Raising Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils:
Good Practice in Lambeth Schools

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February 2003

**Archbishop Tenison's   La Retraite   St Martin-in-the-Fields
Allen Edwards   Clapham Manor   Elm Wood   Granton   Hill Mead
St Andrew's   St Jude's   St Saviour's   Sudbourne   Woodmansterne**

Lambeth
Education

Foreword by Councillor Anthony Bottrall (Executive Member for Education)

I have lived in Lambeth for thirty years and my three children attended our local primary school in Brixton before proceeding to a secondary comprehensive. It has been my great privilege and pleasure to serve the people of Lambeth as a Councillor since 1994. I have also been on the governing bodies of some of our most challenging schools during that time and have shared their journey towards improvement.

This report is a major signal that in Lambeth all our aspirations for our pupils - as parents, teachers, governors, school support staff LEA officers and members- are beginning to pay dividends through rising standards in our schools.

In detailing the experiences of thirteen of the twenty-two primary and secondary schools invited to participate in this project, the report presents a rich array of strategies that have been used to raise the educational attainment of pupils from Black Caribbean backgrounds. Many valuable lessons can now be learnt from these schools' experiences, both within Lambeth and in other inner city areas.

These are exciting times for Education in Lambeth and in London. We welcome the focus that the government is placing on raising the achievement of previously underperforming groups and are proud of the contribution that Lambeth schools are making.

My heartfelt thanks to all those involved in creating this report.

Contents

Introduction by Phyllis Dunipace, Interim Director of Education

I am pleased to introduce this research report on Raising Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils in Lambeth schools. Schools work hard to raise standards among all pupils. However, this task is particularly challenging in schools with a very diverse intake. While pupils from certain minority ethnic backgrounds attain very well at school, results show that other groups have been consistently underachieving in relation to their peers. For example, in Lambeth, levels of attainment of Black Caribbean and Portuguese pupils have been, in the past, below the LEA average.

However, despite this evidence, LEA research has shown that Lambeth has many excellent primary and secondary schools that offer good education to Black Caribbean pupils. It has been argued that there is much innovation to celebrate in Lambeth schools, but our knowledge of good practice in these schools is very limited. It called for research into good practice in Lambeth schools. This new research, carried out jointly by a team of former HMIs, LEA research officers and school staff, adds another dimension to the good news in Lambeth and is to be much welcomed. It is the first strand of good practice research and it is the intention of the LEA to undertake further work on pupils' mobility and good practice in raising the achievement of Portuguese pupils. Special thanks to Feyisa Demie and the rest of the Research and Statistics unit: Anne Taplin, Rebecca Butler and Katherine Ince.

In this comprehensive research report, the team has identified a number of methods of good practice in successful schools, including strategies used for raising achievement and supporting Black Caribbean pupils in Lambeth. Among the key features which contribute to the success in the case study schools are strong and purposeful leadership; a strong emphasis on raising expectations for all pupils and teachers; effective use of sophisticated performance data for self-evaluation, target setting and tracking pupils' performance; an inclusive curriculum that meets the needs of inner London pupils and their families; a strong link with the community; and a clear commitment to parents' involvement, including working in partnership with parents to meet the high aspirations that Black Caribbean parents have for their children.

Schools will want to learn from what has been shown in this research. This document provides a celebration of good practice in Lambeth schools.

La Retraite

Introduction to the Lambeth Raising Achievement Project: Black Caribbean pupils

Celebrating diversity and reflecting England's multi-ethnic communities are no doubt features of the ethos of every school in Lambeth. The local education authority (LEA) is rightly proud of the strong association in the national psyche between Lambeth and its Black Caribbean heritage, which is reflected in its schools. Links between the English-speaking Caribbean islands and Lambeth are not new, as the following extracts from the introduction to Windrush Forbears: Black People in Lambeth 1700-1900 will attest.

'We already had evidence of Lambeth links with Africa, India and the Caribbean. Wealthy merchants whose money derived from slave-worked sugar plantations or from investments in the East India Company were living in Streatham and Clapham in the eighteenth century; and wills and other title deeds document their involvement in slavery.[1] Other men like Noble Jones, born in Lambeth in 1702, emigrated to the New World to help manage the slave economy. Jones worked as a surveyor, mapping the recently acquired British colony of Georgia; his son Wymberley Jones purchased a 450-acre plantation and slaves there in 1750 and named it "Lambeth".[2] At the end of the nineteenth century, the sugar baron Henry Tate, the head of the family firm that was to become Tate and Lyle, and whose Liverpool and London sugar businesses relied first on slave and then on free plantation labour in the Caribbean, was living at his mansion, Park Hill, in Streatham.

The abolitionist movement of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century also had local champions. The activities of the Clapham sect, a group of wealthy evangelical Christians living in that area, were well documented. The MP William Wilberforce, who was the figurehead for the national campaign to abolish first the slave trade in 1807 and then slavery itself in 1833, lived on Clapham Common. So too did Henry Thornton, John Venn, the rector of Clapham and Zachariah Macaulay who were all involved in very practical experiments in the anti-slavery movement including the colony for freed slaves in Sierra Leone in the 1780s and the 'African Academy' set up to educate Africans and freed slaves at Macaulay's house in Clapham.'

A commitment to deepen that knowledge and understanding of the historic links inspired the Lambeth Archive team, based at the Minet Library. As Jon Newman, Archives Manager writes:

'There was no shortage of information about the local White establishment's involvement with Africa, Asia and the Caribbean in either benign or negative ways; but it was less clear whether there would be any real evidence of Black or Asian people living in the area. The occasional discovery of the baptism or burial of a Black person, often a servant or slave to a White master, in the parish registers suggested there might be more beneath the surface. If there were Black people living in Lambeth then where else might they show up within the archives?'

'We always knew that the local Black and Asian community would be comparatively small. Lambeth's remote location and relatively sparse population in the eighteenth century compared with London proper, meant that the Black presence was never going to match that of areas like Westminster or Tower Hamlets. But we also knew that it was important to the present day inhabitants of the borough that this information should be accessible.

The findings are numerically modest but they are nevertheless compelling. It is clear that the White inhabitants of Lambeth would have been very aware of Black people. By the end of the eighteenth century they had become a significant and visible minority who would have been regularly encountered as servants and working people; in the nineteenth century they were also familiar as performers at the local pleasure gardens, theatres and music halls and as the subject matter of much local journalism.'[3]

A similar intellectual curiosity lies at the heart of the Lambeth Raising Achievement Project (RAP), with the commissioning and publication of a series of reports on the successful achievement of groups of pupils who underattained previously, against both local and national averages. The recent OfSTED national reports on the successful achievement of Black Caribbean pupils in three primary and six

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[1] For example William Vassall of Clapham Common lived on slave plantation income from his lands in Hanover parish, Jamaica, [CAS Occasional sheet, no.294]. John Hankey of Streatham Common derived his wealth from sugar plantations and negro slaves in Grenada, which were left to his son in his will of 1773 (Pl. 7) [LAD IV/35/32/10].

[2] Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Society Newsletter no. 90, June 2002

secondary schools were the inspiration for this local research on the successful achievement of pupils of Black Caribbean heritage and is the first of the Lambeth RAP series. An extract from the introduction to both reports is worth repeating here:

'Just over 50 years ago, the SS Windrush brought the first of what were to be thousands of Black people from the Caribbean recruited to work in Britain after the Second World War. They, like Black settlers who arrived before 1948, hoped for a prosperous future for themselves and enhanced educational opportunities for their children. It would be reasonable to expect these hopes to have been realised by now and to assume that the majority of Black Caribbean children in England's schools would be sharing the higher educational standards attained by the most successful pupils in our schools. This is not the case.' (OfSTED, 2002)

Feyisa Demie, Head of Research & Statistics at Lambeth LEA, reiterates these concerns in Section 2 of this report: 'The underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils is in danger of becoming accepted as irrefutable fact.' Two Lambeth schools[4] featured in the OfSTED reports on those schools who were reversing what Taylor (1981) called 'a strong trend to underachievement' amongst Black Caribbean pupils. Further analysis of performance data and trends indicated that more schools in Lambeth were in that category.

The Project Team

The Lambeth RAP research was commissioned by Feyisa Demie, Head of Research & Statistics, Lambeth LEA in June 2002. The project team comprised: Jan McKenley (Lead Consultant and former HMI), Chris Power MBE (Associate Consultant and HMI recently retired from OfSTED) and Louise Ishani, Raising Achievement Consultant, Lambeth Education Action Zone.

Project Aims and Objectives

The specification for the Lambeth RAP was issued to Jan McKenley, Principal Consultant, Austin Mayhead[5] in March 2002. Its aims and objectives were clearly stipulated:

'The project sets out to discover the factors which contribute to the success of Caribbean heritage pupils in Lambeth schools. The emphasis will be on what has worked. The question of why some schools with substantial Caribbean pupil numbers had good SATs results, low exclusion rates and good community relations is at the core of the project.'

The LEA's ambition was that the research should be a 'catalyst' for influencing the culture of the LEA and getting schools to talk about their own practices in relation to their Caribbean students.

'The project will also help the LEA in selective monitoring and helping schools to interpret their data and developing specific strategies for improvement. It will also help the LEA to meet its national agenda and targets related to underperforming groups.'

Twenty-two schools met the success criteria for inclusion in the project as defined by the LEA Research & Statistics:

- Academically above average or improving schools
- A minimum of 15% of pupils of Caribbean heritage

The sample was further adjusted using the Z-score indicator to ensure a good geographical spread of schools[6]. The Director of Education (then Michael Peters) invited the headteachers of 15 of the 22 schools to participate in the project in April 2002. The LEA's ambition for the research was clearly reflected in his letter of invitation to schools:

'How best to get to the heart of what your school does differently, additionally or more intensively to achieve the best outcomes for pupils of Caribbean heritage. Each school is unique but its ingredients

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[3] All extracts from *Windrush Forbears: Black People in Lambeth 1700-1900* are reproduced here with the kind permission of the author Jon Newman.
[4] Sudbourne Primary School and St Martin-in-the-Fields Secondary School
[5] Jan McKenley is currently on secondment as a Special Projects Director at the National College for School Leadership.
[6] In Lambeth, schools have been placed in four LEA defined family groups based on a disadvantage index – calculated using FSM, mobility rate and levels of fluency in English (Not fluent in English). They were ranked in order of z-score from highest to lowest and then split into four equal groups (or quartiles), each containing 25% of schools (for details see Demie 2002). At least three schools were selected from each family of primary schools. Therefore, the selected case study schools were diverse in terms of the socio-economic conditions of their localities in Lambeth.

of success may stimulate new ways of working in other schools in the borough. This is a dynamic process. The first stage of the project will be a report on effective practice in Lambeth schools; thereafter it is our intention to take forward the dissemination of the project outcomes within Lambeth and beyond.'

Thirteen schools (10 primary and 3 secondary) felt able to respond positively. Three schools were visited in the summer term and the remainder in the autumn term of 2002, when Chris Power was able to join the team.

Project Team Approach

Each school was invited to identify a programme of activities, which typically involved an initial interview with the headteacher and tour of the school, opportunities to talk to a wide range of staff in school including learning mentors and playground supervisors, as well as teachers and teaching assistants. Interviews were also held with groups of pupils, parents and/or parent governors. No teaching was observed formally, although we were invited into a number of classrooms in the course of our visits. Detailed performance data provided by the LEA Research & Statistics team was available in advance of each visit and is summarised in Section 3 of this report. The practice of 11 schools is captured in the Case Studies in Section 4. A commentary on the issues and dilemmas that emerged from our visits to schoolscomprises Section 5; particularly informed by the visits to Woodmansterne and Hill Mead Primary Schools.

The project team adopted a collaborative co-inquiry approach to our task by asking everyone with whom we came into contact in the course of our school visits, to reflect in some detail on their successful strategies with individual pupils of Caribbean heritage. Clearly in adopting such an approach, the confidentiality of individual pupils had to be respected, but it is often only when members of a school staff were asked to put a 'face' to the strategies, that the dialogue really came to life.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, terminology has been problematic in this report. Issues of country of birth as opposed to origin, faith, location, and settlement all contribute to the concept of 'ethnicity', 'heritage' and 'background'. These are interwoven with a personal sense of affinity and belonging. Identities and how these might be reflected 'officially' are a lively debate every decade as the national census seeks to catch up with changes in categorisation over the previous decade. Education takes its lead from that national debate and reflects the latest ethnic categories in the Pupil Level Annual Schools' Census (PLASC), but this is always a matter of contention. We have resolved this by reflecting the rich and diverse terminology used by the interviewees and other sources, because we feel this too is part of the discourse. Initially, for the purposes of this research, Lambeth LEA favoured the term 'African Caribbean' or 'Caribbean' to define the children of birth families where at least one parent is of Caribbean heritage, but in the course of the project, that view changed to use the term 'Black Caribbean' to reflect the PLASC terminology.

The schools involved in the project were prepared to share and reflect on their practice, not because they felt their practice was the 'best' or necessarily replicable in other schools. As one headteacher said at the January editorial meeting: 'We wanted to be part of this research, because we wanted to learn more about our own schools.' On initial contact, many of the schools did not feel that they did anything special or different for their Black Caribbean pupils; one or two were uncomfortable with the notion that individual groups of pupils were signalled out for 'special attention'. Many of the strategies described in this report, it was argued, are also effective for other underperforming pupils, but as yet there is hardly any empirical evidence to support these contentions, hence the focus of this project. We acknowledge that the strategies to remove the barriers to achievement for Black Caribbean pupils are designed to combat or counter the impact of poverty, racism, social and economic disadvantage on all pupils in Lambeth.

Once we were in schools, heads, teachers, teaching assistants, learning mentors, premises managers, governors and not least of all pupils and their parents were keen to engage in the discourse – to be part of 'honest conversations[7]' about what works and why in raising the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils in their schools.

A project such as this is bound to have its critics, or to be more accurate, critical friends; this one is no exception. Lambeth headteachers have been closely involved in this project from the outset and have contributed to the rich dialogues which have resulted. Not all schools chose to participate and we have had to contend with a degree of scepticism about the LEA's motives in sponsoring such research. Officers themselves were unsure whether such a project would end up as a chronicle of the blindingly obvious.

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[7] 'Honest Conversations' is a term used by the 'Hope In the Cities' Project run by the Anglican Church in the US and UK.

We make no grand claims for originality; indeed in reporting, the project consciously builds on the work of three recent studies:

- Making the Difference: Teaching and Learning Strategies in Successful Multi-Ethnic Schools (1998) by Maud Blair and Jill Bourne and their colleagues at the Open University. DfEE Research Report RR59.

- Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils: Three Successful Primary Schools. OFSTED, 2002.

- Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils: Good Practice in Secondary Schools. OFSTED, 2002.

It is worth noting that one important aspect has changed since the reports above were published: the introduction of the Race Relations Amendment Act and its requirements that schools demonstrate how they make provision to promote race equality and harmony.

All three reports agreed on the key areas: leadership and ethos, relationships in schools, expectations and commitment, monitoring and curriculum enrichment. This report is no different but reflects on these from a London, and where relevant, uniquely Lambeth perspective.

Reporting arrangements

The RAP team reported to the Lambeth Steering Group on Underperforming Groups, to senior officers in the LEA and to the headteachers of the schools participating in the project. The draft report was dispatched to the LEA in December 2002 and circulated to the project headteachers, the Executive Member for Education and the Director's team in advance of an editorial meeting to which they were duly invited to attend on 22 January 2003. Representatives of the project headteachers presented the final report to the Education Directorate team on 10 February and the published report was launched on 3 March 2003.

Acknowledgements

Members of the project team wish to place on record our thanks to all those staff, pupils and parents at the 10 primary and 3 secondary schools who agreed to participate in the project. These are:

Primary Schools:
Allen Edwards
Clapham Manor
Elm Wood
Granton
Hill Mead
St Andrew's
St Jude's
St Saviour's
Sudbourne
Woodmansterne

Secondary Schools:
Archbishop Tenison's
La Retraite
St Martin-in-the-Fields

We would also like to thank Lambeth Council for financial support, Lambeth Education Action Zone for funding Louise Ishani's time and part of the cost of this publication and Michael Peters, former Director of Education, for his assistance in the initial phase of the project.

The photographs in this report are courtesy of St. Saviour's School.

All of the research team enjoyed the visits to schools and hope that we have captured some of the joyful vitality, which is the daily experience of staff and their pupils in Lambeth schools; it was the most powerful impression.

Jan McKenley
On behalf of the Lambeth RAP research team.

Section 2

Setting the research context for the Lambeth Raising Achievement Project: Black Caribbean Pupils.[8]

The national picture

The last decade of the twentieth century has seen much debate amongst schools, academic researchers, and policy makers about the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils in British schools. There is no doubt that Black Caribbean pupils' underachievement has been a 'hot issue' within education over the past fifty years, as recent headlines attest: 'Teachers are failing Black boys' (Observer, January 6 2002); 'Fast-tracking will penalise Black pupils' (BBC News, 12 March 2002); 'Schools told to do more for Black pupils' (BBC News, 9 December 1998); 'Task Force to help Black pupils' (BBC News, 16 March 2002); 'Schools called to account for ethnic divide' (Guardian, 7 May 2002).

