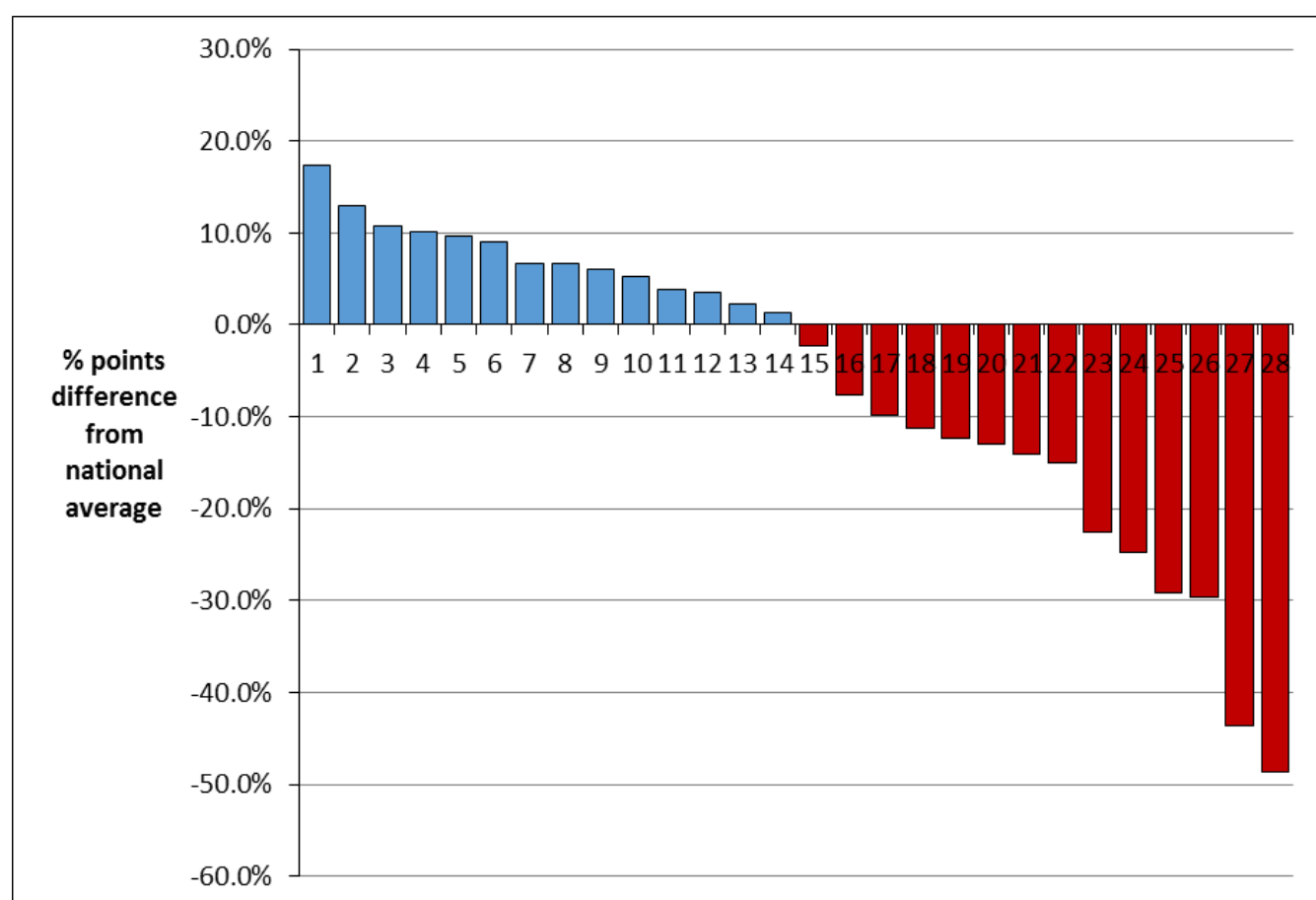
Language	Reading 4+ %	Writing 4+ %	Maths 4+ %	RWM 4+%	APS	Pupil No.	Pupil %
English	90.6%	86.2%	88.2%	80.9%	29.3	5934	27.4%
Polish	73.1%	66.9%	81.9%	61.3%	26.8	4443	20.5%
Turkish	74.2%	71.3%	79.3%	61.9%	26.4	1489	6.9%
Other than English	75.6%	70.5%	80.4%	64.5%	26.9	1272	5.9%
Albanian/Shqip	88.1%	85.1%	87.0%	79.5%	28.3	1218	5.6%
Portuguese	74.6%	67.3%	72.9%	59.3%	26.2	1124	5.2%
Lithuanian	66.6%	57.5%	75.0%	51.8%	25.7	923	4.3%
Russian	72.4%	65.4%	79.9%	60.2%	27.1	532	2.5%
Romanian	63.0%	54.0%	67.8%	49.6%	24.8	500	2.3%
Spanish	83.9%	75.8%	84.6%	72.0%	28.0	447	2.1%
Italian	87.8%	80.2%	84.8%	75.6%	28.5	409	1.9%
French	91.9%	87.5%	91.7%	84.4%	30.2	360	1.7%
Slovak	42.7%	36.4%	48.7%	30.7%	21.6	349	1.6%
Latvian	59.1%	48.6%	65.6%	45.2%	24.4	323	1.5%
Greek	90.8%	83.4%	86.7%	78.2%	28.5	271	1.3%
Hungarian	55.1%	48.7%	65.5%	44.6%	24.4	267	1.2%
Bulgarian	71.8%	68.9%	76.9%	63.0%	26.9	238	1.1%
German	93.2%	90.6%	91.9%	87.2%	30.9	234	1.1%
Czech	36.9%	31.5%	40.1%	25.7%	20.5	222	1.0%
Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian	90.6%	88.2%	89.2%	80.3%	29.8	203	0.9%
Arabic	87.2%	83.9%	88.9%	77.8%	28.8	180	0.8%
Dutch/Flemish	91.5%	90.4%	94.7%	85.1%	30.2	94	0.4%
Swedish	91.1%	89.3%	89.3%	83.9%	30.5	56	0.3%
Other Language	72.9%	66.7%	72.9%	58.3%	26.8	48	0.2%
Kurdish	80.0%	73.3%	80.0%	64.4%	27.3	45	0.2%
Hebrew	83.3%	83.3%	90.5%	81.0%	29.5	42	0.2%
Afrikaans	94.4%	97.2%	91.7%	91.7%	31.0	36	0.2%
Persian/Farsi	80.6%	72.2%	83.3%	66.7%	27.7	36	0.2%
Ukrainian	88.9%	91.7%	94.4%	83.3%	30.1	36	0.2%
Danish	94.1%	85.3%	76.5%	76.5%	29.2	34	0.2%
All White Other	79.1%	73.7%	81.7%	67.9%	27.5	21638	
National	86.5%	81.0%	84.0%	74.3%	28.2	544220	