What is more, most of the studies in the field of school improvement in the past decade show that the notion of Black Caribbean pupils' underachievement in British schools is in danger of becoming accepted as an irrefutable fact. For instance, the most extensive review of research relating to Black Caribbean heritage children in British schools between 1965 and 1980 suggested that 'there is an overwhelming consensus that research evidence shows *a strong trend to underachievement* (my emphasis) of pupils of West Indian origin' (Taylor, 1981:216; Tomlinson, 1983).
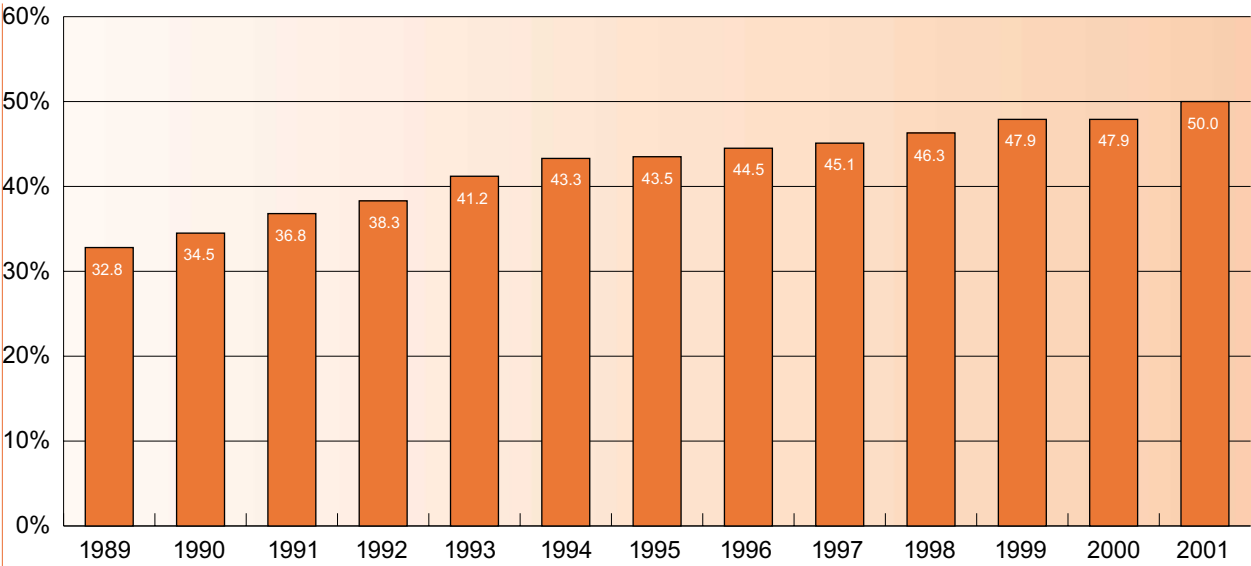
The relative underachievement of ethnic minority pupils has also been a major issue in national education policy formulation. The first official circular was issued by the then Department of Education & Science in 1965. Circular 7/65, *The Education of Immigrants*, instructed local authorities to adopt a policy of dispersal and bussing to avoid the over-concentration of immigrant children in one institution, but few authorities, including the Inner London Education Authority, complied with this approach. Reports commissioned by the highly influential Parliamentary Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration began in 1969. Of particular relevance to this project was the Interim Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups, *West Indian children in our schools,* under the chairmanship of Sir Anthony Rampton, and the final report, *Education for All,* four years later, under the chairmanship of Lord Swann. Both reports detail the underachievement of pupils of Black Caribbean backgrounds. Thus the Swann report concludes 'there is no doubt that the West Indian Children, as a group, and on average, are underachieving, both by comparison with their school fellows in the White majority, as well as in terms of their potential. Notwithstanding that some are doing well' (Swann 1985: 81).

Other research throughout the 1980s and 1990s reiterated those earlier findings, with Black Caribbean pupils continuing to make less progress on average than other pupils (Mabey 1981, Mortimore et al 1988, Nuttall et al 1989, Kendall 1998, Gillborn and Gipps 1996, Demie 2001). Each of these studies appeared to show considerable underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils in comparison with the achievement of White English/Scottish/Welsh and Asian pupils. These research findings have profound implications on the credibility of the education system for addressing the underachievement of underperforming groups and perhaps most importantly for the relationship of the Caribbean communities to the current education system.

The previous OFSTED review of research in this area also described the differences in attainment between certain ethnic groups (Gillborn and Gipps, 1996; Gillborn and Mirza, 2000). This review noted that the gap is growing between the highest and lowest achieving ethnic groups in many LEAs, and that African and Caribbean pupils, especially boys, have not shared equally in the increasing rates of educational achievement. The review concluded that 'Black pupils generally may be falling further behind the average achievement of the majority of their peers' (Gillborn and Gipps, 1996, p 29). The authors warned, however, that the quality of data available nationally was not of a high standard and the ethnic categories were relatively crude.

Figure 1: GCSE Attainment in England 1989-2001 (% 5+ A*-C)

| Year	Value
1989	32.8
1990	34.5
1991	36.8
1992	38.3
1993	41.2
1994	43.3
1995	43.5
1996	44.5
1997	45.1
1998	46.3
1999	47.9
2000	47.9
2001	50.0

Source: DfES Statistics for Education – Public Examinations GCSE and GCE in England 1998-2001

Recent OFSTED reports further state that:

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

The above findings are also supported by the national Youth Cohort Study (YCS) of England and Wales, which provides some useful data on education and ethnicity. Figure 1 illustrates that there was a dramatic improvement in the achievement of pupils completing their compulsory schooling between 1989 and 2001. These figures show that the proportion of 16 years olds attaining at least five higher grade passes rose from 33% in 1989 to 50% in 2001. However, the YCS data suggests that not all ethnic groups have shared equally in the overall improvement in attainment at the 5+A*-C level. Figure 2 shows a clear picture of how different ethnic groups shared unequally in the changing rates of attainment during the late 1990s. A striking finding is that members of each main ethnic group are now more likely to attain higher grades than ever before. The data in Figure 2 also reveals that there are considerable differences in the attainment of different ethnic groups. During the period between 1989 and 2000, Indian pupils' performance improved from 23% gaining 5+ A*-C grades to 60% (an increase of 37 percentage points), followed by White, who moved from 30% to 50% (+20 points). Black pupils moved from 18% to 39% (+21 points), Bangladeshi from 13% to 29% (+16 points) and Pakistani from 13% to 19% (+6 points). Only the White and Indian groups enjoyed a year-on-year improvement. The Black, Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils are markedly less likely to attain five higher GCSEs than their White and Indian peers nationally. The improvement in the attainment of Black pupils was not enough to keep pace with their White peers.

Figure 2: Changes in GCSE attainment by ethnicity in England and Wales, 1989-2000 (5+ A*-C)

Legend: White, Black, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi
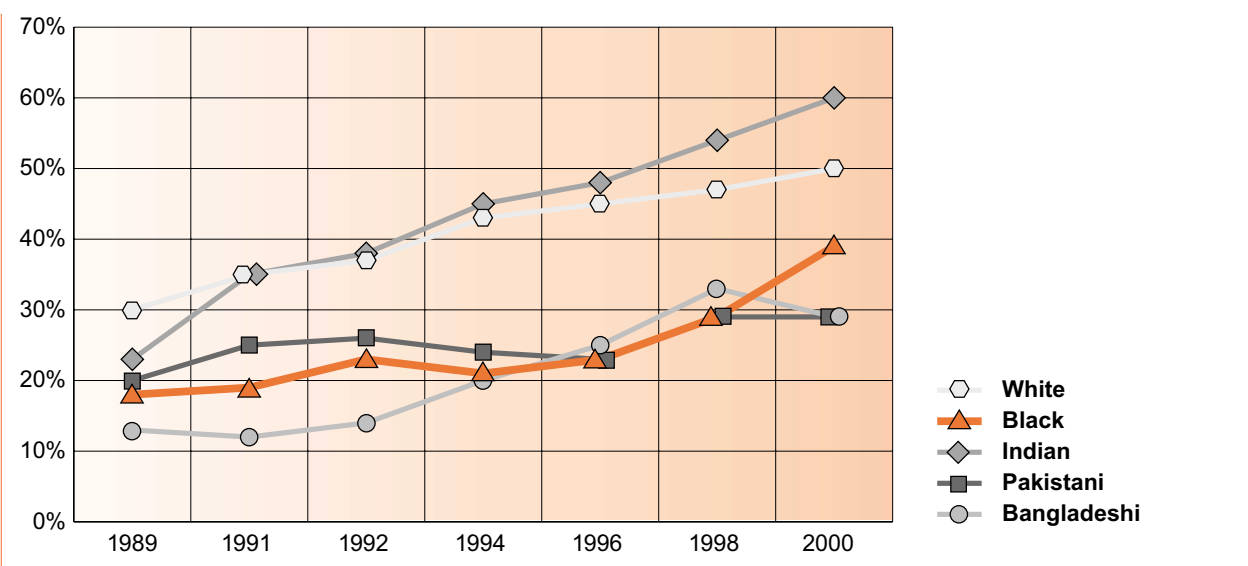
Source: Youth Cohort Study, Department for Education and Skills, (2001) and Demack et al (2000)

The main conclusion from the YCS data is that African-Caribbean pupils have drawn the least benefit from the rising levels of attainment and the gap between them and their White peers is bigger now than a decade ago. However, given the reservations expressed about the YCS, these conclusions must be treated with a degree of caution. There has been a tendency to homogenise ethnic minority groups in the study. For example, the issue of African and Caribbean underachievement has been complicated by the problems of categorising different ethnic groups within the broadly defined 'Black' group in the YCS survey. Overall, the findings from YCS aggregate statistics are unhelpful in drawing conclusions about the underachievement of Black Caribbean pupils at a national level and for formulating policies.

Figure 3: GCSE performance trends by Ethnic Groups in England, 1998 and 2000 (5+ A*-C)

Ethnic Group	2000	1998
Chinese	75.3	64.7
Indian	57.9	53.3
White	47.0	44.3
Bangladeshi	37.1	29.7
Black African	34.8	33.9
Pakistani	34.5	31.1
Black Caribbean	25.3	22.2
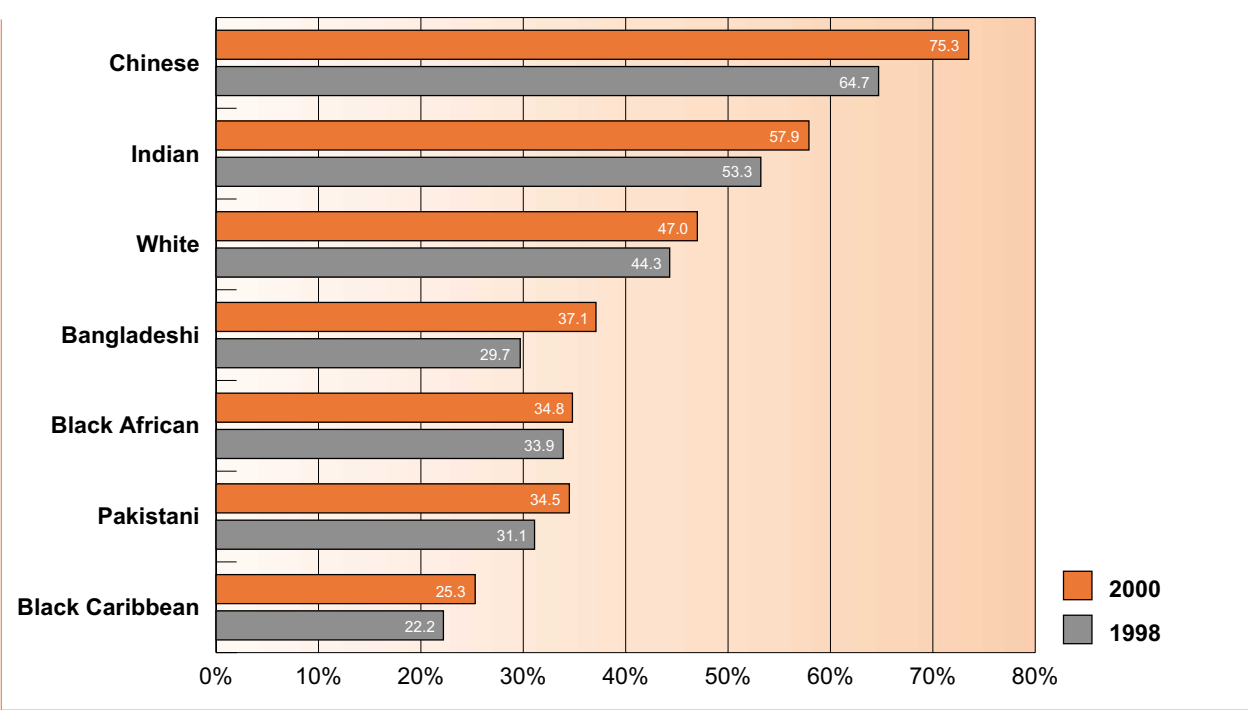
Source: Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant: Analysis of LEA Plans, DfES 2002

Until recently, it has been difficult to draw generalisable conclusions from national research on Black Caribbean educational achievement, because the YCS data categorised a range of ethnic groups at a

national level as Black or African-Caribbean. This made it difficult to establish accurately the relative achievement of Black Caribbean pupils compared to that of English/Scottish and Welsh (ESW) and other ethnic groups. But the new national data is at least helpful and confirms that Black Caribbean and African pupils have not shared equally in increasing rates of achievement and their attainment has actually worsened (see figure 3).
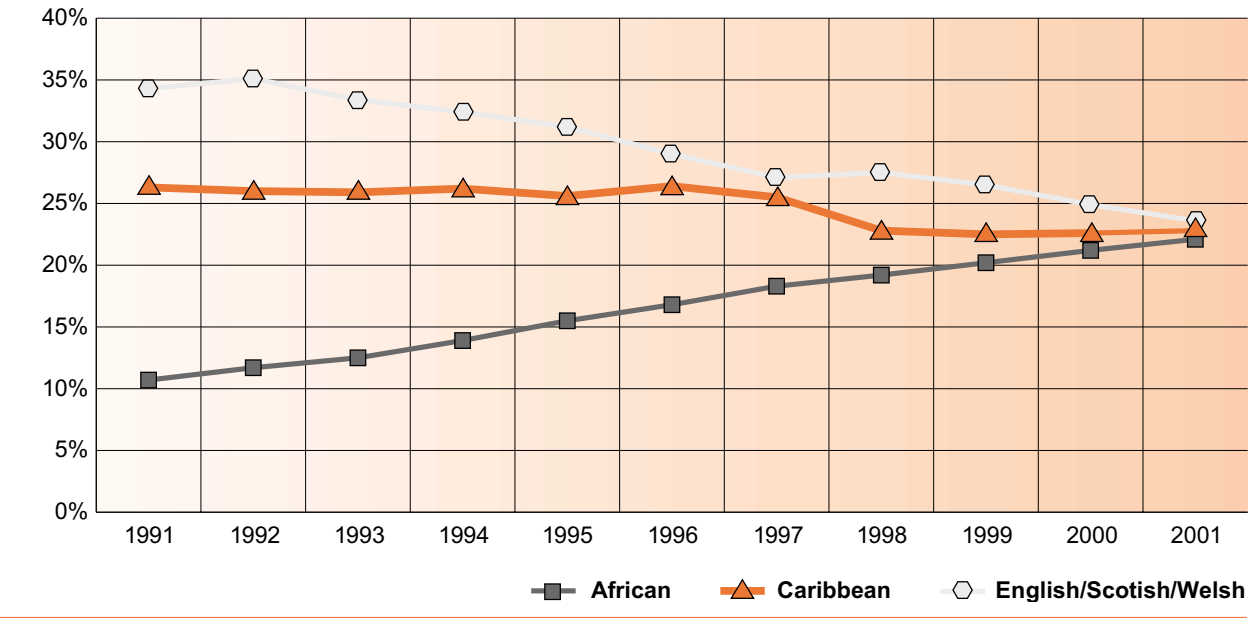
Perhaps the most important new information from the national data is that, without doubt, Black Caribbean pupils are markedly less likely to attain five higher grade GCSEs than other ethnic groups nationally. There is now also some evidence that Chinese, Bangladeshi and Indian heritage pupils are improving at higher rates, leading to a of the narrowing gap between them and White[9] pupils. However, there have not been sufficiently high rates of improvement for Black African and Black Caribbean pupils to narrow the gap and the attainment gap is still wide. As with findings from previous studies, the data highlight a particular disadvantage experienced by Black Caribbean pupils in the English education system (Demie, 2001; Gillborn and Mirza, 2000; Gillborn and Gipps, 1996). The achievement of Black Caribbean pupils is a particular concern, and the gap at GCSE between Black Caribbean and ESW pupils is over 22%. These findings have important implications for strategies to raise achievement. The findings make it easier for researchers to examine the differences in experience of pupils from different ethnic groups and for practitioners to identify appropriate strategies to tackle perceived problems.

The Lambeth Context

Lambeth LEA is one of the most ethnically, linguistically and culturally diverse boroughs in Britain. About 73% of pupils are from Black and other ethnic minority groups. The 2001 census showed that there were 28,384 pupils in the LEA's schools. Of these, ESW pupils formed the largest ethnic group with 23.6%, followed by Black Caribbean at 22.8%, African at 22.1%, Other Black at 11%, Other White at 7.2% and Portuguese at 4.6%. Lambeth serves the largest proportion of Black Caribbean pupils of any English LEA.

There has been a change in the overall composition of the Black and ethnic minority population in Lambeth schools. The 1991 census showed that overall, 66% of pupils in the LEA's schools belonged to Black and other ethnic minority communities compared with 73% in 2001.

Figure 4: Changes in the School Composition in the LEA by Main Ethnic Groups, 1991-2001

The achievement of ethnic minority pupils in Lambeth schools

This section looks in brief at the LEA in terms of achievement of the main ethnic groups. The Authority has carried out considerable research on the achievement of all ethnic minority groups in the LEA's schools (for details see Demie, 2001 and 2002). The main findings of the previous studies suggest that:

'Children from different ethnic groups show a difference in educational attainment at the end of each key stage in the LEA. Indian, Vietnamese, Bangladeshi and Chinese achieve higher results, on average, than African, Caribbean, Irish and ESW pupils. Caribbean and Portuguese are the main underachieving groups (Demie 2001, p.101). The findings of the study also confirm the main ethnic groups are African, Caribbean and ESW. Indian, Vietnamese, Chinese, Bangladeshi and Chinese pupils are relatively small ethnic groups in the LEA, and so more difficult to draw firm conclusion from the data' (Demie 2001, p.98).

Here, we briefly consider recent findings on the main ethnic groups in the LEA, with the focus on Black Caribbean achievement compared to the African and ESW groups.

The KS1 and KS2 Evidence

Table 1: Changes in Attainment by Ethnic Origin in LEA Primary Schools

	KS1 Average Results – Level 2B						KS2 Average Results – Level 4					
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Change 98-02	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Change 98-02
African	54%	55%	66%	67%	64%	10%	59%	69%	73%	74%	74%	15%
Caribbean	49%	51%	59%	61%	57%	8%	49%	57%	67%	68%	67%	18%
ESW	59%	61%	64%	68%	70%	11%	60%	70%	74%	78%	77%	17%
Lambeth	51%	55%	61%	63%	62%	11%	55%	65%	71%	73%	72%	17%

The above table indicates that the KS1 results have shown a steady increase over the last four years, while the KS2 results have improved proportionately more. However, when the ethnic group is considered, it can be seen that not all groups have enjoyed these gains equally.