Source: National Pupil Database (NPD), Department for Education, January 2012

Table 9 also shows the attainment for the different languages spoken by White Other pupils and again, there is a large variation in performance depending on the language that is spoken. The highest achieving group were speakers of Afrikaans, which may be surprising as they were one of the most underperforming groups in the Black African ethnic band. They were closely followed by German speaking pupils, then Dutch, French and Swedish, who all out-performed White Other pupils who had English as a first language and were well above the national average at key stage 2 (Fig 11).

In stark contrast, Czech speaking pupils were by far the lowest performing in the White Other category, with just 25.7% of pupils achieving level 4 or more in Reading Writing and Maths combined. Also very low achieving amongst the White Other pupils, were speakers of Slovak, Hungarian, Latvian, Romanian, Lithuanian and Portuguese.

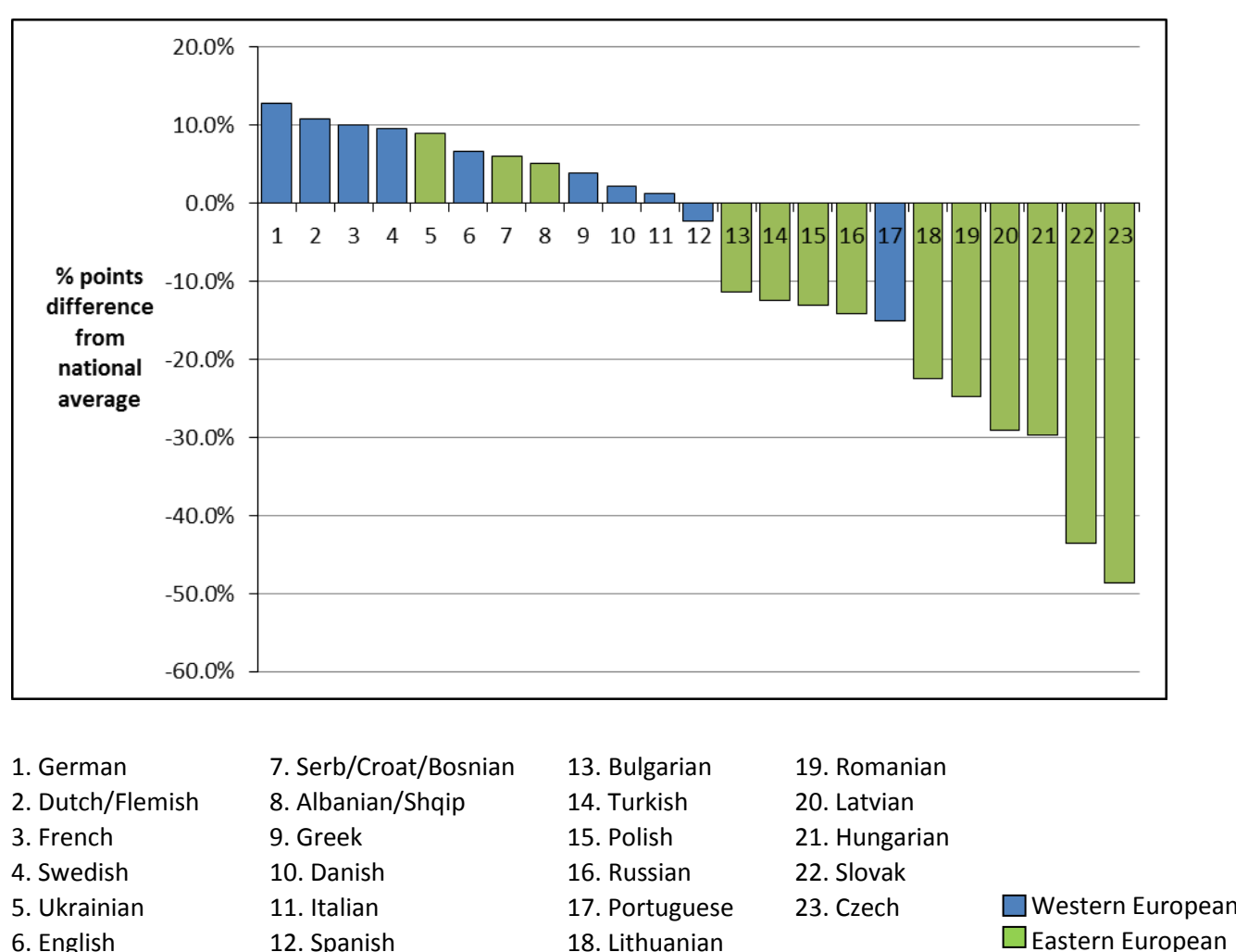
Fig 11. KS2 attainment of languages spoken by White Other pupils 2012



1. Afrikaans	7. Hebrew	13. Danish	19. Turkish	25. Latvian
2. German	8. English	14. Italian	20. Polish	26. Hungarian
3. Dutch/Flemish	9. Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian	15. Spanish	21. Russian	27. Slovak
4. French	10. Albanian/Shqip	16. Persian/Farsi	22. Portuguese	28. Czech
5. Swedish	11. Greek	17. Kurdish	23. Lithuanian	
6. Ukrainian	12. Arabic	18. Bulgarian	24. Romanian	

Examining this further, it would seem that most of the language groups associated with the White Other ethnicity are of European descent. However, there is a significant difference when comparing languages from countries in Western Europe to Eastern Europe (Fig 12). In the White Other ethnic category, Western European languages such as German, Dutch, French and Swedish are the highest achieving, performing above the national average for achieving level 4 or more in Reading, Writing and Maths combined. The notable exception to this are Portuguese speaking pupils who are a consistently underperforming group with just 59.3% achieving expected levels, a significant 15 percentage points below the national average. Conversely and maybe an area which requires further scrutiny, pupils speaking Eastern European languages such as Czech, Slovak, Hungarian, Latvian, Romanian and Lithuanian are some of the lowest achieving groups of all the languages spoken. Of particular concern could be the large number of Polish speaking pupils, one of the fastest growing groups in the UK of whom only 61.3% achieved expected levels at key stage 2.

Fig 12. KS2 attainment of West European/East European languages spoken by White Other pupils 2012



One of the reasons for underachievement by some White Other language groups is the language barrier. Previous research shows that *'between 64% and 80% of pupils who are underachieving are not fluent in English, compared to French, Danish, Swedish, Dutch, German, Serb-Croatian, Afrikaans and Albanian speakers with a significant number of pupils fully fluent in English.'* (See Demie and Hau 2013a, p.17). Some of the high achieving children in the White Other ethnic group are second or third generation, born in the UK with a good knowledge of English.

Indian Language Diversity and Achievement

The Indian ethnic group are one of the highest achieving groups of pupils in England. They consistently achieve well above expected levels at KS2. The empirical evidence demonstrates a high level of achievement at all of Reading, Writing and Maths. In 2012, 82.6% of Indian pupils achieved level 4 or more at combined reading, writing and maths compared to the national average of 74.3%.

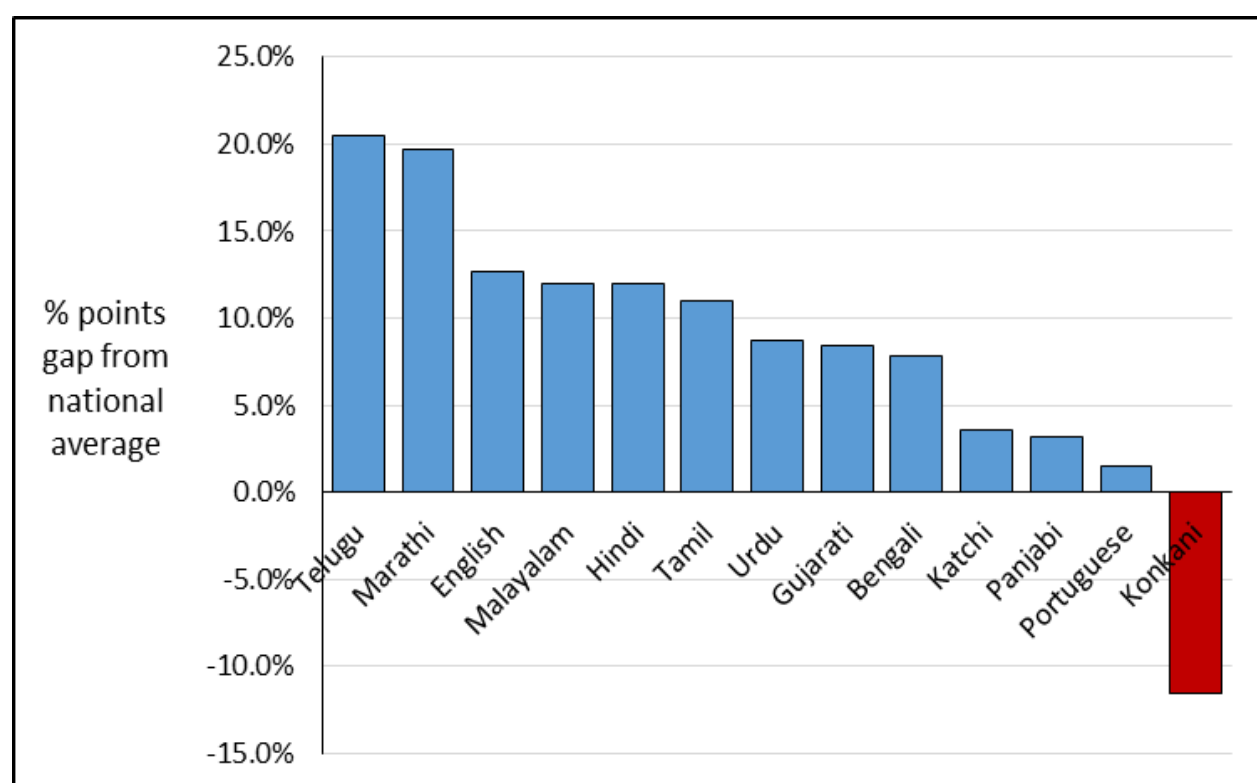
However, India is a very linguistically diverse country with many regions with different dialects spoken. The KS2 national data showed a remarkable 52 different languages spoken within the Indian ethnic category of 13,241 pupils.