Figure 5: Gaps in KS2 Performance between Main Ethnic Groups in the LEA (% level 4+)
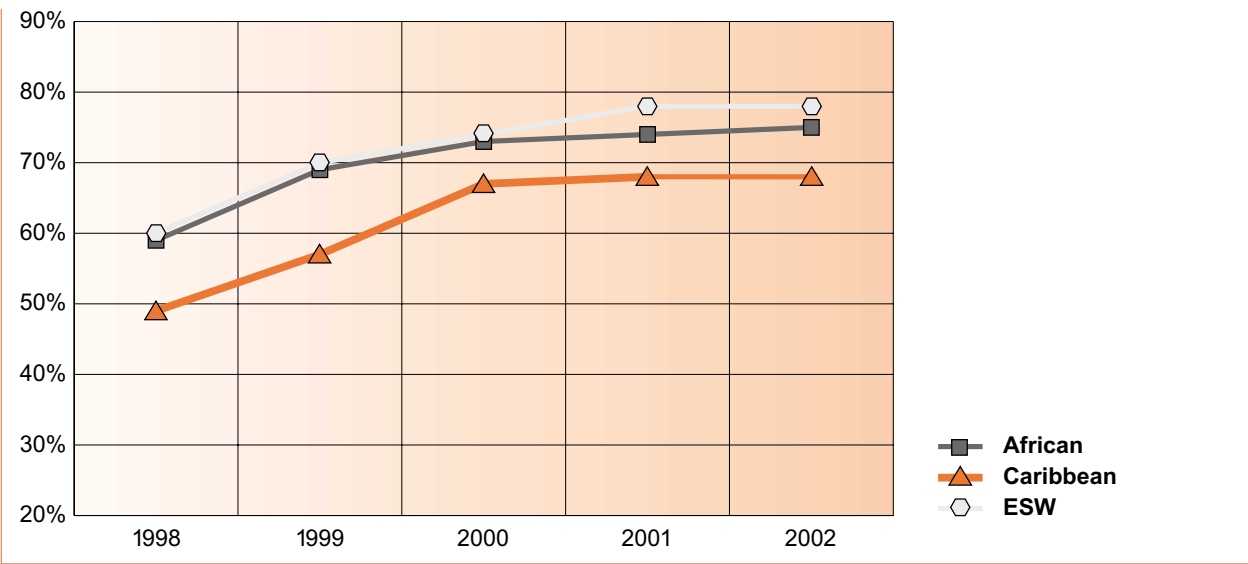
Of the main ethnic groups, African pupils made the least improvement over the four years, at KS2.

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[9] The term White is misleading, as it does not refer to ESW. It also includes Irish, Greek, Turkish, Portuguese, Gypsy/Roma and any other background such as other European, who are underachieving. The figure certainly underestimates the true level of the achievement of the White ESW group in the UK, which is significantly higher than the one reported in DfES national statistics.

The KS3 and GCSE Evidence

An analysis of KS3 and GCSE results by ethnic background also reveals a contrasting picture of performance between different ethnic groups and suggests that pupils of different ethnic heritage do not experience equal educational opportunities.

Table 2: Changes in Attainment by Ethnic Origin in Secondary Schools, 1998-2002

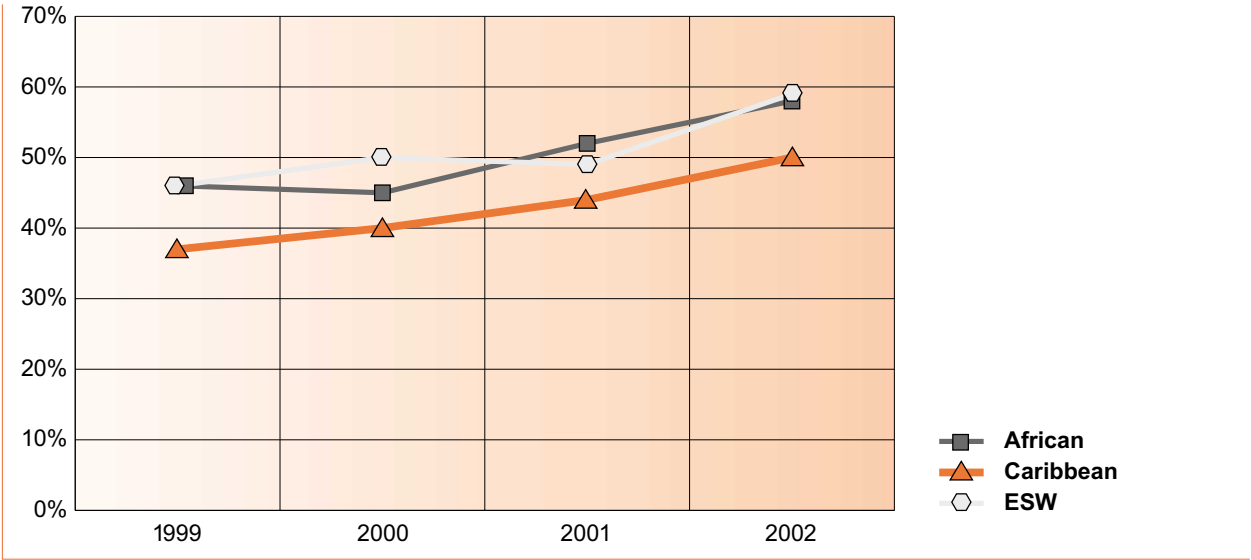|	KS3 Results (% level 5+)					GCSE (% 5+A*-C)				
	1999	2000	2001	2002	Change 99-02	1999	2000	2001	2002	Change 99-02
African	46	45	52	58	12	35	38	44	40	5
Caribbean	37	40	44	50	13	24	20	23	30	6
ESW	46	50	49	59	13	34	32	32	36	2
Lambeth mean	44	46	48	56	12	32	32	36	41	9

Figure 6: Performance Gaps of Main Ethnic Groups at KS3 (% level 5+)

The Caribbean pupils show an improvement rate nearly double that of the LEA and are catching up ESW and African pupils. Despite improvement, evidence here suggests they are still underperforming compared to ESW and African.

Figure 7: Performance Gaps of Main Ethnic Groups at GCSE (% 5+ A*-C)
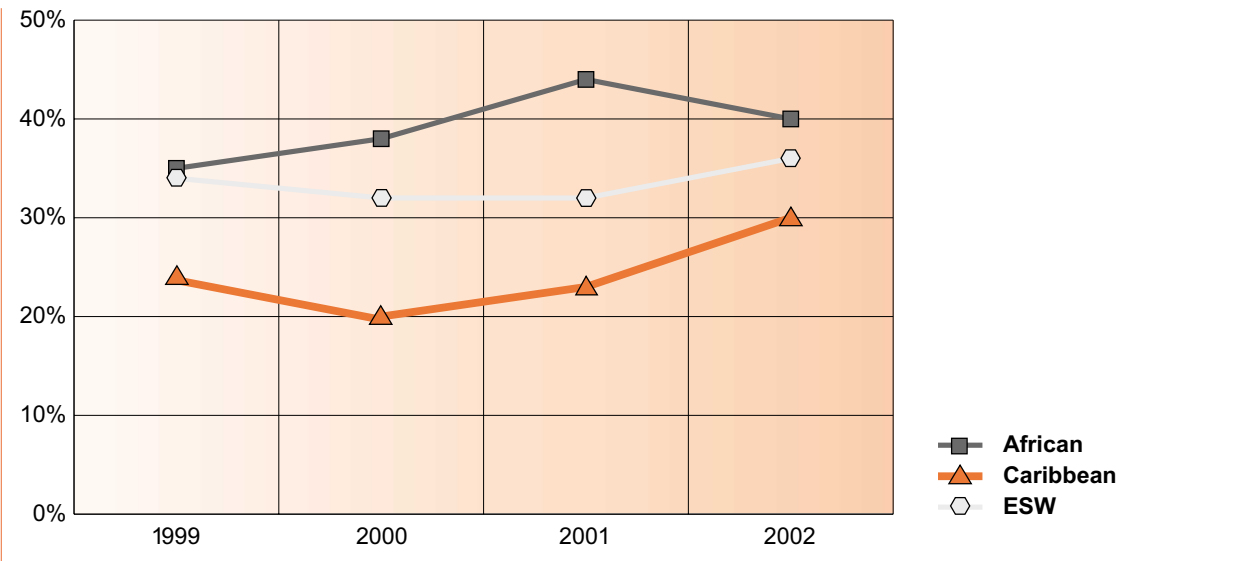
Overall, the evidence suggests that the performance gap is widening between ESW, African and Black Caribbean pupils at GCSE. However, caution needs to be exercised when considering these improvements, as they may be due to some difference in the characteristics of the cohorts in each year, rather than an improvement due to any external targeted intervention.

Black Caribbean Performance by Gender and Social Factors

Gender Differences

Table 3 repeats the pattern established earlier, whereby girls tend to outperform boys at each key stage (See Demie, 2001 and Gillborn and Gipps, 1996). Overall, the findings of the results between key stages indicate that girls achieve higher averages than boys by a quite noticeable margin. This is true for African, Caribbean and ESW pupils at all key stages. It also confirms that for Caribbean pupils, the gap in performance between boys and girls is higher than for African and ESW pupils, suggesting the underachievement of boys. Overall, this finding questions some of the previous studies which argued that only Black boys, and not girls, face inequalities. The data in table 3 confirm that both Black Caribbean girls and boys were lagging behind White boys and all three groups were some distance behind White girls.

Table 3: Performance by key stage, gender and ethnic background (percentage)

Ethnic Groups	Year	KS2 (level 4+)				GCSE (5+A*-C)			
		All	Boys	Girls	Diff.	All	Boys	Girls	Diff.
African	1998	60%	56%	62%	6%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	1999	69%	66%	73%	7%	35%	33%	37%	4%
	2000	73%	71%	75%	4%	38%	32%	41%	9%
	2001	72%	72%	75%	2%	44%	32%	52%	20%
	2002	74%	72%	76%	4%	42%	35%	45%	10%
Caribbean	1998	49%	43%	55%	11%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	1999	56%	54%	61%	6%	24%	15%	28%	13%
	2000	66%	63%	70%	7%	20%	14%	23%	9%
	2001	67%	63%	73%	11%	23%	18%	25%	7%
	2002	67%	66%	68%	2%	33%	26%	36%	10%
ESW	1998	61%	57%	64%	6%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	1999	69%	67%	72%	4%	34%	34%	35%	1%
	2000	72%	72%	76%	4%	32%	32%	32%	0%
	2001	77%	76%	80%	5%	32%	33%	31%	- 2%
	2002	77%	75%	80%	5%	36%	36%	37%	1%
Lambeth	1998	55%	50%	57%	7%	29%	25%	32%	7%
	1999	65%	63%	67%	4%	32%	27%	35%	8%
	2000	71%	68%	73%	5%	32%	28%	35%	7%
	2001	73%	70%	75%	5%	36%	29%	38%	9%
	2002	72%	70%	72%	2%	40%	33%	42%	9%

Social Factors

The free school meals variable is often used as a proxy measure of the extent of social deprivation in the backgrounds of pupils and has been linked to underachievement in a number of studies (see Gillborn and Youdell 2002; Demie 2001). The proportion of pupils taking KS2 in 2002 who were eligible for free school meals (FSM) was 41%, and for the GCSE cohort, it was 43%. Figure 8 indicates that there is a marked difference in KS2 performance between pupils eligible for free school meals and the most economically advantaged groups in schools. At end of primary education, the difference between pupils eligible for FSM and those not is significant, with about 64% of eligible pupils achieving level 4+, whereas 77% of pupils who are not eligible achieve at this level. The GCSE data also shows a significant gap, with pupils on free school meals gaining only 28% 5+ A*-C, compared to 46% attained by those not eligible. Overall, the findings from the LEA data confirm that pupils eligible for school meals did considerably less well than their affluent peers.

There are also some striking differences within the main ethnic groups when the data is further analysed by pupils eligible for free school meals. Table 4 shows that at GCSE, 22% of Black Caribbean pupils eligible for free school meals achieved 5+ A*-C, compared with 40% of pupils who were not eligible. The White ESW difference is even higher – with the gap of 15% at KS2 and 27% at GCSE. However, there are narrower gaps for African and Black Caribbean pupils at KS2. This is despite a high number of pupils on free schools compared to ESW. This finding underlines the importance of treating any measure of school or LEA performance which does not allow for the influence of background factors such social class and deprivation with scepticism. Social class data is particularly essential for the analysis of performance of ESW and Black Caribbean in addition to other disadvantage factors. As we have argued in the previous section, our analysis is not complete because of a lack of data on social class. Care must be taken in generalizing the results of particularly White ESW pupils from this study to a wider context. A number of studies have confirmed that London's White population is not representative of the social class composition of ESW more generally in the UK, tending to be more skewed towards people with a working class background (Nuttal et al 1989, Demie 2001). Because of the social class profile, 'it is possible that in inner London, low attainment by White working-class pupils is a particular issue, and that markedly different results might be found in a less disadvantaged rural setting. Further research in other populations *outside inner London* is clearly required' (Strand, 1999, p. 199).

Figure 8: KS2 Performance by free school meals (% level 4+)
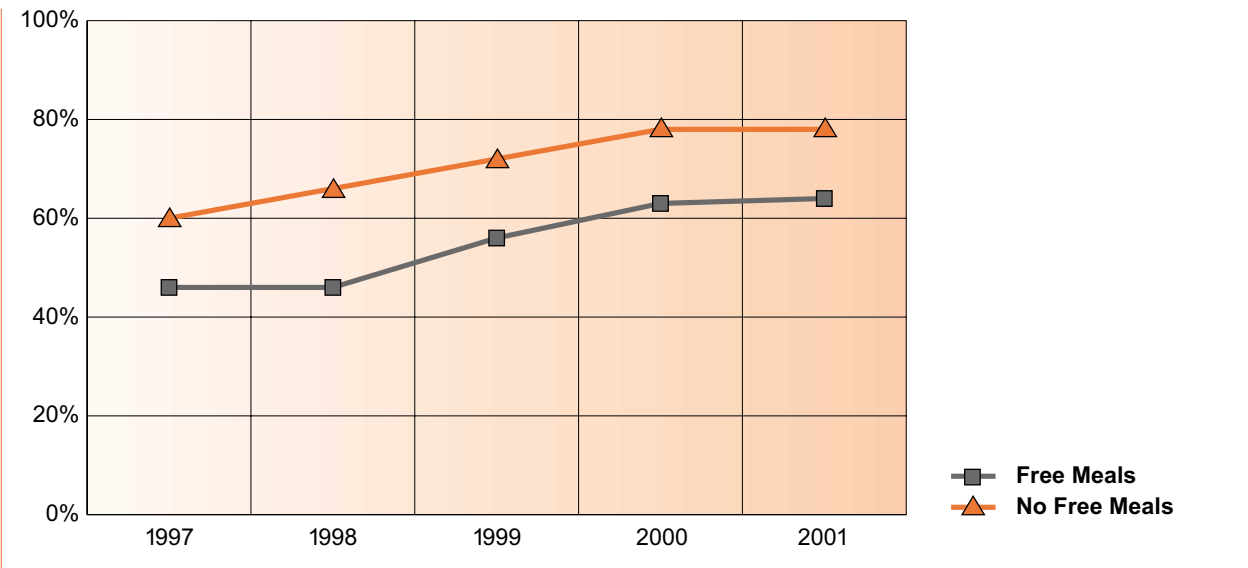
Table 4: Performance by key stage, free school meals and ethnic background in Lambeth 2002

	KS2 (% level 4+)			GCSE (% 5+ A*-C)		
	% of pupils eligible	Free Meals	No Free Meals	% of pupils eligible	Free Meals	No Free Meals
African	41%	72%	76%	38%	31%	48%
Caribbean	47%	65%	69%	39%	22%	40%
ESW	33%	60%	85%	35%	19%	46%
Lambeth Average	41%	64%	77%	43%	28%	46%

Summary

The review of previous research on the educational achievement of underperforming groups of pupils revealed that there has been little research into how the experience of successful schools might be disseminated within an LEA. Figure 9, overleaf, shows the difference in performance at KS2 by the main ethnic groups in Lambeth, for all Lambeth primary schools. This also shows how well the schools are doing compared with the Lambeth and national averages. Overall, the findings show how well schools can do, whatever their circumstances. They also confirm that there is a wide range of performance between schools within the LEA. Section 3 looks at the performance of these schools in more detail.

Figure 9: Key Stage 2 Performance By Major Ethnic Groups, 2001 (% level 4+)

Caribbean   African   English, Scottish, Welsh

Schools (vertical axis)

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

Legend: ■ School   □ Lambeth   □ National
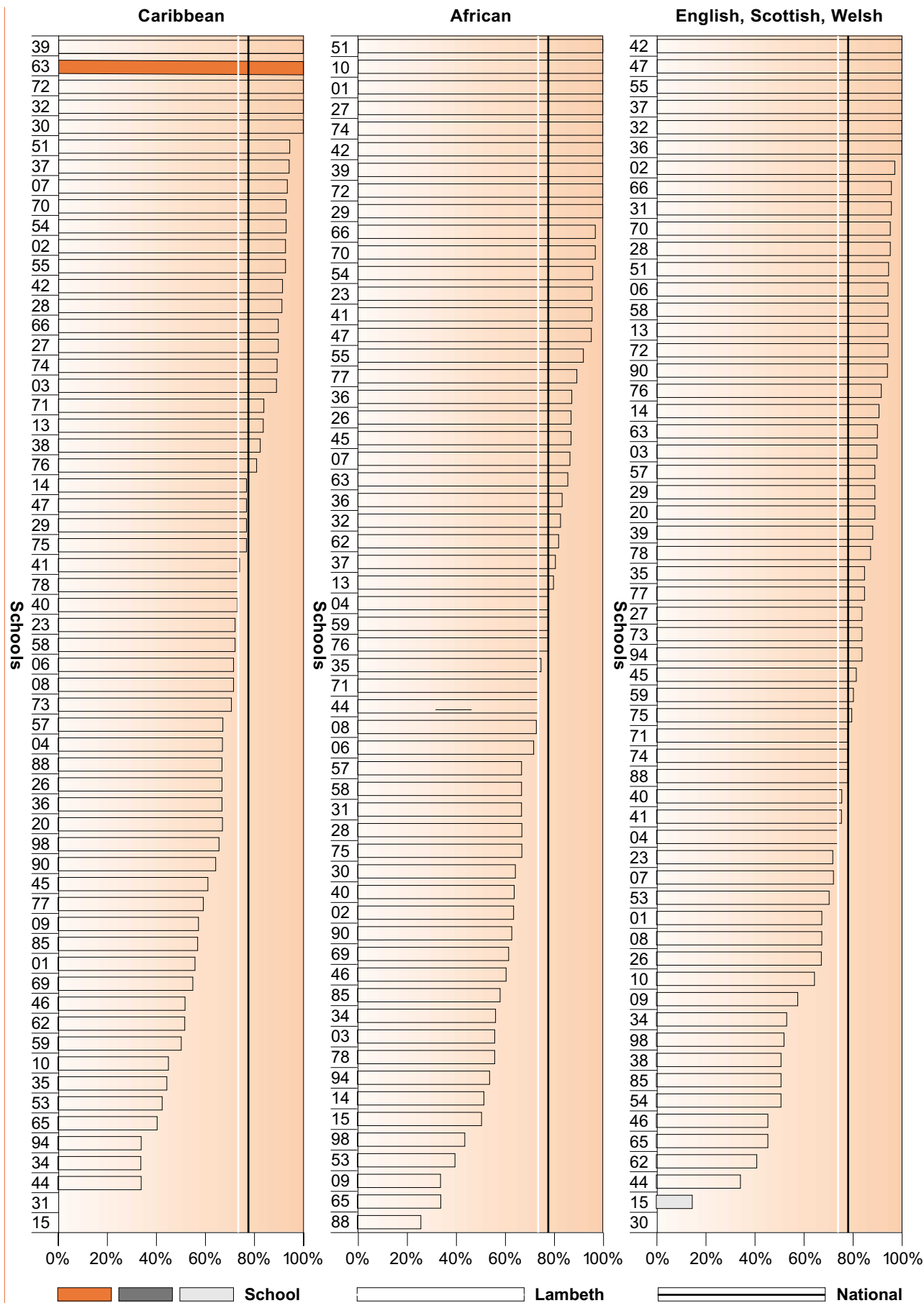
Section 3

The Attainment of Black Caribbean pupils in the case study schools

Introduction

The previous section covered the attainment of Black Caribbean pupils in context of the overall performance. However, in recent years, the need for a detailed case study of successful schools in raising the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils has become apparent as a means of increasing our understanding of the ways in which schools can enhance pupils' academic achievement. For this reason, OFSTED recently looked at 'examples of schools that provide an environment in which Black Caribbean pupils flourish' (OFSTED 2002, p.2). The purpose of this section is to examine in detail the attainment of Black Caribbean pupils in the case study schools in Lambeth, comparing them with other schools in the LEA that are not included in the project. This will be followed in the next section with further detailed case study research that illuminates how the complex interactions of context, organisation, policy and practices helps generate effective practice in raising the attainment of Black Caribbean pupils in Lambeth. In order to keep the amount of data to a minimum and to give credit for overall performance, average performance data across all subjects was used for KS2 and KS3 evidence.