Table 10: Key Stage 2 performance of Indian pupils by language spoken 2012

Language	Reading 4+	Writing 4+	Maths 4+	RWM 4+	APS	Pupil No.	Pupil %
Gujarati	90.0%	88.0%	89.5%	82.7%	29.01	3443	26.0%
Panjabi	87.2%	84.7%	85.9%	77.5%	28.41	3356	25.3%
English	93.3%	91.5%	92.4%	87.0%	30.1	2710	20.5%
Malayalam	91.4%	89.6%	92.6%	86.3%	30.02	720	5.4%
Hindi	91.1%	90.0%	94.0%	86.3%	30.61	629	4.8%
Urdu	91.4%	89.3%	89.3%	83.0%	29.4	382	2.9%
Tamil	89.6%	88.3%	91.9%	85.3%	29.92	307	2.3%
Konkani	80.9%	70.0%	81.8%	62.7%	27.68	110	0.8%
Telugu	95.8%	95.8%	95.8%	94.8%	31.77	96	0.7%
Bengali	86.3%	86.3%	83.2%	82.1%	29.43	95	0.7%
Katchi	89.7%	85.3%	88.2%	77.9%	28.62	68	0.5%
Marathi	95.5%	94.0%	95.5%	94.0%	31.88	67	0.5%
Portuguese	90.9%	87.9%	84.8%	75.8%	28.9	33	0.2%
All Indian	90.0%	88.0%	89.6%	82.6%	29.3	13241	
National	86.5%	81.0%	84.0%	74.3%	28.2	544220	

Unsurprisingly, most Indian language groups were high achieving (Table 10). The two largest groups were Gujarati and Panjabi pupils, making up over half of all Indian pupils. The highest achieving groups were Telugu and Marathi speaking pupils, achieving well above expected levels with 94.8% and 94% respectively, achieving level 4 or more. Similarly, Hindi, Malayalam and Tamil speakers were well above the national average. However, the achievement gap was much less significant with Panjabi and Katchi speakers. Noticeably, Konkani speaking pupils were underachieving, with only 62.7%, significantly lower than the national average and may be a group that should be examined further.

Fig 13. KS2 attainment of languages spoken by Indian pupils 2012



Pakistani Language Diversity and Achievement

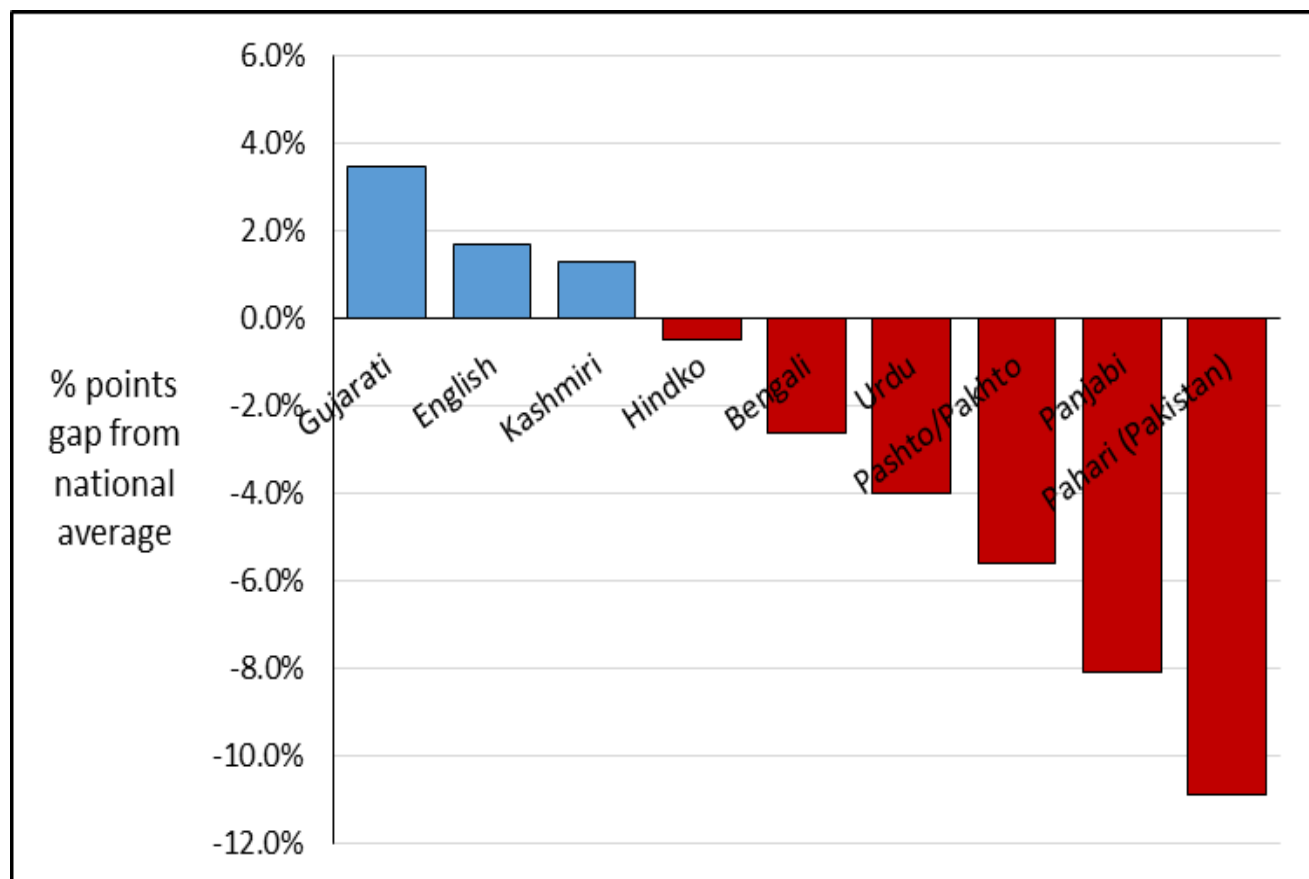
Pakistani pupils made up the largest ethnic minority group at key stage 2. They were also an underachieving group with only 69.2% achieving expected levels. The group is less linguistically diverse than other ethnic groups.

Table 11: Key Stage 2 performance of Pakistani pupils by language spoken 2012

Language	Reading 4+	Writing 4+	Maths 4+	RWM 4+	APS	Pupil No.	Pupil %
Urdu	82.8%	79.2%	80.3%	70.3%	27.3	9500	42.9%
Panjabi	80.8%	76.0%	77.9%	66.2%	26.6	7643	34.5%
English	87.4%	83.5%	83.5%	76.0%	28.1	2333	10.5%
Pashto/Pakhto	81.3%	76.9%	79.0%	68.7%	26.8	594	2.7%
Pahari (Pakistan)	79.0%	72.7%	74.8%	63.4%	26.4	238	1.1%
Hindko	90.0%	81.3%	82.5%	73.8%	27.8	80	0.4%
Bengali	82.6%	87.0%	76.1%	71.7%	28.2	46	0.2%
Gujarati	86.7%	88.9%	80.0%	77.8%	28.2	45	0.2%
Kashmiri	82.9%	78.0%	82.9%	75.6%	27.9	41	0.2%
All Pakistani	82.4%	78.2%	79.5%	69.2%	27.1	22159	
National	86.5%	81.0%	84.0%	74.3%	28.2	544220	

Urdu and Panjabi speakers predominate the group (Table 11). Both are underachieving but Panjabi speaking pupils are among the lower performing with only 66.2% achieving expected levels along with Pashto (68.7%) and Pahari (63.4%). Gujarati speakers are the highest achieving. English speakers are above the national average but suggests pupils who are second or more generation and whose families have been settled in England for longer.

Fig 14: KS2 attainment of languages spoken by Pakistani pupils 2012



Overall the analysis by language category illuminates the spread of attainment within ethnic categories and suggests that some of the commonly used ethnic groupings may be too broad to be useful, and that language data can provide greater insight into which pupils may be in need of particular support. In conclusion, this study confirms that the worryingly low achievement of a number of ethnic groups, including Black African and White Other has been masked by Government statistics which have failed to distinguish ethnic groups by language spoken at home.

4. Discussion and implication for policy and practice

The number of pupils in England with English as an additional language has seen a dramatic increase over the years, nearly doubling across the primary and secondary phases. EAL pupils overall do not achieve as well as their non-EAL peers, but EAL is a very broad category which aggregates many different ethnic groups, who individually demonstrate a wide diversity of attainment, some very high achieving and some very low achieving. The highest proportions of EAL pupils come from the South-East particularly Inner London. The data shows that this correlates with an overall increase in attainment of EAL pupils.

Building on past research, which suggested links between ethnic background and academic achievement, this study extends the current literature by exploring the potential roles of language data to analyse pupil performance. It focuses on Black African, White Other, Indian and Pakistani ethnic groups which have the greatest linguistic diversity. The findings of this study suggest that analysing an ethnic group's performance by language adds to our understanding of the associations between language and ethnic background and also confirm that children from different ethnic groups show differences in educational attainment. Indian, Chinese, Bangladeshi and White British pupils achieve higher results, on average, than Black Caribbean, Black African, White Other and Pakistani pupils. Black Caribbean, Black African, White Other, Pakistani, Black Other and Mixed White/Black Caribbean pupils are the main underachieving ethnic groups.

However, we would argue that none of these ethnic categories are homogenous. A further analysis of the data by language spoken highlighted the potential of language data to help disaggregate school census ethnic categories and give greater insight into the performance of different groups in schools. In particular the White Other and the Black African groups had the greatest linguistic diversity and attainment patterns. Of the Black African language groups, one of the lowest achieving were Lingala speakers, spoken in the Congo. This group tended to have attainment well below that of the lowest attaining ethnic group Black Caribbean, while the Igbo, Yoruba, Luganda, Somali, Krio, Twi-Fante, Tigrinya and English speaking Black African pupils achieve better than White British and the national average. Within the White Other Category, both Portuguese and Spanish speakers showed low attainment. Most White Other pupils are of European descent and language groups associated with Eastern Europe such as Romanian, Latvian, Slovak and Czech were some of the lowest performing groups at Key Stage 2. Of concern could be the large number of Polish pupils who as a group are attaining below the national average.

The Indian and Pakistani ethnic groups are less linguistically diverse, but still show variation in achievement when disaggregated by language spoken. Being the best performing ethnic group, unsurprisingly, most Indian language groups were some of the highest achieving, with Marathi and Telugu speakers seemingly the most able. The Pakistani ethnic group in contrast is a low performing group. However, when analysing the languages that were spoken by Pakistani pupils, Kashmiri, Gujarati and English speakers were actually performing better than pupils nationally, in stark contrast to Punjabi and Panjabi speakers who were many percentage points below.