Performance of the Case Study Schools[10]

Key Stage 2 attainment at the end of primary education

Lambeth has many excellent primary schools that offer good education to Black Caribbean pupils and where pupils achieve results above the national average. There is much to celebrate about the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils, particularly in the case study schools and a number of other LEA schools. Table 5 and Figure 10 show the attainment of Black Caribbean pupils in Key Stage 2 tests compared with the data on the performance Black Caribbean in other LEA schools. The main findings from the data show:

■ Attainment of Black Caribbean pupils has been consistently high for many years and above national and LEA averages.

■ Black Caribbean pupils in the case study schools make good progress and consistently do better than the Black Caribbean pupils in other LEA schools.

■ The improvement rate of Black Caribbean pupils in the case study schools is impressive and the rate of improvement is faster than for all other schools. Between 1998 and 2002, the schools in the case study improved their KS2 results from 48% to 81% – up 34%. This compares with an improvement rate of 14% by other LEA schools, 18% for all schools.

Table 5: KS2 Performance Trends of Black Caribbean Pupils in the Case Study Schools, 1998-2002

KS2 (Level 4 +)	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Improvement
Black Caribbean in Case Study Schools	48%	63%	78%	81%	81%	34%
Black Caribbean – Other LEA Schools	50%	56%	65%	65%	64%	14%
Black Caribbean – All Schools	49%	57%	67%	68%	67%	18%
LEA Average*	55%	64%	71%	73%	72%	17%
National Average*	64%	73%	77%	78%	78%	14%

* Please note the LEA and national data in this report is not related to Black Caribbean national averages, due to lack of data. It is an average of all ethnic groups. Care needs to be taken in the interpretation of the data used and groups in this table.

[10] Hill Mead Primary School is not included in this analysis.

Figure 10: KS2 Performance of Black Caribbean Pupils in all Case Study Schools: LEA and National Comparison (% level 4+)
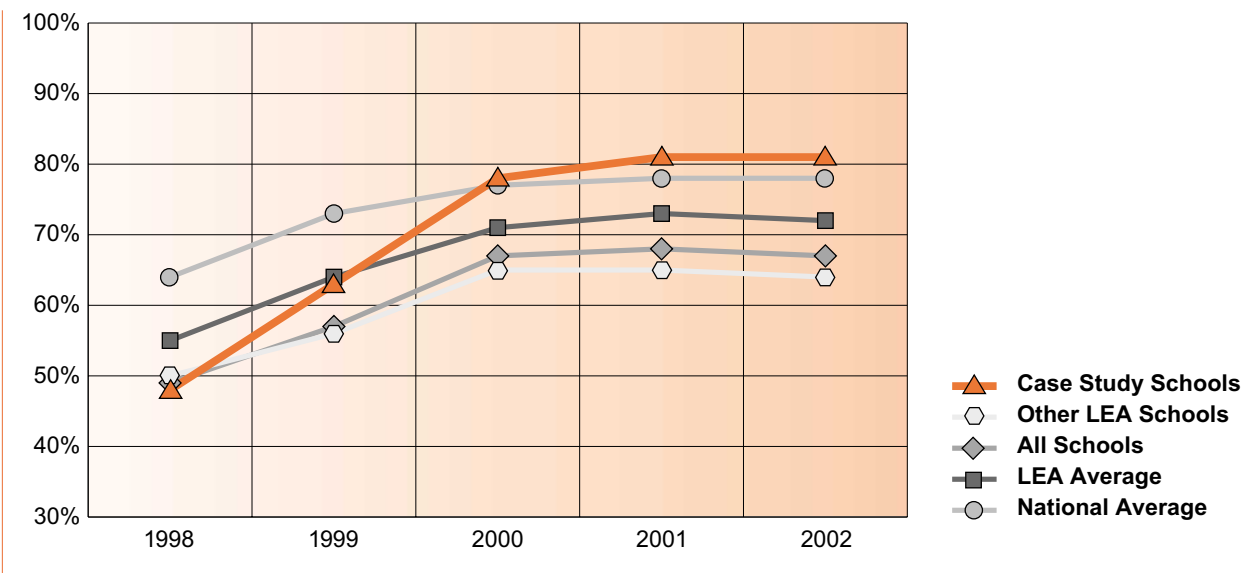
Key Stage 3 and 4 attainment during secondary education

Table 6 and Figure 11 show the attainment of Black Caribbean pupils at Key Stage 3 and GCSE, compared with the data on Black Caribbean pupils in other LEA schools. Standards of performance of Black Caribbean pupils in the case study schools have improved steadily and faster than in other schools in the LEA and nationally. The following features are of note in this table:

- Attainment of Black Caribbean pupils has been consistently high for many years and above national and LEA averages at KS3. The schools in the RAP area improved by 16%, compared with an improvement rate of 8% nationally and 12% in other LEA schools between 1999 and 2002.

- There is also much to celebrate in GCSE performance in 2002 in the case study schools. Fifty-nine percent of Black Caribbean pupils achieved 5+A*-C compared with 51% overall nationally and 22% in other LEA schools.

- There has been a substantial and impressive rise in GCSE performance of Black Caribbean pupils in the case study schools between 1999 and 2002 with a 22% improvement rate compared to a national overall improvement rate of 3%.

Table 6: KS3 and GCSE Performance Trends of Black Caribbean pupils in the Case Study Schools

KS3 Level 5+	1999	2000	2001	2002	Improvement
Black Caribbean – Case Study Schools	60%	65%	72%	76%	16%
Black Caribbean – Other Schools	30%	28%	34%	41%	12%
Black Caribbean – All Schools	36%	37%	44%	50%	13%
LEA Average*	44%	45%	48%	58%	14%
National average*	60%	63%	65%	68%	8%
GCSE 5+A*-C	1999	2000	2001	2002	Improvement
Black Caribbean – Case Study Schools	37%	33%	41%	59%	22%
Black Caribbean – Other Schools	20%	15%	17%	22%	3%
Black Caribbean – All Schools	24%	20%	23%	33%	9%
LEA Average*	32%	32%	36%	41%	11%
National average*	48%	49%	50%	51%	3%

Figure 11: GCSE Performance of Black Caribbean Pupils in all Case Study Schools compared with LEA and National Results (% 5+ A*-C)
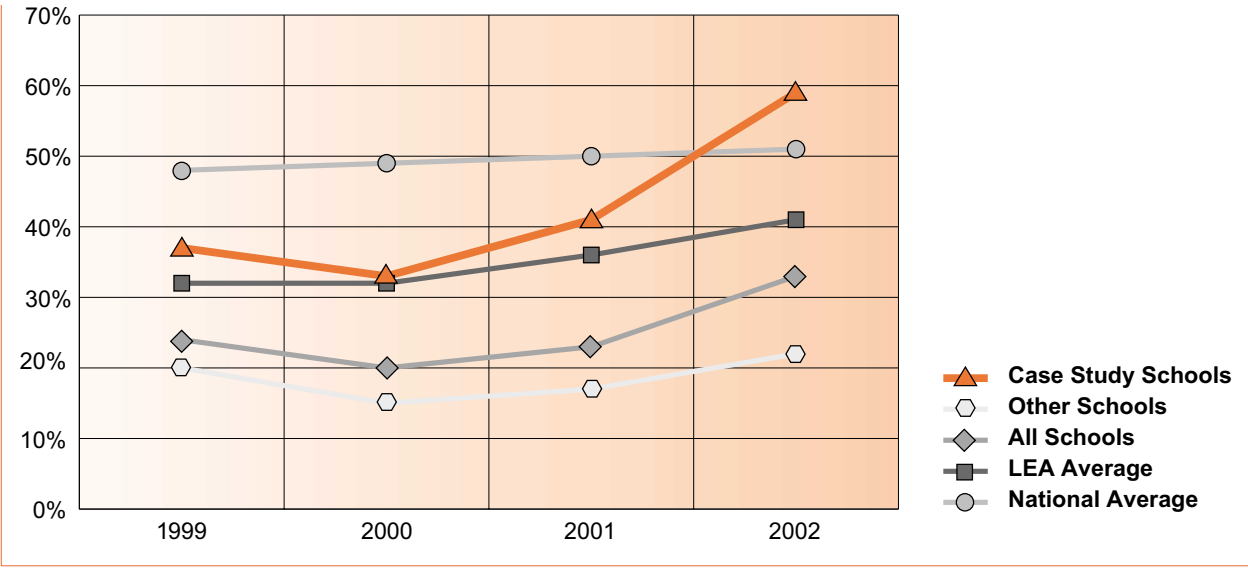
Figure 12: KS3 Performance of Black Caribbean Pupils in all Case Study Schools compared with LEA and National Results (% level 5+)
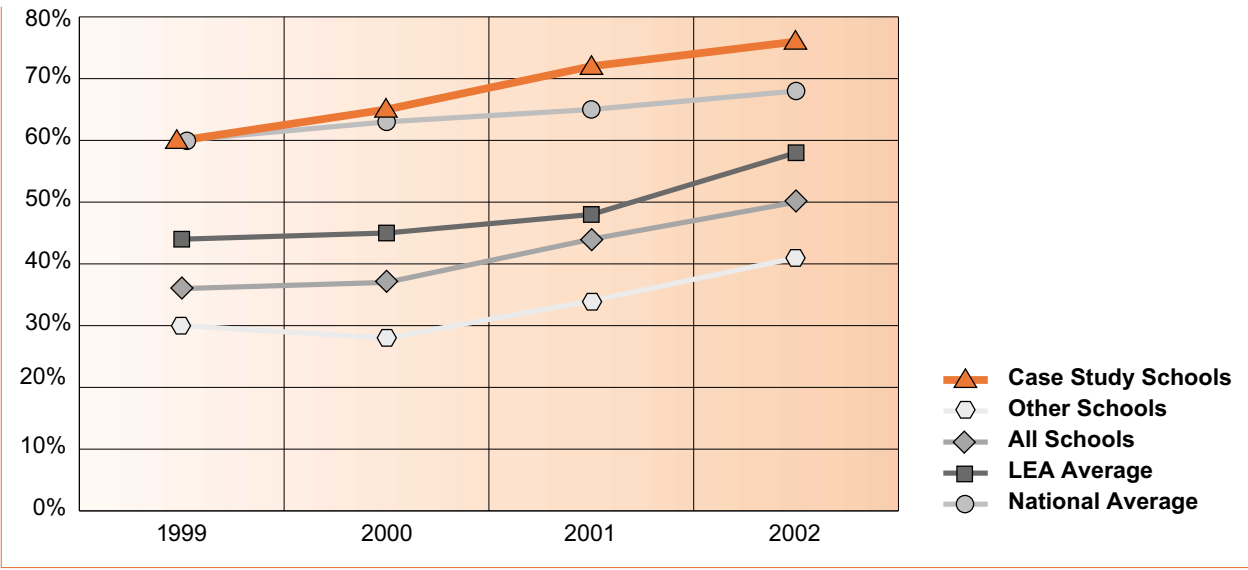
Summary

Black Caribbean pupils are performing above national and LEA averages in the case study schools; the majority of which have high levels of disadvantage. In some cases, the schools also have excellent results for ESW and African children, including boys (Demie, 2001). The key challenge for the LEA is to find out what some of the successful schools are doing and why these strategies are proving to be effective in raising the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils.

Section 4

Case Studies of Schools

Introduction

What works and why in raising the attainment of pupils from Black Caribbean backgrounds? Is it all or some combinations? Which ones are transformative?

On the basis of one or two day visits, scrutiny of attainment data and trend analysis by schools and the LEA, this report is the sum of a series of reflexive enquiries with a wide array of people involved in Lambeth schools. The project team did not rely only on the school perspective; we also interviewed parents, parents who were also on the staff, parents who were governors. We interviewed pupils from the full ability range; Black Caribbean pupils mainly, but not exclusively in all cases. Generally, groups were organised by the school, but on no occasion did we feel pupils were following a 'party line'. We sat in assemblies. We observed the interactions as we toured the school, observed the children arriving and leaving school and at play.

The key for us is what did pupils and their parents feel was transformational. The sessions with pupils and parents were therefore crucial. We went to see displays and parts of the school that pupils told us were important to them. We asked pupils what good teaching involved or what activities embodied the ethos of the school in their view, or had made the difference to them. So in one school for example, pupils told us to go and look at the wall outside a particular senior teacher's room where the signed Football League shirts of former pupils hang in cases with one empty frame, awaiting the next footballing talent to emerge from the current school cohort. We did so because the pupils told us how strongly they felt this epitomised the teacher's support and encouragement to them to give of their best. More importantly, how the teacher conveyed to them a sense of pride in being able to teach them and to share in their success. As one boy in the group told us: 'That teacher could teach in any school in the country but instead chooses to stay with us in this one'. It's a strategy that motivates that group but there are other teachers offering alternative approaches, which work for other pupils. We hope the case studies presented in this section illustrate the issues discussed so far in the report.

Case Studies of 11 Lambeth Schools

Primary Schools
- A. **Allen Edwards**
- B. **Clapham Manor**
- C. **Elm Wood**
- D. **Granton**
- E. **St Andrew's**
- F. **St Jude's**
- G. **St Saviour's**
- H. **Sudbourne**

Secondary Schools
- I. **Archbishop Tenison's**
- J. **La Retraite**
- K. **St Martin-in-the-Fields**

Clapham Manor

Primary Schools

A. Allen Edwards Primary School

Allen Edwards Primary School serves a 1930s local authority housing estate in the Stockwell area of the borough, on which the majority of pupils and some of the school staff live. The headteacher has held the substantive position for three years but has worked in the school for 14 years.

The school has 429 pupils and serves an area of high socio-economic deprivation, with 44% of pupils eligible for free school meals and 11% mobile pupils in 2002. The percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language is 48% and very high compared to Lambeth and national averages. Of these, 31% of pupils are not fluent in English.

The school's Key Stage 1 performance in 2002 was 75% at level 2B+ for Black Caribbean pupils in writing, reading and maths. Performance in Key Stage 2 tests has improved overall year on year from 1998. In 2002, 42% of Black Caribbean pupils attained level 4+ in English, 58% attained level 4+ in maths and 83% in science.

The achievement of Black Caribbean pupils, particularly the boys, is a real strength of the school. *'There are very good relationships throughout based on a shared commitment to respect and equality of opportunity. There are no raised voices in this school, this is not a 'shouting school'*, (headteacher). The key for the headteacher has been *'to create an environment where teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of their subjects and there is good management of pupils in an atmosphere of mutual respect which encourages pupils to do their best and learn effectively'.*

This has not been achieved overnight. The school worked hard to tackle the key issues raised in their OFSTED Inspection of February 2000. The headteacher applauds the impact of the performance data and analyses provided by the LEA. *'Targeting underachieving groups of children is now a strength of the school; this is underpinned by the data which makes progress and progression explicit for both teachers and pupils. By doing this we had to face the hard truth that Black Caribbean children were the underachieving group in every classroom of the school'* (headteacher). An OFSTED Self Evaluation course run by Lambeth LEA was also seen as a key feature in shifting the culture of the school and helping the headteacher to develop the 'critical eye' which arises from training in effective classroom observation and giving developmental feedback. *'It underlined my own strengths as an experienced teacher and gave me the confidence to help my teachers to unleash their creativity in the classroom, to convey that sense of 'awe and wonder' which characterises effective teaching and learning in my view'.*

'Moving pupils on through teachers' passion' is how the headteacher summarises one of the key management tasks for a school leader in these times. *'Newly qualified teachers immersed in the national strategies are in danger of seeing school as a rigid structure'*. In this context, it is important for the headteacher to empower staff to be intuitive, which is the key in her view to transformational teaching. *'Pupils were mesmerised by the Literacy Hour in the early days, but now it's routine. Pupils are ready for the next inspiring input'.* The headteacher feels there is now a need to move on, taking the best of the national literacy and numeracy strategies, and applying the same rigour and attention to the foundation subjects, particularly the arts curriculum. *'I see clearly that the cross-curricular dimension in Art has enhanced pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy'.* The school is keen to see pupils using and applying their core skills in other subjects.

Role-play is used 'when the language isn't working'. *'It's not something that we do every day; it's a strategy for targeting underachievement in a school where oracy is an issue'.* For example, in a recent literacy lesson, the quality of writing was disappointing. The theme was about the escape of a boy from a concentration camp. The Black Caribbean boy who played the 'escapee' had to assess the chances for escape and returned saying 'I need a diversion'. The class then devised a scenario where half the class had to divert the attention of the rest while one boy 'escaped'. Overall, the quality of the stories produced and the language used was significantly better.

That strong focus on pedagogy is routinely discussed in the staff room, which has been refurbished to provide a bright positive environment for all staff to enjoy. As the exchange of ideas takes place between teachers, teaching assistants and mentors on less formal basis, so the Allen Edwards discourse is enhanced. Teachers and teaching assistants are encouraged to share their strategies and the 'props' that fire children's imaginations. The use of a Story Box made by a year 2 teacher to enliven a creative writing session, is 'borrowed' by a year 6 teacher and so year 6 pupils in groups made Story Boxes for year 2 pupils. The year 6 teacher recalled that the most powerful learning was in the conversations, the arguments that arose from discussions about the skills required for collaboration. This was then used as a focus for an assembly on listening and working together.