This research illustrates the diverse nature of current ethnic group categories and calls for a rethink of the categories that we use to understand educational achievement in British schools. Researching the achievement of different ethnic groups in British schools is complicated by the problem of categorisation under groups which are too broadly defined nationally as Black African, White Other, Black Other, Indian, Pakistani, Other Ethnic Group etc. As a result of the lack of detailed ethnically based data, there are limitations in past research into different ethnic groups. The absence of detailed national data which identifies patterns of achievement of ethnic minority children of African, Asian and European heritage in British schools, places serious constraints on effective

targeting policies and developments at national and local level. As Von Ahn et al (2011) and Demie et al (2011) have so eloquently articulated, this study suggests that language spoken provides a better means to understand the relationship between ethnicity and educational achievement. There is, therefore, a clear requirement for further research into language groups whose needs are obscured in the White Other ethnic category, speaking languages such as Polish, Albanian, German, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Italian, Turkish, Greek, Lithuanian etc. Similarly obscured are the Indian ethnic group who mainly tend to speak Gujarati, Punjabi and Hindi; the Pakistani ethnic group who tend to speak Urdu, Punjabi and the Black African ethnic group which masks the performance of pupils who tend to speak many different languages including English, Yoruba, Somali, Twi-Fante, French, Igbo, Krio, Tigrinya, Lingala, Arabic, Ga, Swahili, Luganda, Amharic, Portuguese, Shona, German, Fang, Manding, Runyakata, Temne and Zulu etc. to gain a fuller picture of their educational achievements.

There are also some limitations to this study that should be noted. Previous research suggests that the number of speakers in some of these groups are too small to make any meaningful comparison with other languages (Demie and Hau 2013a; Demie 2012). As a result we have not taken into consideration any language groups with less than 20 speakers. We would argue any conclusions or interpretations drawn from these small cohorts should be made with care, since the performance of a few pupils can significantly weight the overall performance of a group. Despite these limitations, the broad findings of our research are in line with other studies (see Von Ahn et al 2011 and Demie et al 2011, Mitton 2011, Demie and Mclean 2007, Demie and Hau 2012) and offer significant new insight by extending our existing knowledge in the area of ethnicity, language and achievement.

The findings of this study have implications for the collection and use of disaggregated data at national and international level. As highlighted above, the British system of data collection can be considered the most elaborate when it comes to collecting data related to ethnically based statistics. In Britain, census data is considered the most important source of information about schools and is used by Ministers, Parliament, central and local government, pressure groups and the public to monitor government policies and their effectiveness (DfE 2006; Gill and Demie 2011). We pointed out that accurate and reliable disaggregated ethnic and language data are important to address education inequalities. Such data are important to identify knowledge gaps and develop effective programmes and policies. However, the extent to which ethnic and linguistic data is collected and used varies from country to country (Goldscheider 2002; Graves 2011 and Ford 2013). We would argue, as a matter of good practice, government and public institutions need an account of peoples culture, ethnic and linguistic background in formulating national and local policy. While for example some countries such as UK, USA, Australia and Canada recognise the importance of collecting detailed data, many states believe that recognising ethnic and linguistic differences will have a negative and destabilising effect on the country (see Blum 2002, Goldscheider 2002). In some countries, efforts to deny the existence of different ethnic and linguistic groups can stem from the desire to create a homogenised identity in order to maintain national unity (Blum 2002). For example in France *'it is illegal to include ethnic and language data in official statistics or for Census to include questions about race or origin, ethnic and linguistic background.'* (See Gray 2009:57). But the negative impact of such a policy means some communities are consistently excluded and marginalised with resources remaining in the hands of specific ethnic and linguistic groups. Other researchers highlighted particularly the issues related to the ethnic classification used in census. The census in many countries collects data on ethnicity or language by asking respondents to choose the ethnic group or language they feel best describes them from the list (Gill and Demie 2011). Issues that are hotly debated in UK and USA include the use of terms such as Black, White, Asian, African, Mixed Race, Other Ethnic Groups and inconsistencies in category descriptions of different communities. Such classification is confusing, inconsistent and inaccurate and hides the real diversities within the country.

There are also other concerns and a growing debate around the need to disaggregate ethnicity and language data. Some governments have been reluctant to detail disaggregated data and have argued a number of reasons related predominately to legal and moral considerations, including privacy of individual data against potential abusers. In countries such as Turkey and France, constitutional provisions and data protection laws have thus been claimed for not articulating data collection on minority groups (Blum 2002, Goldscheider 2002). Furthermore, some governments are reluctant to carry out ethnic and language monitoring to avoiding shedding light on complex problems within the country. Overall, in many countries, there is a lack of relevant disaggregated statistical data which prevents monitoring performance and measuring the effectiveness of government policies.

We would argue that inequality in access in education will not end without detailed disaggregated ethnic and language data and a carefully designed targeted national programme. Detailed disaggregated data by language and ethnic background provides evidence that can be used to design interventions that tackle the root cause of underachievement of different groups in schools. The recommendations from our findings are that if any country is serious about tackling pupil underachievement in schools, they need to recognise first the importance of cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity. In addition they must collect disaggregated ethnic data and language spoken at home to benefit all groups attending schools. Such data is fundamental in identifying which ethnic and linguistic groups are most at risk of underachievement and to design specific interventions that will be effective in raising achievement, whatever their background.

Appendix A

Achievement of Languages Spoken Nationally at KS2 2012

<i>Language</i>	<i>No. of pupils</i>	<i>% Pupils Achieving Reading Writing and Maths Combined Level 4+</i>
English	448324	75.1%
Panjabi	11500	69.7%
Urdu	10487	70.8%
Bengali	8202	76.2%
Polish	4847	61.4%
Somali	3893	68.1%
Gujarati	3691	82.5%
Arabic	3477	69.5%
Tamil	2261	83.0%
Portuguese	2246	59.1%
French	2077	73.3%
Turkish	1891	62.5%
Yoruba	1525	81.8%
Albanian/Shqip	1385	78.5%
Chinese	1380	81.4%
Spanish	1264	71.0%
Tagalog/Filipino	1153	80.7%
Pashto/Pakhto	1076	61.5%
Persian/Farsi	1019	68.8%
Akan/Twi-Fante	986	76.7%
Lithuanian	977	52.1%
Malayalam	769	85.7%
Hindi	716	86.0%
Italian	709	70.9%
Romanian	685	42.5%
Russian	672	63.7%
Shona	594	67.0%
Nepali	591	73.8%
Slovak	589	24.6%
German	558	83.5%
Swahili/Kiswahili	547	69.7%
Kurdish	535	62.2%
Czech	404	23.8%
Greek	371	79.5%
Igbo	356	84.0%
Latvian	355	44.8%
Lingala	343	53.1%
Dutch/Flemish	336	71.7%
Hungarian	318	46.9%
Vietnamese	298	82.9%
Bulgarian	277	63.9%
Thai	265	54.7%
Pahari (Pakistan)	263	64.3%
Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian	256	78.5%
Caribbean Creole English	239	76.2%
Tigrinya	208	74.5%
Luganda	189	82.5%
Japanese	186	84.4%
Sinhala	186	84.9%