A striking feature of Allen Edwards School is the diversity of the school workforce. Teaching assistants are actively recruited from the local community. The school invests increasingly in the continuing professional development (CPD) of this group of staff, who provide stability and continuity at a time of high teacher turnover and mobility. Their loyalty to the neighbourhood and its community is a real asset. Most are also parents of children in the school. *'There is a good division of labour and expertise between us and the teachers. The parents that work in this school provide a strong understanding of racism and its impact on pupils and their parents. I see myself as key in boosting pupils' self-esteem and in providing at school the love their parents would instil if they were present. We get to know each individual child and you learn how to get the best out of them, which not all the teachers do. Stories about their lives come through in our 1:1 sessions; this helps to build trust. You make allowances because you know more about them and why they behave like they do. When a year 4 pupils says to me 'If my mum is not interested, so why should I do…'. I see my role as the school in saying 'We're interested'. The headteacher creates this environment through the professionalism and team-working ethos of this school'* (teaching assistant).

New relationships are emerging and challenging old roles and assumptions about CPD. Feedback, dissemination, planning and progression to teaching assistants are part of the new challenge for classroom teachers as well as the headteacher to manage. The headteacher is of the view that the style of teaching pupils receive is as important as the groups. She is not convinced that formal teaching styles necessarily work for boys in Key Stage 2, who may require a more nurturing approach. The deployment of teaching assistants to complement and broaden range of engagement for pupils is critical.

Teaching assistants are not only encouraged to attend external courses but also receive training from subject coordinators within school, through workshop sessions. A number of teaching assistants at the school have attended the Specialist Teacher Assistant training which is run by a local agency. This requires one day a week training every fortnight and the school gives them the same day on alternate weeks to plan and prepare for the training. This is a significant investment in allowing teaching assistants to 'own the resources and the concepts'.

Behaviour management is central to the standards agenda. *'There is a growing confidence in the school about raising the attainment of underachieving groups and on the contribution positive behaviour management strategies make'* (headteacher). High expectations of good behaviour characterise the entire school community, which the headteacher believes are articulated and shared at all levels. *'Pupils have a good understanding of the impact of their behaviour on others'.* Pupils are encouraged to stay focussed on their work and to strive to do well. *'In many lessons pupils put a great deal of effort into achieving the best results they can and even the youngest pupils are able to work independently'* (headteacher). Or, as one of the teaching assistants observed, *'This is a caring staff who demonstrate that it's fun to work so when pupils muck about, I say 'Why are you messing around, when we're having a good time?''*

This approach is also adopted by the learning mentors who focus their work with boys at risk of underachieving not on their ethnicity but on their masculinity through play and games, not through explicit counselling.

Teachers use Circle Time to explore emotions and anxieties and invite recommendations and solutions. *'Our use of language in this school is key. We stress cooperating, collaboration all the time – ritualised like a call and response, which is very powerful. We use glove puppets as part of our positive discipline strategies and I say 'Do you need to talk to anyone else about your work? No, because the work is about you''.*

'Some children live as if there's a war on. You kept me out of a lot of trouble is what children, especially boys who have left the school say to me when we meet on the street, and what I did is that I helped them to 'sort it' and having backed them up in this way, you're part of their behaviour management strategy. You build up a memory in them of being supported. I use my best parental instincts' (teaching assistant).

This strong sense of purpose is evident throughout the school. Nursery staff describe the purpose of home visits as not just part of the induction but also to confirm the readiness of pupils, so that staff can target their energies on ensuring that all children have the same play experience before they leave the foundation stage. There is an equally strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy, science and other aspects of the curriculum. The nursery takes an active part in Black History Month. This year the focus was on the production of a batik based on the Anansi Stories.

Parents notice and appreciate the hardworking ethos of the school. *'This school places its efforts on the acquisition and fluency of language for children. They give and get good attention here. The school is quick to identify, understand and alert parents about any concerns about skills or behaviour. I feel well informed about progress. I see staff striving to raise standards which makes parents work harder too'* (parent). *'There is a strong commitment to sharing aims and objectives with parents and pupils, for example with the SATs. We maintain an Open Door Policy and we talk to parents about why Level 4 is important'* (teacher).

The school benefits from the collective wisdom and experience of its staff as it tries to manage the frontiers of poverty, negative parenting and peer group pressures, which teaching assistants observe the impact of, both in school and out. *'One year 3 boy has all the signs of going down the troublesome road. He is given the benefit of the doubt in the playground but it is almost as if he is too bright for his own good, too lazy for his own good. He has the capability to go all the way but he won't get to 16 in my view. Attitudes, home background, plays out with older children but shouldn't. It's almost as if he needs a personal mentor to reach adulthood'* (teaching assistant). *'Countering or compensating for what is perceived as negative parenting is a difficult frontier for schools to confront but this is a factor when considering how to motivate and build pupils' self esteem when this is not happening at home'* (headteacher). There are of course boundaries to be maintained between the role of the school and the responsibility of parents. It is not an easy course to follow.

Why do Black Caribbean pupils do well in this school?

'The quality of the leadership and planning by the headteacher, the diversity, the values based recruitment, which leads to high quality of teaching and support staff. Rewards and sanctions are clear. Two ticks against your name and you are sent into the parallel class. Three times and your parents are called. Instant rewards for good behaviour and achievement. The school tries really hard for every child' (teacher).

'In this school we're treated all the same, equally valued' (year 6 pupil).

'Since the inspection the relationships have become even stronger. This school celebrates staff as well as pupils. There is a strong focus on inspiration' (teacher).

In a glass panel in the entrance hall, there is a paper mache replica of the World Cup awarded to the headteacher by a group of pupils in Summer 2002 'for managing a great team.'

B. Clapham Manor School

Clapham Manor Primary School is situated in Clapham Town Ward. The school is a popular one and its roll has steadily increased. In 2002, there were 433 pupils on roll. Proportions of Caribbean pupils in year cohorts vary but in 2002 they were the second largest in the year 6 cohort. Thirty-eight percent of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Ninety pupils are on school action for special educational needs and 30 are on school action plus. A number of pupils in year 5 leave the school to attend independent schools and this contributes to a rise in levels of mobility.

At Key Stage 2 in 2002, 67% of Black Caribbean pupils attained level 4+ for English, maths and science on average, in line with the Lambeth average. In English and maths, 55% achieved level 4+ and in science 91% attained level 4+.

Interviews were held with the Chair of Governors, the headteacher, members of the Senior Management Team, teaching assistants, pupils from a range of ethnic backgrounds, parent governors and parents from a range of ethnic backgrounds.

The critical factors and strategies in raising Caribbean pupils' achievement were explored in discussions with staff, governors and parents. Pupils were asked to reflect on key influences in their development whilst at the school. The following is a mixture of quotations from the discussions and commentary.

'High expectations of all in the school community are at the core of what we need to be as a school. There has to be a belief that all pupils can achieve if they are given the right circumstances. Everything I do is related to the notion of high expectations as a reality, whether in the improvements to the building, developments in the quality teaching, or seeking consistency of display. I don't think we should ever settle for less. Ultimately I am responsible for everything. I have been here for almost twenty years and still I realise there is loads to do' (headteacher).

'We always have to aim for the top in all we do. High quality teaching is important, very important. I see my job along with the senior team as ensuring that class teachers get the support they need. One of the key jobs of a Head is to get the resources the school needs. We have done that. We have floating teachers who can be deployed to meet identified needs. They all have specific tasks to undertake aimed at raising achievement' (headteacher).

'I suppose my vision/approach might be summarised by the words 'high expectation', 'mutual responsibility and respect', 'being kind and assertive', and trying to be 'empathetic'' (headteacher).

'Pupil responsibility is very important. The School Council is part of that process. I always try hard to respond to the issues they raise as quickly as I can. I try to make it clear what can be done immediately and what will take a little longer. Above all I want the children to realise what they say is taken seriously' (headteacher).

The ethos of the school is explicit in the consistency of displays and in the messages such displays convey. On every corridor, the school community is reminded of the importance of mutual respect. Posters affirm commitments to 'Excellence knows no gender', *'We all smile in the same language', 'We are all one family under the same sky'*. There are pictures of Black people in different roles. Parents thought that some of these were particularly important as they featured local people whom the children might know. The parents were appreciative that the pictures affirmed a range of roles and were not confined to sports and the media industry. Outside each classroom there is a photographic display of each class all framed in stars. No one is left in doubt about the importance of every individual or the diversity of the school community. This approach is consistently developed across the school and guidance in implementing it is given to staff. A thoughtful and well-organised photographic display in the entrance corridor identifies the languages other than English which children understand, speak, read or write to some degree. Parents felt this really made a very public statement of the school's values.

Pupils are clearly appreciative of the school, its staff and its facilities. They thought the leadership of a headteacher was very important. *'The headteacher is very thoughtful'*, said one pupil. *'He is very precise*

on things but stubborn on targets. He said he wanted to improve results and he brought in more teachers and equipment'. Another said *'He doesn't skip on people. He likes everyone. He has an all seeing eye. He never says anything bad and he never embarrasses you in front of other people'*. Another commented *'He tries very hard to make the school a better place. We have new toilets and orange juice in the dining room. We wanted swings in the playground so he arranged to have swinging tyres put up. We thought the paintwork in Kings Square needed doing and he did it. He always keeps his promises'*.

Parents too were appreciative of the school's efforts to guide their children and give them a grounding, both academically and socially. They felt that each child was valued in his or her own terms and although children might perceive differences in standards between them the school encouraged them to their best for themselves. *'No child is held in higher regard with comparisons made one to another. Each child is recognised as an individual. The key is confidence'* said one. Another commented *'The school offers a nurturing, caring environment. Children are not singled out as better but yet are told they can achieve no matter what the level'*.

Black Caribbean achievement varies across different year cohorts. Data is used to establish year on year what progress individuals are making. Class teachers at the beginning of each year are asked to provide a profile of their class in terms of ethnicity, gender, free school meals and attainment as a way of setting the scene for target setting for the next academic year. Senior staff are involved in monitoring the progress of individuals and groups. They are well supported in this by administrators in the school office. Not only is information on class groups readily available but also information by ethnicity, gender, and free school meals for a year or key stage. Ways of using this information to underpin the longitudinal monitoring the school undertakes are being developed.

'Data is important and we are very well served by the LEA in that regard. We are able to review the results across the school. It raises our awareness, keeps us on the ball and helps define the priorities. For the last two years we have used mathematics data to group pupils across years 5 & 6 in sets for the spring term. The aim being to increase the opportunities of pupils to get higher levels. Many have done so'. A number of Black pupils in year 6, when discussing how the school had raised their self confidence, cited this opportunity in particular as being a signifier to them that they had potential to develop. Another issue arising from data analysis related to reading, as the deputy explained; *'We had focused on writing but were worried about boys' standards in reading. We decided to be pro-active. The English co-ordinator researched appropriate texts for each class, particularly non-fiction, that we purchased'*. Monitoring of pupil progress is seen as a core activity for class teachers supported and helped by the SENCO, EMAG co-ordinator and managers of the key stages. The governing body is involved through the curriculum sub committee, which receives reports on the outcomes of classroom observations.

'Staff need time to plan. We have non-contact time but it is very carefully organised'. Time is timetabled as personal planning time and specified time. The latter is allocated in order to facilitate the development and delivery of key roles. For instance, time is given to the key stage co-ordinators in literacy, numeracy or science to undertake joint monitoring. The school has well-structured systems for monitoring of teaching and learning.

Staffing is important. *'A team that has different strengths that complement each other is essential. We have an experienced long serving team that seeks to be fair in all their dealings with pupils, parents and other staff. A team that has the attributes of fun, directness, scariness (at times), starters and finishers but all committed to get the best for all our children'* (headteacher).

Teaching assistants certainly considered themselves to be part of a team and one that cared about all members of its school community. They felt the school had an openness of practice and a positive and caring ethos. Regular staff meetings of support staff gave opportunities to air views and discuss professional practice. They were alert to individual and group needs. *'People sometimes can't understand why I so often come out of school with a smile on my face. It is a smile of satisfaction with what I am involved in doing and the progress I see children making'*. They thought that the ethos of the school helps all pupils and is also responsive to the needs of Black Caribbean pupils. The elements of ethos they identified as embedded in this school's practice involved time for listening to and affirming individuals; recognising the importance of mutual respect; understanding that praise and reward are important; that teaching and learning needs careful structure. One gave the example of a very young pupil who was clearly dying for 'an hullo'. The teacher gave the pupil such recognition and it raised his level of

concentration and engagement for the rest of the lesson. *'Sometimes if I think a pupil I support is a bit down I say 'you don't sound very happy' and I then try to find time to listen to their response and give them some adult time'*. These staff recognised the importance of partnership with parents but also emphasised that the realities of life for some were very hard indeed. As one said *'Non attendance at school events shouldn't be read as non-interest on the part of those parents'*. The consequence for the school was to broaden the network of support for such parents and increase involvement. This they thought the school was trying to do.

'Role models are important but not always easy to find. We have male and female teachers but no Black male teacher across the staff as a whole, though we do have a Black male teaching assistant as well as Black female teaching assistants. They are all part of the team and are valued as such' (headteacher).

'We need more young people from different ethnic groups to see teaching as a worthwhile career. Young people who can really make a difference in the classroom and the wider school' (headteacher).

Parents too were clear on the importance of trying to attract more Black people into teaching, especially Black men. Parent-governors pointed out that efforts had been made at the school but with little success to date. One said *'We are not complacent about this issue but frankly it is very difficult to attract male teachers into primary schools'*. In a discussion that ensued, it was clear that some Black parents felt more needed to be done to directly invite Black male parents into the school to work with and be alongside the children. *'Some Black men have had very negative school experiences and need to be encouraged and invited to cross the school threshold. If they are personally invited that might open the channels for them'*. The work two years ago of the Black male assistant was cited as an example of an effective intervention with a Black boy. This boy had really got himself into trouble in the school, but was helped to avoid permanent exclusion. One parent commented *'Although our children's class had been disrupted by the boy, most of us didn't want him to be excluded. We asked the head to arrange the extra support and this he did. We really believe it made a difference to that boy, avoided exclusion and gave him a chance to start secondary school with a clear record'*.

'Respect is very important if all children are to achieve but particularly so for Black Caribbean pupils. I think as a White person I need to think of the 'other' on the basis of my experiences which related more to class. I remember being told that I wouldn't ever be a teacher and I ought to look for another job. At college I was unceremoniously pulled out of a lesson following complaints about my accent. I draw on these experiences to try to hone my sense of empathy when considering the sense of exclusion some Caribbean parents feel in relation to the 'system'' (headteacher).

'We have to realise that people have personal battles, often great battles to cope with but even so there is always mutual responsibility. I think schools need to make explicit their high expectations and explain to parents and pupils why they do so. I know it is a niggle for some but I think school uniform plays an important function in this process. We insist on Black shoes, not a big issue but one that emphasises a shared responsibility in creating a consistency of appearance across the school. All part of a sense of belonging' (headteacher).

'Clearly I want the parents of all 430 plus pupils to feel we value and care for their children. I try to explain that explicitly when I meet parents every Monday morning. I tell them in looking for a school, go by their gut feeling of what it stands for, then look at the OFSTED report and then the results. When pupils have been allocated a place I meet children and parents to discuss mutual responsibilities. I try to make it clear that the school stands for fairness and high expectation for all' (headteacher).

Parents appreciated the work of all staff in the school. They recognised the value of the focussed small groups that children across the ability range can have access to. As one parent reported, *'In the case of my child she needed special needs support which she got. The special needs staff really supported her. They built up her confidence. They helped to enjoy learning. They made it fun.'* Another commented *'The staff know the children and don't allow them to slip. The reports we get on our children are very detailed. They really know our children'*. Those who had worked as volunteers in the school felt that each class was a small community. *'I really enjoy going out with classes on trips and to see their spirit of camaraderie. It was lovely to hear them singing'*.

'In any classroom all pupils need to be engaged. The atmosphere needs to be purposeful. Everyone needs to be clear what he or she is doing and to know what he or she is trying to learn. At the moment we are thinking very carefully about replacement furniture and what that can do to enhance different styles of learning' (headteacher).

Pupils saw teaching style and approaches as important. One commented *'I like how the teachers teach us. They listen to you and help you to learn more'*. Others elaborated on this. *'They are patient in explaining things. They let you learn at your own pace'*. *'They don't force you to give answers. They ask you if you know and if you don't they give you hints to help you'*. *'They treat you with manners and do a lot of listening'*. *'On balance all our teachers are special. They are all different. They have different styles but they are all equal. I like coming to school. It makes me feel at home'*. As a group, the pupils all said they looked forward to coming to school. They felt they made progress year on year and that the school was giving them the confidence to cope with being in year 7.

'I think it is important for schools to signal explicitly that Black culture is appreciated and valued. Every two years we are making an effort to do that explicitly by having every class undertake drama, story dance and musical activities. Last year we did this and the children presented their work at a parents' open evening which ended with food and music. We need to do this in order to show its importance to all parents and to reaffirm the value of heritage' (headteacher).

Pupils felt the school had helped them to grow in self-confidence. One boy said *'The sharing assemblies that we have have really helped me to speak up in public. I remember how worried I was when I had to do it but doing it has built my confidence'*. Assemblies, PSHE and RE were seen as important in helping to learn about people's backgrounds and to appreciate different points of view. One girl said *'I am a Christian but I want to know something of what other people believe so that I can understand them better. The school helps me to do that'*. Another commented *'I didn't know anything about Buddhism but I do know something now. The school really tries hard to broaden our horizons'*.

The school is involved in developing a new history unit on Britain post 1948. Children have interviewed residents and some have begun to study the impact of the Windrush. The school is keen to develop local history starting points that would help pupils develop a better sense of the impact of local, national, world events in their own histories and that of their locality.

Extra curricular activities such as drama, drum choir, guitar lessons and the orchestra were all activities the children were involved in. Some attended an after school homework club. The yearly Sports Day was seen as an important event as was the bi-annual residential trip to Wales.

They were secure in discussing their own backgrounds and identities. *'I am Black British'* said one *'but a big part of me is also Black Caribbean with links to Jamaica'*. Another said *'The roots of my family are Black African but I have grown up here'*, *'I was born in England but have lived for a long time in New Zealand so that is important for me'*. *'My identity is influenced by the time I spend in America every year'*.

'Colour is not an issue in this school' said one Black parent. *'I have always taught my children to realise there is good and bad in all groups. We mix with a range of families – White and Black. I have tried to teach them to see the person not the colour. I realise the issue is always going to be there when they are outside school but I tell them go for your potential'*. Another Black parent put greater emphasis on the issue of colour and its potential impact on pupils. *'I remember being the only Black girl at a Grammar School, being the only Black person in a neighborhood. I realise as a woman of colour I will never be accepted as an Englishwoman. I tell my children to never forget that. They have to work extra hard. It is important for the child to know that. After eleven when children pass to secondary that is when the pain comes in growing up. They move from a nurturing primary into a big secondary. Thank goodness in my case they have the armour of Clapham Manor to deal with it. They need to be prepared for the system and know how it stays. At my son's independent secondary school he has had to cope with serious name calling on the sports field and I have had to correspond about hair style so that he isn't singled out'*.

C. Elm Wood School

Elm Wood is a one-form entry primary school with a nursery in the West Norwood area of Lambeth. Most of the children live locally and come from a range of ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. Seventy percent of pupils are of Black Caribbean heritage. White pupils are the next largest group. Thirty-six percent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is twice the national average. There is a high rate of mobility, which at times has reached 13%. The school is located on a relatively small site. It has managed to purchase a plot of land adjacent to the school that it is hoping to develop as an outdoor games area. The issue of secondary transfer is an issue particularly for boys as there is no maintained boys' school in their area of the borough.

The outcome of national tests at Key Stage 1 in 2002 was 80% at level 2B+ for Black Caribbean pupils in writing, reading and maths. Performance in Key Stage 2 tests has improved overall year on year from 1999. In 2002, 50% of Black Caribbean pupils attained level 4+ in English, and 75% attained level 4+ in maths and 100% science, well above national averages. Overall, the gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and those not eligible is much narrower than in the LEA generally.

The school interrogates its data on performance rigorously. 2002 results have been carefully reviewed in relation to the performance of individuals and groups. They show that an apparent drop in the number of level 2B+ for boys masks actual progress made, based on levels of attainment on entry to the school. No boy attained less than a level 2C. This care in the analysis of performance directly influences teaching and learning in classrooms. Each class teacher analyses progress made for individuals in literacy and numeracy. The implications of this analysis for additional in-class support are discussed at staff meetings and with the senior team. Target sheets are completed for literacy and numeracy and the associated curricular activities are clearly outlined for groups and individuals. This means that the staff are not just working with percentage targets but are able to translate them into learning objectives which can be explained to the pupils.

The Chair of Governors thought that the size of the school was important in helping the staff to acquire detailed knowledge of individual needs. *'The stability in the staff has also helped. We now have a team who really works well together. Their assessment strategies are thought out, manageable and their approach is focussed and helpful to individual. I think the success of children in this school, and particularly Black Caribbean pupils lies in the care of the individual and the systems put in place to make that possible. Many schools aren't small like ours and also don't have the role models on the staff that we have'.*

'Our aim is to let the children into the 'secrets' of the curriculum process. We try to be as explicit as we can about teaching and learning objectives. We want the children to know why and what it is we are trying to achieve in lessons. This also goes for the social and personal rules of behaviour. We talk a lot about learning teams and what that means for the way in which we all work together' (headteacher).

The children are certainly enthusiastic learners. Year 3 pupils spoke at length about stories they had really enjoyed; Peace at Last proved to be a particular favourite. Older children studying the Victorians had clearly enjoyed leaning about Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale. These pupils demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of the complexities of identity personally and in relation to others. One said *'You don't have to be White to be English. There are White and Black Jamaicans so there can be White and Black English'.* In a discussion on the history of Black people in Lambeth, they emphasised the importance of dating settlement in the locality. One boy said *'My Dad lives near where Francis Barber lived in Streatham and I am definitely going to look for the site. I had no idea Black people were in Lambeth so long ago'.*

They were all in no doubt about how motivated they were by what the school calls 'the privilege hour', which is time to reward good behaviour and consistent work. One said *'It gives me time to really develop my art'.* Another *'I love to go and tell stories to reception children'.* This sense of cooperation and sharing between year groups is consolidated in buddy reading pairs and peer reading support. The children spoke appreciatively of the support teachers and assistants give them. *'They really care about us and want us to do the best we can'. 'They help you to feel good about yourself. Our teacher always tells us 'If you think positively about yourself you act and learn positive'. 'I really believe that works for me'* said one

boy. Another said *'I like the way they take time to explain things with patience. If you do something wrong they always give you another chance and you start fresh'.* One boy reflected *'There would be no school without teachers. They expect you to try here even if you get it wrong'.*

Pupils valued their class assemblies. One such assembly observed during the visit involving year 2 pupils was impressive. The children's concentration and determination to give of their best was palpable. In the process the rest of the school and the many parents there affirmed them. This was an occasion when self-confidence was being built.

Teachers were clear that mutual respect, self confidence, self discipline and self motivation were the essentials, underpinning the achievement of any child but particularly Black Caribbean pupils. *'No two children are alike. What we have to strive to do is to build that self-confidence and self-motivation for all of them in a structured and consistent way. If we challenge ourselves and remember we need to be learners then they will challenge themselves and become better learners. We need children to understand that they are all important. Each day is a new opportunity to motivate them'.* Another said *'Listening to children is so important. And not making assumptions about them. We have to have high expectations and help them realise they can achieve'.* Staff were alert to the importance of affirming individuals, alert to differences yet with a notion that all pupils are equal. As an early years teacher put it *'I encourage them to talk through differences that emerge when they are painting self-portraits in art. I work with them one to one in mixing colours and talk about whether the colour mix they are using needs to be lighter or darker. I try to emphasise no-one is better than another, just different'.*

Staff felt one of the biggest challenges facing Black Caribbean boys in particular is the impact of transfer to secondary school. *'It is so important they leave us with the self-confidence to sustain them in the secondary years. More needs to be done to keep their channels of communication open to us. Why can't former pupils use our school as a homework centre given so many are travelling so far to schools? It would mean that extra support is available to them'* said one. Another recalled a male relative who had really done well at primary school. *'He was tall for his age but when he went to secondary school it was as if the male secondary teachers saw him as a challenger they had to defeat. He felt he was always being picked on needlessly and nobody in the school was prepared to support him. He steadily went downhill and did not get back on track. We need to stop that from happening.'*

Staff saw parental contacts as crucial in raising achievement. One put it like this: *'I was always told it was important to know your community but it was only when I started talking to parents of different backgrounds that I really appreciated what it meant for my practice. I needed to be broader in my thinking. I realised I wasn't the fount of knowledge but I was a learner. Learning about how other people perceived their world and what it meant for their children. Hearing people talk about their own experiences really affected me, their family links, their accents and their interests'.* Another said *'Parental involvement is vital. I try to make sure parents understand what class work we are doing and how they can be involved. Little bits of homework help whether it is letters to learn, finding shapes around the house or reading something from a book'.* The school takes care to ensure that the times given for parents' evenings are flexible and convenient. Daytime appointments are offered as well as times in the evening. One Black parent felt the school offered consistent and unconditional support to her in helping her to motivate her sons. *'My mother was on her own with my brother. The school wasn't interested and my Mom just got worn down. One of my sons is very bright but sometimes very troublesome. Here the school is supportive and helpful. I can always go to the headteacher even if he is in the wrong. She gives her all to sort things out. The headteacher and staff are bothered about him. They don't turn away. They are prepared to give me time to discuss strategies that work to improve his behaviour and develop his potential. I really value that. It is about time others stretched their necks out to help Black kids and help avoid the slide'.*

Staff and pupils in this school put a great deal of emphasis on being learners. One teacher remarked how she was watching an episode of West Wing, which featured a story about the Peterson map projection of the world. She was absolutely bowled over by the implications of the map for geography in school and immediately set about getting copies for the school. *'The fact that things aren't always as I thought they were really hit me. It made me think much more deeply about curriculum content. I also happened to see an article in the Guardian on Violette Szabo an agent in France in the Second World War and realised that one of the housing blocks in our area was named after her. That really got me thinking about how we could help pupils to explore such issues through a local history unit. I now try to think through the issue of relevance as a trigger for learning. In our project on the Victorians I want the children*

to think about the implication of having only one pair of clothes to wear so that they think about that in relation to their own experience'. Another staff member recalled the impact on family thinking that a history homework assignment from her daughter's school had had. *'They encouraged her to find out what links she had with Jamaica. It really got us all going and made us realise how important it was to talk to older relatives about the past and their memories. I have remembered that for my own work in school'.*

The Norwood Achievement Partnership has certainly made a difference for individual pupils. One of its activities was to pair together primary and secondary pupils to work on a history project. One girl who had come to the school in year five from Jamaica was paired with a year 10 girl who had also been educated in Jamaica. They worked together on an oral history project on the Second World War. The opportunity to work together was recalled positively by the younger pupil. *'Meeting someone else who also had been to school in Kingston was really helpful. We had a lot to talk about. Working with an older girl helped me find the confidence to interview the older local residents and learn something of what happened to them'.* These initiatives obviously take time to organise but appear to make a real difference for the individuals involved.

D. Granton Primary School

The school is located in the Streatham South ward of Lambeth and serves an area of relatively high socio-economic disadvantage. The majority of pupils are of minority ethnic backgrounds with Black Caribbean pupils being the largest minority ethnic group in the school at 25%. Fourteen percent are of Black dual heritage. In addition, 44% of pupils in the school are eligible for free school meals. The school is experiencing high levels of pupil mobility, up to 20% in the last academic year. This is in part accounted for by families attending the school while living in housing association properties. One of the major challenges facing families in this part of Lambeth is the transfer of pupils to secondary schools. The school reports it spends a lot of time advising and helping pupils and their families with this issue. The school has become two-form entry since 1998, following an extensive building programme. It is a popular school and is over subscribed. The school has a nursery.

In 2002 national tests at Key stage 1, Caribbean pupils (the second largest group in the cohort) achieved above the national average by 1% in level 2B+. In reading, 92% achieved level 2B+, 23% above the national average. Attainment in writing was lower at 67%, but still 3% above the national average. In maths, 50% attained level 2B+, some 28% below the national average. In the school's overall results, girls performed better than boys in all areas. At Key Stage 2 in 2002, Black Caribbean pupils were the joint largest group in the cohort. Their average was 93% at level 4+, significantly higher than the national average. In English, 80% achieved level 4+ and in maths and science 100% attained level 4+.

The school is not complacent about raising achievement. A dip in the SAT results in 1999 led to root and branch restructuring of curriculum organisation in year 5 and year 6 in the way literacy and numeracy were taught. It is called a three way split and involves three members of staff working with a class organized into three small groups each working in rotation with the specialist teacher for numeracy, literacy and ILS. The results of this initiative have been carefully monitored. The schools' results outlined above indicate a much-improved situation from 1999.

The school sees monitoring and tracking of pupil performance as a crucial underpinning to its efforts to help all pupils achieve their potential. A computerised assessment system, praised by OFSTED, is used to consider trends and patterns in individual and group performance. Gender is used as an initial variable in any analysis and is then interrelated with ethnic groupings in the cohort or class. *'We go where the data takes us and try to be fair to all communities'.* The school was able to provide evidence from its monitoring of a consistent dip in the performance of Black Caribbean boys as they come out of year 3. This is the basis for specific support in year 4 by senior staff, class teachers and classroom assistants.

The way in which pupils are helped to raise their achievement on the basis of this information is seen as crucial. Careful talking that affirms strengths and considers jointly ways forward is the priority. *'Our approach is to be open and honest about a child's potential to develop. Sometimes they don't believe that and we have to be blunt about it. We always try to approach the individual supportively and carefully'. 'We don't wait till the end of the year to tell parents about progress but involve them along the way'.*

At the core of the school's endeavour is a group of very experienced long serving staff working as teachers and support assistants. They work hard together with pupils and parents to establish a belief in the Granton family. Pupils in year 6 commented that they were proud to attend the school. *'It is a place where people are made welcome, where we are introduced to different cultures, where we actually learn to cooperate with each other'.* They were in no doubt that the leadership of the headteacher was crucial to establishing and maintaining this ethos. *'Our head gives us time and encouragement, makes us feel we belong'.* This priority is in their view shared by the staff. *'They are always prepared to give us time. We know they are from the way they say it and do it'.* One girl recalled the time her teacher had taken time to explain a difficult concept in maths and encouraged other children to help. *'He kept explaining it in different ways until he knew I was confident to go on on my own'.* The perception gathered from staff and pupils is of a school committed fully to the development of the whole child, but also very aware of the challenges, both academic and social, of a wider society.

The school has articulated its aims clearly and succinctly:

> In the time your child is with us we would hope to develop these values:
> **respect** – for themselves, others and their environment;
> **care and consideration** – for others irrespective of race, class or sex;
> **awareness** – of the environment and in particular the local community in which we live;
> **independence** – to develop the ability to think for themselves, to learn through discovery, and to enrich their creativity.

The school is committed to 'unity in diversity'. Assemblies linked with the recent development of an explicit programme of PSE modelled on the American 'Second Step' scheme have been combined with specific and focussed attention through story to the issues of prejudice and racism in the wider society. Respect for self and others are seen as the key dynamic for 'the Granton family'.

The environment of the school is important in symbolising a commitment to diversity. One teacher commented *'The resources you use talk to the children. They say something to them about whether you know they are there. We need to engage their interest. Black Caribbean boys in particular must be given hope. They must be able to see images of Black men achieving and not just in sport'.* One teacher, after a holiday in Nigeria, selected a number of photos to enlarge as a stimulus for pupils' reflection and discussion. Displays in general are very well organised and relevant in helping to develop an awareness of the diversity within the school population and the wider world. In the main corridor, the titles and content of displays such as *Wisdom around the world; Do you know any of these languages? Have you heard any other words of wisdom?* provide a rich field for individual reflection and awareness raising.

The school is ethnically diverse, but it doesn't see difference as something to shy away. Rather, as something to understand and appreciate. The group of year 6 pupils had a range and diversity of family backgrounds that the current census categories do not adequately represent. They were secure in their understanding of their nationality as British and how their family backgrounds influenced the way in which they defined themselves. One pupil said *'I always want the St Vincent part of me from my parents and Grandparents to be part of my identity and the way I see myself'.* Another commented *'My identity is complex made up of my living here and from my Mum who is from Jamaica and my Dad from Mauritius'.* Poems these pupils wrote on relationships and significant locations indicate they are secure in their own identities and have a deep commitment to valuing and respecting others. They reported that the poems of Benjamin Zephaniah, which teachers have encouraged them to read, have been over the years a source of inspiration and delight.

The school participates in Black History month and has a good range of background material on Black people in the UK and in other parts of the world. Careful thought is being given to ways in which pupils can reflect on the connections over time people from all over the world have had with their borough and neighbouring boroughs. For instance, Black people like Francis Barber who lived in Streatham in the

18th century, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor who lived in Croydon and John Archer who lived in Battersea in the early years of the twentieth century. The development of themes to help historical understanding like Histories in locality, exploring the stories of people over time who came to settle in this part of London, and Connections, the history of the Thames and its Port to look at peoples' local, national and the world links, are seen as ways forward. At its 11 November Remembrance Day assembly, the school includes references to the contribution of people from the Commonwealth in the First and Second World Wars, and they would like to develop materials on the impact of those events on civilian populations in Lambeth and the Commonwealth.

In the school there is a real sense of a vibrant learning community. The ethos is real and not just a reference to a paper policy in a file. There is an unconditionality in the relationships between staff and pupils, a sense of determination to serve all pupils that join 'the Granton family'. There are clear expectations of what is needed for each person to do their best whether this is a teacher, other staff member, pupil, parent or governor. Parents recognised the contribution all staff make to the educational process. *'Pupils are well supported by teaching assistants. They act as significant others, helping encouraging almost running alongside pupils and alert to their concerns and needs'.*

The environment of the school, its displays, and its cleanliness all make an impact on a visitor. The office staffs' welcome of visitors brings another aspect of the ethos to reality. Organisationally, the school has structures in place to flexibly deploy staff to meet identified needs. This is not done as a knee jerk response but after careful reflection, mindful that additional staffing resources are always lagging behind those identified needs, particularly as the roll increases.

Concern for the achievement of all is a reality. Dips in performance are not just matters for comment but for action and intervention within the resources the school has to deploy. Staff and parents recognise that pupil confidence is an essential ingredient for success for all pupils, but particularly for Black Caribbean boys. As one parent put it *'If confidence is taken away then their character is broken. The essence of who they are is lost. They shut down. If they are not listened to that saps their confidence. A young man without confidence and self-respect does not feel anything. This school is alert to that – to the need for respect and for confidence building'.*

The quality of the staff recruited is crucial. As one parent put it *'We have teachers who want to be here, teachers and staff who believe in real partnership. We want teachers who don't take anything away but come with attributes to enhance and help. We have those but it would be great if they could be joined by more male and Black teaching staff'.*

Clearly, the issues of racism and relationships in the wider community impact on the lives of all pupils. Parents recognised this as a live issue. They also felt it was essential that their children learnt about the ways people in the past and present have lived and worked together across different ethnic and racial groupings. As one parent put it *'Colour is an issue but is not the be all and end all. We need our children to avoid taking on narrow definitions of nationality and grouping, and to be given space to explore and live as citizens of the world. Girls are often more propelled to this. Boys need more stoking'.*

According to pupils and parents, these are the attributes staff need if they are to address the needs of Black Caribbean pupils, and indeed all pupils. It involves preparedness:

- to listen seriously to pupils, intervene and get behind them and their parents;
- to be learners themselves, to be open minded, and aware of cultural dynamics;
- to develop opportunities in the curriculum that help pupils to learn to empathise, risk take;
- to exploit opportunities to help pupils understand where they are and how they got there as part of cycle of ongoing movement;
- to help them 'walk the right way'

E. St Andrew's CE Primary School

St Andrew's is a one-form entry Church of England Primary school located in the vicinity of Stockwell Green. The school had 200 pupils in 2002. Of these, 39% are eligible for free school meals, 36% not fluent in English and mobility is as high as 13%.

The 2002 KS2 results of the school are impressive. Ninety-four percent of Black Caribbean pupils achieved level 4+. Also, 100% attained level 4+ in English; 92% level 4+ in maths and 92% level 4+ in science. They were the largest group in the cohort with 12 pupils. Overall performance in English, maths and science was above the national average.

The school was described in its Section 13 inspection of January 2001 as 'an oasis of learning for many pupils in this disadvantaged area of South London', which serves a school community 'largely made up of pupils from African or Caribbean backgrounds'. All the more satisfying, since the school only came off special measures in November 1998. The headteacher had been the acting headteacher during this difficult period (the school was in special measures for two years) and became the substantive postholder in September 1998[11]. *'Going to a school where teachers have low expectations of your children was depressing for parents and de-motivating for everyone. I was determined to change that'* (headteacher). Parents have responded very positively. *'The children are very confident. This is because they have good relationships with teachers and the Church. The school doesn't categorise children as 'no hopers', it doesn't write children off, it is very patient'* (parent).