<i>Language</i>	<i>No. of pupils</i>	<i>% Pupils Achieving Reading Writing and Maths Combined Level 4+</i>
Amharic	140	78.6%
Korean	130	86.2%
Katchi	125	77.6%
Konkani	122	63.9%
Swedish	117	73.5%
Malay/Indonesian	115	83.5%
Caribbean Creole French	105	68.6%
Ndebele	103	64.1%
Afrikaans	101	75.2%
Telugu	99	93.9%
Hebrew	97	78.4%
Krio	87	66.7%
Hindko	85	74.1%
British Sign Language	79	12.7%
Danish	79	74.7%
Wolof	74	62.2%
Ga	72	81.9%
Marathi	68	92.6%
Romany/English Romanes	63	25.4%
Edo/Bini	56	75.0%
Zulu	49	67.3%
Kashmiri	47	76.6%
Mauritian/Seychelles Creole	46	58.7%
Ukrainian	46	84.8%
Hausa	41	75.6%
Bemba	37	73.0%
Ebira	37	54.1%
Norwegian	36	69.4%
Finnish	35	82.9%
Fijian	33	54.5%
Romani (International)	29	20.7%
Armenian	28	89.3%
Manding/Malinke	27	48.1%
Welsh/Cymraeg	27	85.2%
Ewe	25	92.0%
Gaelic/Irish	25	64.0%
Guarani	25	84.0%
Urhobo-Isoko	25	72.0%
Macedonian	24	79.2%
Sindhi	24	83.3%
Acholi	23	47.8%
Fula/Fulfulde-Pulaar	23	56.5%
Chichewa/Nyanja	22	59.1%
Mongolian (Khalkha)	21	76.2%
Kikuyu/Gikuyu	20	75.0%
Other*/Refused/Unclassified	15498	
All Languages	544220	74.3%

* Other includes those languages with only 1 to 19 speakers who for statistical reasons have not been included in the analysis

Source: National Pupil Database (NPD), Department for Education, January 2012

References

- Blum, A. (2002). Resistance to Identity Categorisation in France. In D.I Kertzer and D.Ariel (eds.), *Census and Identity: the Politics of Race, Ethnicity, and Language in Censuses* (pp. 121-147). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University press.
- Bradbury, A. (2011). Equity, Ethnicity and the Hidden Danger of Contextual Measures of School Performances, *Race Ethnicity and Education*, Volume 14, Issue 3, March.
- Demie, F. and Hau, A. (2013a). *The Achievement of Pupils with English as an Additional Language: An empirical study*, Research and Statistics Unit, Lambeth LA
- Demie, F. (2013b). English as an Additional Language: How long does it takes to acquire English Fluency, *Language and Education*, Volume 27, Issue 1.
- Demie, F. and Hau, A, Butler, R., Tong, R., Taplin, A. and McDonald, J. (2011). *Language Diversity in Schools*, Research and Statistics Unit, Lambeth LA.
- Demie, F. and Lewis, K. (2011). White Working Class Achievement: An Ethnographic Study of Barriers to Learning in Schools, *Educational Studies*, Vol. 37 (3), p245-264.
- Demie, F. and Lewis, K. (2010). Raising the Achievement of Portuguese pupils in British schools: a case study of good practice, *Educational Studies*, Volume 36, Number 1, February 2010 , pp. 95-109
- Demie, F and McLean, C. (2007) *The Achievement of African Heritage Pupils: A case study of good practice in British schools*, *Educational studies*, 33:4,45-434
- Demie, F. and Strand, S. (2006). English Language Acquisition and Attainment at the End of Secondary School, *Educational Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 2, June 2006, pp. 215–231.
- Demie, F. (2005). The Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils in British Schools: Good Practice in Lambeth Schools. *British Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 31, No. 4, August 2005, pp. 351-378.
- Demie, F. (2003). Using Value-added Data for School self-evaluation: A Case Study of Practice in Inner City Schools, *School Leadership and Management*, Vol. 23, No.4, pp. 445-467.
- Demie, F. (2001). Ethnic and Gender Difference in Educational Achievement and Implications for School Improvement Strategies, *Educational Research*, Vol.43, Number 1, 91-106.
- Department for Education (DfE 2012). The Statistical First Release: National Curriculum Assessment and GCSE/GNVQ attainment by pupil characteristics, in England, 2012 at <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000448/index.shtml>
- Department for Education (2011) DfE: Schools, Pupils and their Characteristics, January 2011, <http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/index.shtml>
- Department for Children, Schools and Families (2008a) *Raising The Attainment Of Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Somali and Turkish Heritage Pupils: Guidance For Developing Inclusive Practice*, (Ref: 00043-2008BKT-EN), Nottingham: DCSF.
- Department for Children, Schools and Families (2008b) *Excellence and Enjoyment: Learning and Teaching For Black Children In The Primary Years*, (Ref: 00058-2008BKT-EN), Nottingham: DCSF.
- Department for Children, Schools and Families (2009) *Breaking the link between special educational needs and low attainment*, <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/SpecialEducationalNeeds/Page1/DCSF-00213-2010>

Department for Education and Skills (2002) *Removing the Barriers: Raising Achievement Levels for Minority Ethnic Pupils Exploring Good Practice*, DfES Publications.0001/2002.