'A major focus and strength of St Andrew's is the headteacher's focus on whole-school systems – evident in school improvement planning, monitoring and evaluation, tracking of children and the strong emphasis on teaching and learning' (Diocesan Officer). This arises from a belief that expectations should be as explicit as possible. Every team in the school has a set of aims and objectives, which are reviewed annually. For example, there are Codes of Conduct for lesson observations which all start with an explanation of the purpose of the activity followed by the key phrase: 'We at St Andrew's School…'. *'In many respects the implementation of such systems were the 'backbone' for raising standards and expectations. When planning teachers were asked to not only set half term curriculum aims and objectives, they were also asked to think about their classes/pupils 'holistically' and identify one or two non-curricular areas for development'* (headteacher).

The underpinning principles are the school's strong Christian faith and the headteacher's conviction, now shared by the staff, that low expectations of children's capacity to learn and achieve are 'ungodly'. Her practice has been to be systematic in putting in place an infrastructure to support and maintain high standards; and in building a strong multi-disciplinary staff team. *'Standards in teaching and learning were raised by the Senior Management Team being extremely rigorous in the implementation of monitoring systems set for key stage teams and individual teachers'* (headteacher). *'Over time the school has acquired the right calibre of teaching staff. Getting staff that would buy into the explicit culture and core values. When these are strong it is easier to see who doesn't fit in'* (Diocesan Officer). Governors supported this approach. *'We found additional monies to back the headteacher's conviction that increasing the number of adults in the school would make a difference'* (governor).

The school has worked hard to develop an ethos of 'praise and celebrate', which motivates parents as well as children. The school's values are embodied in the school motto 'Reaching for the stars' and reflected in the signage and displays both inside and outside the school. Parents regularly receive letters home from class teachers congratulating them on their children's achievement. The following extract gives a flavour of the tone: *'Dear Parent, I am now writing to let you know just how pleased we all are with… Your child is making a real effort to 'reach for the stars!… Keep up the good work!'* The vision of the school is re-visited and re-affirmed on a regular basis to avoid complacency and slippage. *'Empathy with Black Caribbean culture may fade unless it is addressed consciously. It is this attention to detail which has had a cumulative impact'* (governor).

For the headteacher, this emphasis on a school motto reflected the strong focus on embedding a vision and set of values for St Andrew's which were owned by teachers, parents, pupils, support staff, everyone. *'Again that was key in raising standards. It was crucial that the vision was manifest in every aspect of*

[11] A new headteacher has since been appointed to the school in September 2002. This interview took place with her predecessor.

the school. It helped to make the difference and is an important element in understanding the success of St Andrew's'.

At the entrance to the school hall is a large display with press cuttings from both British and Irish newspapers reporting the school's highly successful involvement in the joint British Council/CfBT Lambeth Education Action Zone (EAZ) funded 'East-West' School Programme. The Music, ICT and Citizenship Project, linking two London and two Dublin schools, was set up after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998. As part of the project, teachers received training on group compositions, using the music of Bartok as a starting point for work with children on percussion pieces and rap tunes. This is a clear example of the enriching power of the Arts curriculum, which is a key belief of the school and is one of the priorities of the local EAZ. In St Andrew's, it has proved a highly effective tool for raising the self-esteem of pupils and staff; and reinforced the school motto. *'Art has a great effect on the learning of the whole school. It gives children a chance to express themselves – less deskbound and more opportunities to shine. The children are making things happen for themselves through the Arts'* (newly qualified teacher). Regular press coverage, the opportunity to share the stage with professionals and opportunities for their work to be celebrated in high profile venues, such as the Royal Festival Hall, have given children higher expectations of their abilities and improved their engagement with the core subjects of the curriculum.

The school groups pupils by ability in sets, which boys in the school have found highly motivating. *'We make the sets explicit rather than hidden. It has to be handled well but we find it makes pupils more confident about their skills as a result of having a measure for themselves'* (headteacher).

The diversity of the school staff is a strength of St. Andrew's and includes a number of teachers and support assistants of Black Caribbean and African heritage, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher for a significant period in the school's recent development. *'Having Black teachers in the school was really important for the development of the school as a whole – strong confident practitioners who could walk the talk. Children have the belief that despite difficult backgrounds, they too could succeed'* (teacher). *'I see myself as a role model for the children to achieve their potential and to provide opportunities for them to achieve those goals'* (senior support assistant).

The school has actively pursued additional projects to support their work on removing the emotional and behavioural barriers that some children face in trying to access the curriculum at St Andrew's. The school works with a number of external agencies including: Spinnaker – a Christian education charity, which visits the school to help teach Religious Education in collaboration with classroom teachers; Peer Mediation run by Lambeth Mediation with year 5 and 6 pupils; the Kids Company.

The Schools Have Inclusive Education (Shine) Project is a particularly notable example. For the past two years, the school has been involved in the Shine Project funded by the Children's Society and sponsored by the Southwark Diocese. The Project funds a worker who is based part-time in a space, known throughout the school as the Shine Room. Year 5 pupils described it thus: *'Where you go when you have problems controlling your anger'. 'A room of toys to make you forget your troubles'. 'It helps us calm down, to talk about anger, a place where you don't get told off'*.

The Shine Project worker summarised her work as follows: *'The majority of the children I work with are of Black African or Caribbean heritage, mainly boys. Black Caribbean girls use friends. Often the boys referred to me are identified as in need of support, or have tense relationships with adults and their peer group, or have difficulties in respecting boundaries. The Project helps them to build cooperative relationships'.* Anger is a key issue for many of the children that the Shine Project works with in St Andrew's. *'Children are very aware of injustice, unfairness, difference of treatment and the whole win-lose scenario which destroys their confidence if they see these things un-tackled in the classroom. Teachers do not have the time to deal with pupils' trauma; they don't always have the time to use language that values children. It's the task of the headteacher to work with teachers on this aspect of their work. Together with the Special Needs Coordinator, the Senior Support Staff Team Leader, the headteacher sees me as part of the Pastoral Support Team of the school'.* In this way, the Shine Project has worked in partnership with St Andrew's based on a set of shared values and a concept of children's rights. The Project also works with parents and carers by giving advice on handling behaviour.

'The Shine Project has been key to my raising achievement strategy in this school. Children get one or two sessions on anger management through play therapies. It has helped us to work with those potential lost boys that every school has and shown them that they too are valued. It allows children to act as advocates of other children and that has been very powerful' (headteacher). Sadly, the Project was available to the school for a maximum of two years, ending last year. *'That has posed a serious management challenge to maintain the same level of consistency and impact using new partnerships'*, in the view of the headteacher.

All the various projects described above are testimony to the headteacher's strong belief that schools need to enlist the support of as many allies and other specialists in 'a partnership for learning'. But St Andrew's is also confident about growing its own initiatives. So mentoring, for example, was established in November 1999 for underachieving Black Caribbean boys in Key Stage 2, coordinated and developed by one of the EMTAG classroom assistants. Through a judicious programme of in-service training and the use of consultants, the school devised 'Programme Achieve', a planned PSHE programme differentiated for each year group, which teaches pupils the skills needed for emotional and social intelligence. Both staff and governors have undertaken training and the work is supported by one of the LEA's Senior Educational Psychologists. An ambitious plan, which the school was unable to sustain because of staff changes, but which nevertheless gives an idea of the innovative approach to raising standards adopted by the headteacher.

Every teacher is given non-contact time on Thursday or Friday, to address the key issues in their curriculum action plans, supported by a carousel of supply cover. This was linked to meeting the targets within the school's Education Development Plan and key curriculum areas. Children are expected to maintain their standards of behaviour, regardless of the status of the teacher. Parents are not wholly convinced of the impact of supply teachers but this is their only serious misgiving. *'My kids are getting on well, they are seen as individuals here and stretched. I know because they constantly compare what they do at St Andrew's by comparison with their former school in Mitcham. Mom we've got a Black headteacher, we didn't have that in Mitcham! I like getting early notification of the Praise and Celebrate assemblies so I can attend. Makes you as a parent feel pride in your children's achievement. My older twins are at secondary school now and they're still maintaining the expectations they learned at St Andrew's'* (parent).
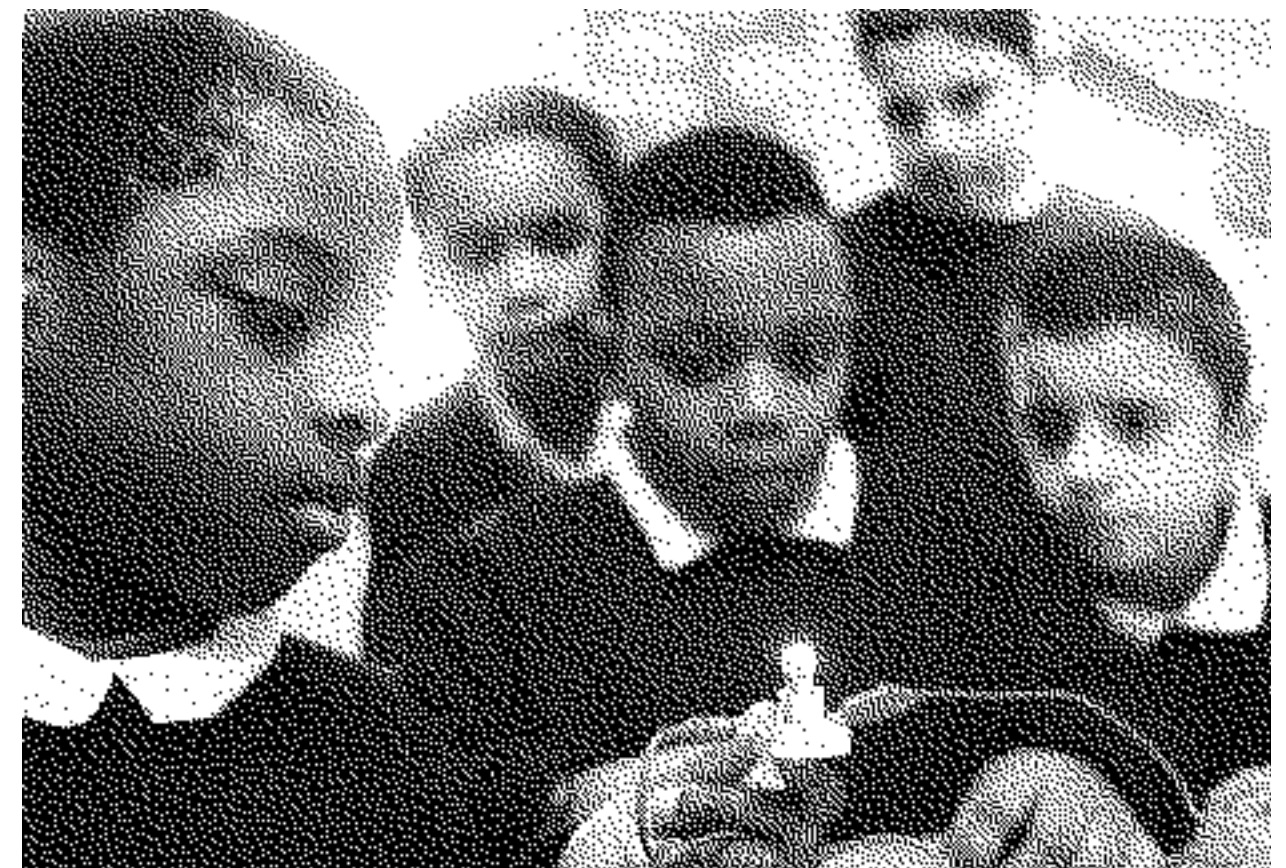
Clapham Manor

F. St Jude's C of E Primary School

St Jude's Church of England School serves part of the Brixton/Herne Hill area of Lambeth. Most pupils live in the immediate area of the school. The majority of pupils are of Black Caribbean heritage. There are smaller proportions of African and White pupils. There are high levels of pupil mobility in the area and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is double the national average. A core group of teaching and support staff, including the headteacher, have worked in the school for a number of years. They have as a result given the school some staffing stability in the face of considerable difficulties in the recruitment of teaching staff.

In 2002, 87% of Black Caribbean pupils achieved level 4+ in their SATs. This compares with a national figure of 78% and a Lambeth figure of 73%. Eighty-three percent attained level 4+ in English; 83% level 4+ in maths and 94% level 4+ in science. They were the largest group in the cohort with eighteen pupils. Black Caribbean pupils at Key Stage 1 in 2002 attained above the national average in reading and were at the national average in maths. Results in writing were higher, with 80% attaining level 2B+. Overall, girls outperformed boys in reading and maths, but the difference was most marked in writing. Overall, 78% of pupils at Key stage 1 attained level 2B+, which is above the national and LEA averages.

'I don't care where pupils start from. It is progress we want, however small. I want the children to look back over their time here and realise they have made some movement in what they have done. I want them to realise that it is not enough to have talents, you have to work to develop them. It is not a matter of talents rising to the top like cream. It takes nitty gritty grind. I don't want us to inhabit a comfort zone. I want us to really develop our potential. Every pupil is seen as important in the school whatever their background', commented the headteacher. *'I want all my pupils to see life as a challenge, not as a series of problems to defeat them. They have to be prepared if they face a difficulty to pick themselves up and dust themselves off and keep trying. That is the reality I want them to understand'.*

The pupils are proud of the school. They realise it is a special place that puts their needs as the first priority. As one year 6 boy said *'They put you to the test. They push you to your limit. I know that is right and I appreciate it'.* Pupils are encouraged to think responsibly. 'Golden rules' guide behaviour and expectation. These are not just paper edicts, but realistic frames of reference and are structured to help pupils and staff to work productively together. They read clearly:

- always be polite;
- be honest;
- always do the best you can;
- if you can't say something nice don't say anything at all;
- take care of your own and other people's belongings;
- keep your hands and your feet to yourself.

One year 6 pupil recalled a situation at the end of last year when his class rather 'let go' with a supply teacher. The Golden Rules helped the class to refocus with their permanent teacher and set agreed class targets of better attitudes, good role modelling, and personal commitment.

'Really good teachers don't judge you by your colour. They don't put you down by who you are' said one year 5 boy. *'They judge you by your efforts. I can look up to my teachers for that'.* Another said *'Our teacher in year 3 always kept saying how much she wanted to teach us again and now she does. She didn't have to say that. She always showed she really cared for us. She expects a lot of us. She always says 'Never give up, always try your best''.* Year 5 girls thought the school had good teachers who were 'explainers'. *'It is a brilliant school. A place where they don't take for granted where people come from. They bring them in and work with them. They encourage us to make friends with newcomers and the friendship bench in the playground helps to do that'.* Another year 5 girl commented *'Our teachers listen to us. They are not dozy. They are prepared to sort things out'.* One year 6 boy noted: *'At our school there is so much you can be involved in; the 198 Art club, homework classes, drama, football, swimming and lots more. It all helps with your education'.*

The group of year 6 pupils really appreciated the circle time they had as a class. It gave them, they thought, lots of opportunities to discuss likes and dislikes as well as to raise issues of real concern for class discussion. In considering issues of identity, they all thought the autobiography of Floella Benjamin was a real source of interest and relevance. Year 5 girls said they had spent quite a lot of time in year 4 discussing what the issues of belonging meant to them. In terms of personal definitions of identity, they all said they would start by defining themselves as English. As one girl said *'This is where I was born. I live here. I am used to the place'.* They all, in varying degrees, felt the Caribbean was part of them and their identity, whether that be St Lucia, St Vincent or Jamaica. One girl put it like this: *'My family is made of people from lots of countries. My grandparents came from Poland, Jamaica, Southern Ireland and England. They were all people who came from the countryside. They are all part of me. I think I am a country person at heart'.*

On the wall in the head's office is this quotation from Thessalonians: 'Look for the best in each other and always do the best to bring it out.' One member of staff reflected, *'This is a school with high expectations for all in its community. The head leads by example. She has high standards for herself and expects the same from everyone else. It is expectation and demand. You are never left to flounder, there is always some one looking out for you. I think that is what makes the place special'.*

This is a school that combines a search for high academic standards with a determination to offer pupils every opportunity to extend their horizons through curriculum activity, visits out of school, visitors to the school and through an extensive and very broad extra curricular programme (see appendix). Year 6 pupils commented that involvement in the steel pans from year 4 had made them appreciate their skills, musical abilities, capacity for memory and co-ordination *'and it's fun as well'.* The visit of author Lynn Reid Banks impressed them. *'She wasn't putting on an act. She was approachable. She brought stories to life'.*

Developments such as these are not accidental but carefully planned for and build on the school's curriculum. Every class has a detailed and comprehensive organizer and planner that outlines key policies, details of curriculum to be covered and frameworks for planning. Record keeping is scrupulously undertaken within an explicit timetable of assessment procedures. Results are carefully analysed for each individual, group and class. Analysis by ethnic group, gender and circumstance is routine and influences priorities for the deployment of teaching assistants and senior staff.

The wide range of external initiatives that the school is involved with is not seen as an administrative burden to be coped with, but an opportunity to meet needs meaningfully and comprehensively. Strategically, the deputy manages and co-ordinates these external initiatives under the umbrella of 'interventions'. The school has evolved excellent planning tools to establish priorities, which ensure effective implementation and use of such resources to meet identified needs in particular classes. There is coherence in the endeavour both in the planning and in its delivery.

Parents are seen as key partners in the endeavour. *'Every step of the way parents need to do their bit and the school tries to reinforce that. We work on the assumption that all parents want their children to do well. We don't apply a model willy-nilly but try to adopt strategies that flow from that principle. We try to develop strategies to sustain that'.* One of the practical implications of that approach is the timing of the assembly. This is held every morning at the start of the day. This gives parents who are at work a chance to drop in on their way to work and for special assemblies, and perhaps the opportunity to negotiate a later arrival *'We try to emphasise the need for flexibility in the way support is offered. Sometimes it makes more sense for a child to read to their parents in the morning before school rather than when everyone is frazzled at night. If an older cousin or sibling is collecting a relative from school we try to involve them in helping their relative in the reading process by hearing the spelling of high frequency words. We try to be proactive and pick up the slack'.*

The personal, social and spiritual dimensions of the curriculum are seen as crucial elements in building self-confidence and in helping pupils understand and work with each other. Bi-annually, all year 5 and 6 pupils spend eight days in a village in Devon on a residential visit, which gives them a chance to experience living together and being involved in that community. The school approaches charitable trusts to support this, but also asks for a small payment from parents on the basis that 'something paid is valued'. Pupils are helped to develop a sense of appropriateness in terms of behaviour, conversation and dress from the range of visits the school organises for them throughout the year. As the headteacher commented, *'We want our pupils to realise how good they are and be confident in all situations so that*

they can develop their potential'. A year 5 pupil who had visited the Royal Institution to hear a maths lecture had no doubt about how well she and her class had acquitted themselves. *'I was very surprised to see how immature some children from other schools could be in the way they behaved and listened. We weren't like that'.*

Underlying the school ethos is a commitment to value all members of the school community. Several pupils and staff recalled the impact of an international evening celebrating the theme of 'Our Heritage', which was held in autumn 2001. *'I wanted that evening'*, commented the head, *'to give us a sense of where we have all come from and at the same time to give us a direction of where we are going in terms of the knowledge of each other'.*

Teaching assistants spoke warmly and enthusiastically of their role in the school. *'We are seen as para-professionals in this school. We are involved in our own training programme which helps to work more effectively with the children and at the same time develop our own responsibilities and roles. The focus we had on reading strategies and handwriting has been excellent. It really means I know what I am doing'.* All staff are involved in building pupils' confidence and worth in the school community. Lunchtime supervisors, cleaners and the school caretaker can all award certificates for good behaviour. In addition, written invitations are given to the children who have behaved well to eat their lunch on a Friday at a special table which has a tablecloth, flowers and cutlery sets.