Department for Education and Skills (2004a) *Aim High: Supporting the Use of Ethnic Minority Grant*, DfE.

Department for Education and Skills (2004b) *Aiming High: Understanding the Educational Needs of Minority Ethnic Pupils in Mainly White Schools: A Guide to Good Practice*, Nottingham: DfES.

Department for Education and Skills (2005) *Ethnicity and Education: The Evidence on Minority Ethnic Pupils aged 5-16*, London: DfES.

Department for Education and Skills (2006) *Ethnicity and Education: The Evidence on Minority Ethnic Pupils aged 5-16*, London: DfES.

Dustann, C., Machin, S. and Schonberg (2010). Ethnicity and Educational Achievement in Compulsory Schooling, *The Economic Journal*, 120, F272-F297.

Ford, M. (2013). Achievement Gaps in Australia: What NAPLAN Reveals about Education Inequality in Australia, *Race Ethnicity and Education*, Volume 16, Issue 1.

Gillborn, D. (2005) Education as an act of white supremacy: Whiteness, critical race theory and educational reform, *Journal of Education Policy*, 20 (4): 485-505.

Gillborn, D. (2002) *Education and Institutional Racism*, London: Institute of Education.

Gillborn, D. and Youdell, D. (2000). *Rationing Education: Policy, Practice, Reform And Equity*, Buckinghamshire: Open University Press

Gillborn, D. and Mirza, H. S. (2000). *Educational Inequality. Mapping Race, Class and Attainment*, London: Ofsted.

Gillborn, D. and Gipps, C. (1996). *Recent Research on the achievement of ethnic minority pupils*, OFSTED Reviews of Research, HMSO, London.

Gill, B. and Demie, F. (2011). The White Paper Teaching and Learning and Accountability: Implications for data on ethnicity and English as Additional Language, *Race Equality Teaching*, Spring.

Goldscheider, C. (2002). *Ethnic categorisation in censuses: comparative observations from Israel, Canada and the United States*. In D.I Kertzer and D.Ariel (eds.), *Census and identity: the politics of race, ethnicity, and language in censuses* (pp. 71-91). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University press.

Gray, Z. (2009). *The importance of ethnic data for promoting the right for education*, in Minority Rights Groups International (eds.) *The state of the World's minorities and indigenous peoples*, p.57.

Graves, S. (2011). School and Child Level Predictors of Academic Success for African American Children in Third Grade: Implications for No Child Left Behind, *Race Ethnicity and Education*, Volume 14, Issue 5, April.

Office for Standards in Education (2002a) *Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils: Three Successful Primary Schools*, London: Ofsted (HMI447).

Office for Standards in Education (2002b) *Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils: Good Practice in Secondary Schools*: Ofsted (HMI448).

Mitton, L (2011) The Languages of Black Africans in England, *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 32(2), 151-172.

Mortimore, P. ;Sammons, P.; Stoll, L.; Lewis, D and Ecob, R. (1988). *School matters: The Junior Years*, Somerset, Open Books.

NALDIC (2011). *Language in schools, National Association for Language Development in Curriculum*, <http://www.naldic.org.uk/research-and-information/eal-statistics/lang>

NALDIC (2005) Promoting EAL Teacher Professionalism
<http://www.naldic.org.uk/Resources/NALDIC/Home/Documents/PromotingEALTeacherProfessionalism.pdf>

Parekh, B. (2000). *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain: Report of the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain*, Profile Books.

Rampton Report (1981). *West Indian Children in our Schools. Interim report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

Smith, D. and Tomlinson, S. (1989). *The School Effect: A study of multi-social comprehensive*, Exeter, Policy Studies Institute.

Strand, S. (2014). Ethnicity, Gender, Social Class and Achievement Gaps at Age 16: Intersectionality and 'Getting it' for the white working class, *Research Papers in Education*, Vol. 29, No.2, 131-171.

Strand, S. (2012) 'The White British-Black Caribbean Achievement Gap: Tests, tiers and teacher expectations', *British Educational Research Journal*. British Educational Research Journal, Vol. 38, 1, p 75-101.

Strand, S. (2010) 'Do some schools narrow the gap? Differential school effectiveness by ethnicity, gender, poverty and prior attainment', *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, Vol. 21, No.3, 89-314.


Strand, S and Demie, F. (2005). English Language Acquisition and Attainment at the End of Primary School, *Educational Studies*, Vol. 13, No.3, 275-291.

Strand, S. (1999), 'Ethnic Group, Sex and Economic Disadvantage: Associations with pupils' educational progress from baseline to the end of Key Stage 1', *British Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 179-202.

Swann, Lord (1985) *Education For All: Final Report Of The Committee Of Inquiry Into The Education Of Children From Ethnic Minority Groups*, cmd 9453, London: HMSO.

Von Ahn, M., Lupton, R., Greenwood, C., & Wiggins, R. (2010). *Languages, Ethnicity, Education in London* London: Department of Quantitative Social Science, Institute of Education.

Von Ahn, M., Wiggins, R., Sanderson, A., Mayhew, L., & Eversley, J. (2011). *Using School Census Language Data to Understand Language Distribution and Links to Ethnicity, Socio-economic Status and Educational Attainment: a guide for local authority users*. London: Department of Quantitative Social Science, Institute of Education.



Published by:
Schools' Research and Statistics,
Education and Learning,
Canterbury Crescent,
Brixton SW9 7QE

www.lambeth.gov.uk/rsu

© Lambeth Council. All rights reserved. July 2015

ISBN: 978-1-910428-09-2