This school works hard through its systems and procedures to affirm pupils and to build their confidence. It offers a rich and varied range of experiences that are intended to broaden and deepen horizons. These are not random but arise from a systematic and clearly thought through approach by the headteacher and her staff. There is openness in relationships and a real sense of a value system and environment that promotes personal learning and respect for individuals.

St Saviour's

G. St Saviour's Church of England Primary School

St Saviour's Church of England primary school serves the urban area of Herne Hill and Camberwell in Lambeth. It is a popular church school where the pupil intake reflects the social and ethnic diversity of the community. The school has 204 pupils. Thirty-six percent of pupils are Black Caribbean, with ESW pupils at 30.4%, the next largest group. Just over 20% percent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average. Inward mobility is 0.7%, having fluctuated between 11% and 5% in the past.

In the 2002 national tests at Key Stage 1, 70% of Black Caribbean pupils achieved level 2B+ for writing, reading and maths, with 100% of those pupils achieving level 2B+ in reading. These results compare with a Lambeth average for this group of 57%. Performance in Key Stage 1 tests has been increasing steadily since 1997. In 2002, 81% of Black Caribbean pupils achieved level 4+ overall in English, maths and science with 92% of them achieving level 4+ in English and science. This compares with the Lambeth average of 67% for this group. Performance for all pupils in the end of Key Stage tests were significantly better than both Lambeth and national averages.

The school was awarded the Basic Skills Agency Primary Quality Mark in 2001 for its achievements in Literacy and Numeracy, following a nomination by the LEA and a thorough assessment by the Basic Skills Agency. The headteacher summarised the benefits to the school as: an increased level of consistency among staff in assessing the levels of pupils' work in numeracy and literacy, and their improved ability to identify the strategies needed to raise pupils' levels of attainment.

Support for building the confidence of Black boys is a key focus for the school. The headteacher describes the children in the school as 'motivated' but on arrival he noted that there were pupils who lacked motivation and these tended to have poor self-confidence; Black Caribbean boys featured in this group. In response to this, the school has used its funds to employ a Black male learning mentor, who has made a significant impact in boosting the confidence of these boys.

'The key for the pupils is their being able to talk to the learning mentor about the issues they are facing and the confidentiality element of the relationship. He gives the pupils confidence to talk about things or issues that effect the pupil's learning in school. He provides pupils with opportunities to try out strategies that he has suggested in a safe environment. He provides the boys with a Black role model. This is very important, as the pupils see him as someone who will listen and understand their issues without there being a stigma attached' (headteacher).

All the pupils who work with the learning mentor receive a certificate at the end of the year and this further serves to reinforce the ethos of the programme, which is one of emphasising positive progress.

The school has long held a strong commitment to creating a more diverse staff, but until recently has experienced difficulty in recruiting and retaining members of staff from Black and ethnic minority groups. As one of the teachers confirmed: *'Having a more mixed profile in the staffing is high on the school's agenda and has been for some considerable time – it's part of the school's positive ethos and is considered as very important'.*

The headteacher is aware that as a Black Caribbean headteacher, he is offering Black pupils in the school a strong role model, which for them is an important contribution to their ability to achieve.

'I use my success in achieving the position of headteacher at the school to tell the pupils that it's about taking opportunities that are there to be taken; I tell them it's about being confident in your own abilities and about realising that we all have a lot to contribute. I hope the Black Caribbean pupils see me as someone who understands and who is providing opportunities for every single child to succeed' (headteacher).

The headteacher felt what was important for the Black Caribbean children was that they felt comfortable with him and felt they could speak to an adult who they knew would listen. This strongly mirrored the view of the pupils who were interviewed. The pupils were extremely positive about the school staff, but

at the same time expressed the importance of the presence of Black staff members to them. *'When there are no Black teachers you feel uncomfortable… You feel they are not mixing with you. It's much better now. There is lots of support for learning'* (year 6 pupil). The Black Caribbean parents see the headteacher's appointment as a very positive step. They feel the children now have someone who can relate to their issues, particularly issues around the perception of how Black children achieve.

St Saviour's is a school with a very strong Christian ethos and a genuine desire of the whole school community to make the school experience a happy one. Central to this ethos is the empowerment of pupils and parents to get involved in every aspect of the life of the school and the creation of an environment which welcomes and includes all. The school has very close links with St Saviour's and St Paul's churches. The vicars of both churches send their children to the school and support the headteacher in delivering assemblies. The school has developed links with Spinnaker Trust, a Christian Education organisation, which supports the delivery of religious education and assemblies.

'This is a school which is actively promoting the removal of barriers. A key motto in this school is 'Valuing our differences'' (headteacher). It's part of the school's mission statement displayed around the school and more importantly, is backed up not just by daily interactions, but also by a carefully planned programme of assemblies, the PSHE curriculum and lessons addressing specific issues, including racism. *'Issues around racism are addressed when appropriate and children know that the school has procedures for dealing with racist incidents. They know that there are 'racist incident' sheets that they can complete when something happens. As a result pupils feel secure that issues will be properly dealt with'* (headteacher).

The school prides itself on its good rapport with parents. They are involved from the beginning in any discussions about support for their child. Parents work with the school to support their child's learning and the school is always able to discuss why children aren't making progress should that occur. Parental involvement in the school ranges from a very active parent teacher association, supporting pupils in the classroom and working with teachers to follow up work for individuals. A prime example of how parents are actively involved in the school community is the fact that the appointment of the schools learning mentor came out of discussions with parents about pupils who were lacking in confidence.

The children at St Saviour's have a strong clear voice in the school. They can express how the school has benefited them and how they are involved in the very fabric of its operation. Speaking to a group of year 5 and 6 pupils, what was clear was that the pupils' experience of school life was an empowering one. All the pupils spoke of the school as providing them with new opportunities; being pro-education; having clear rules and expectations and most importantly a place where their culture was valued and promoted. *'St Saviour's is a good school for Black Caribbean pupils. It brings out everybody's talent and brings all the Black community into the school. It doesn't matter what your culture is, you fit in'* (year 5 pupil).

The children spoke in an extremely positive manner about the headteacher and staff. The school council was applauded for its role in providing them with a voice and a say in the running of the school. *'We have a school council and everybody's opinion counts. School councillors keep records of peoples' problems and take them to the meeting so they can be talked about'* (year 6 pupil).

'The school council improved the playtimes. We have more of a voice in the school, more security' (year 6 pupil). The pupils described how the School Council raises money, which the pupils have a say in spending. Part of the funds have been used to support school journeys for year 6 pupils; to help make improvements to playtimes and to run clubs. A key factor for the pupils was the willingness of adults to listen to their problems. *'This school encourages you, gives you new opportunities. You can express your feelings if you've got any problems. The school gives you encouragement and says don't give up. It gives you chances. It gives you choices'.*

The school has managed to create a climate where pupils feel secure in relation to expectations for learning and behaviour. *'The school has rules that make you think more about what you are doing'* (year 5 pupil).

St Saviour's pupils demonstrated an advanced ability to reflect on their school experience and a high level of emotional literacy. Year 6 pupils act as prefects and children are positively encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour. The involvement of all pupils in the writing of the school's behaviour policy, 'Working Together', by the present headteacher, further highlights the seriousness of the school's commitment to allowing their pupils' voices to be heard.

In the headteacher's office are many books and pictures celebrating the achievements of Black people across the ages. The school has just finished its Black history month celebrations. St Saviour's has made extra efforts to incorporate Black history into its curriculum throughout the year and not just for the month of October. The school encourages a range of community involvements, which serve to raise the status of Black Caribbean pupils and other ethnic minority groups. With parents coming in to do cooking activities with classes, children visiting cultural events and visitors such as Black poets and authors invited into school to work with the children, St Saviour's is passionate about its provision for a broader curriculum.

The key for the headteacher is providing pupils with opportunities to achieve at the highest level. The school's annual participation in the Royal Ballet's 'A Chance to Dance' project displays it commitment to providing quality opportunities for its pupils. The project has, as one of its core aims, the intention of encouraging more Black children into the ballet. As a result of this programme, which is open to all year 3 pupils, a number of pupils, including Black Caribbean children from St Saviour's, have been successfully invited back to further auditions with the offer of free weekly lessons.

After school and lunchtime clubs are an important aspect of the St Saviour's ethos. Clubs are run by staff or parent volunteers and the school in its annual report and newsletters encourages parents/carers, who may have the time and ideas to run clubs, to volunteer their services. The children also run clubs for themselves.

'If we go to the headteacher with an idea for a club, he asks us to write down who will run it, when and why the school should have it. If we do that then he lets us run our own clubs' (year 6 pupil).

Pupils run the drumming club, the Fun club and a chess club for other pupils. In addition, there is football coaching by Fulham football club. There are also clubs for German, Netball, Cricket, Drama, a Computer club, a choir… the list is extensive. The school has a long tradition of success in local cricket, football and more recently netball competitions. The school's trophy cabinet in the reception area is full to overflowing and buckling under the strain.

Celebrating pupils' achievement is a fundamental part of the ethos of the school. The headteacher makes a point of highlighting pupils' achievements in each edition of the fortnightly newsletters. He describes spending a sunny lunch hour sitting with children having their packed lunches in the playground. He noticed one of the children was quietly drawing. When he asked the child to show him his work he was so impressed with the quality of his drawings that the head asked if he could include some of them on the back of the next edition of the school's newsletter, a regular practice of the school. The child was very excited and he with three other friends chose a selection of their comic type drawings, which were then included in the next school newsletter. Currently, those pupils are working on a school edition of their comic, with the headteacher's backing and support as Editor. A few days after the newsletter was published, the headteacher met the child's parent in passing and she commented on the fact that her son had got a 'real buzz' out of his talent being recognised and that she could see that his self confidence had significantly increased as a result.

The school celebrates pupils' achievements both in and outside the school setting and pupils receive acknowledgements for their successes in assemblies as well as in the newsletter. In another example, the headteacher spoke of how he regularly invites the 'Globe Players Theatre Group' to the school to work with the pupils. This subsequently inspired one of the school's pupils to take part in an out of school theatre project. This eventually led to her performing in a production of King Lear at the Young Vic Theatre.

'What we are about as a school is providing a wider variety of platforms for pupils to celebrate their achievements' (headteacher).

In terms of valuing pupils' Black Caribbean heritage, children spoke of how the school choir now included a repertoire of Jamaican and African songs. They also spoke of a recent assembly where they got to focus on the life of Nelson Mandela. They talked with passion about the headteacher, and described how they felt that his presence had brought for them increased opportunities and involvement in the

school. The visit to the Brixton Lido to see 'Rasta Santa Christmas Joy Ride' was a favourite experience for the whole group. The pupils listed all the different ex-curricular activities that were available to them and spoke of how year 6 pupils had set up lunchtime clubs for younger pupils. They enthused at the willingness of the headteacher to provide a platform for them for their dance talents and the upcoming talent show that he had allowed them to organise. A year 6 girl summed up for the group the view of Black Caribbean pupils in the school. '*There is always a 'yes' to education in this school. There is always an open door to education in this school'*.

The level of support provided for the transition to secondary school is a key priority. Each child is offered a mock interview with the headteacher. Parents are invited to take part and following the interview, the headteacher provides detailed feedback with a copy of the questions asked and responses given provided. In addition, he provides parents with prepared answers and suggests individualised actions that would benefit both parents and child. The pupils and parents benefit from having more confidence in terms of how they promote themselves. In addition, the headteacher attends appeals with parents of pupils who have been turned down for their preferred choice. The result is that the majority of children obtain a place at their school of choice.

St Saviour's is a school that is successfully providing building blocks to support its Black Caribbean pupils to climb the achievement ladder. By 'actively removing barriers' and 'valuing difference', this school has created an emotionally literate climate for all its pupils. It has provided a voice for pupils and parents who may have questions in their mind as to how accepted they are in the wider community.

H. Sudbourne Primary School

Sudbourne is situated in central Brixton. In 2002, there were 362 pupils on roll. The school is extremely popular. Pupils are admitted on reaching compulsory school age on the basis of a sibling within the school or how near they live to the school. Caribbean pupils were the second largest ethnic group in the 2002 Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 test cohorts after ESW. Thirty-nine percent of pupils are eligible for free schools meals, over double the national average. There is a low rate of mobility compared with the average for schools in Lambeth. Transfer to secondary schools is complicated by the number of schools involved. In 2002, 45 pupils went to 26 different secondary schools.

In national curriculum tests, the school has performed consistently above national and LEA averages. In KS1 overall in 2002, 70% of Black Caribbean pupils attained level 2B+ compared to the Lambeth average of 57%. In writing and reading, 73% attained level 2B+ and in maths, 64%. Attainment of Black Caribbean pupils at KS2 is very high and has shown a significant improvement since 1997. In 2002, 81% of Black Caribbean pupils achieved level 4+ in English and 90% attained level 4+ in maths and science.

Sudbourne school has featured in two major national reports on the issue of raising the achievement of minority ethnic group pupils. One conducted in 1997 by the Open University for the DfEE was entitled Making the Difference: Teaching and Learning Strategies in Successful multi-ethnic schools, and the other published in 2002 by OFSTED, but conducted by HMI entitled Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils: Three Successful Primary Schools. Both of these reports give insights on why Sudbourne is such a successful school for all its pupils. The HMI report noted the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, the school's consistency of approach across its staff; the way ethos is established through clear parameters, organisation and sense of certainty across the school.

This school has, at its core of staffing, a long serving, experienced and dedicated senior staff team, which has helped consistency in the development and implementation of aims and values. *'Ethos is the most important issue to resolve. Our bottom line is that we are a diverse school and that everyone has a place in it. How we talk to each other is crucial. We are very lucky with our whole team of teaching and support*

staff. They all realise the importance of affirming the pupils and each other. All adults in the school celebrate individual success.

Essentially we are about developing a sense of a common good. We are alert to strengths. School is a second home. We try to create a secure environment underpinned by a sense of self-discipline but we are always willing to step in when needed. We want the pupils to develop independence, an independence that recognises the importance of personal self-control. We are open to our pupils and want them always to realise that the key thing is to keep trying. They should never feel they failed if they get things wrong', said the headteacher. Another teacher commented: *'Our ethos is about developing happy, well-adjusted pupils. Fundamental to the whole process are opportunities to talk and listen. We sort out issues between pupils and then have our key focus as the quality of their learning'*. Responsibility for developing that approach is not the preserve of teaching staff only. *'One of the great things about this school is the involvement of all staff in the process, teaching staff, support staff, the school secretary, the school keeper, and the dining staff. Adults are encouraged to get alongside the children. Although the school isn't physically small it feels small because everyone knows each other'*. Another senior member of staff said *'It is important to have time to get alongside pupils. Trust and respect are crucial'*.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2002 has given an opportunity to the school to review its policies and practices. *'We realised this had to be a senior management led endeavour. It was more than writing policy. It required reflection, review and action. We have employed a critical friend to take us through the implications of the Act for our practice and held governor training days'* said the headteacher. The Act has brought into sharper focus how important a background on monitoring is. *'Our first OFSTED made us look more closely at how our pupils were really achieving. We had always done section 11 returns but this was different. I vowed then that I would personally ensure we had the data we needed to properly track the performance of every child by gender, ethnicity, free school meals, summer birthday, special educational needs, teaching group. At first I did manual tracking but now I use Excel. It is vital there is a central person who can manipulate the data and interpret trends. In my case I believe that is a central role for a headteacher. The data we get from Lambeth is excellent and the preparedness of the research staff to follow requests is first class. I asked recently for help with summer births as a variable and the response was immediate'*. One other teacher commented *'The Act has given us a further stimulus to look carefully at results, at value-added with individuals and groups. We are not sure that the published format will necessarily do justice to the progress pupils make but at least we are open to that accountability'*.

The contribution a behaviour policy has in helping to develop a sense of community and shared ethos has been carefully thought through. *'We don't pursue an assertive discipline policy. We feel that that can easily lead to no win situations for all concerned. We really believe you have to consider each case on its merits. There always has to be potential for a flexible response linked to individual need'*.

'Pupils need different things. We always try to go where the priorities are' said a senior member of staff. The school has a very clear policy for the deployment of additional teaching and support staff. It is prepared and able to deploy additional staffing resources to meet identified needs. This it did with the 2002 year 6 cohort.

'Our aim is to fit our support to the needs of the individual child but we have a bottom line that no one disrupts the learning of others. In 2002, we had a very challenging year 6 cohort of pupils. They had needed a lot of support from their entry in Reception. We knew that we had to put in place a variety of responses to meet their needs in preparation for transfer at year 6' said the headteacher. The school was able to employ a curriculum support teacher to work with these year 6 pupils and to deploy a learning mentor to give individual and group support. In addition, they were able to get support from an external charity called Oasis who provided a staff member to come into the school to work on issues of PSHE with selected pupils from year 6.

Staff, in discussing the experience of a particular group of Caribbean pupils within the year 6 cohort, showed a deep commitment and determination to develop individual potential, as well as a realisation of how important it is to prepare pupils for secondary transfer. One class teacher said *'These pupils had very challenging behaviour but average or above average academic attainment. I realised if this group of pupils was to succeed and reach their potential I needed to modify my teaching style. I put an emphasis on individual work and personal targets except for paired work in IT. I introduced minute to minute time management with very clear learning objectives. At the start of every session I outlined these objectives*

very carefully ensuring each child noted them. I was lucky to have additional help. The learning mentor spent a lot of time discussing self-expectation and ways to sustain engagement. The curriculum support teacher was able to follow up individual learning need. There was very focused individual dialogue'.

'The dialogue with parents was also important', said the class teacher. 'The parents knew we were worried but we emphasised that something could and would be done. We tried to be consistent and did as we said we would do. Individual logs of pupils' work and behaviour detailing the good and the disappointing were kept and shown to parents by pupils. I really thought hard about the comments I made, as a stray negative comment could be destructive. Particular good pieces of work were also copied so the children could take them home and keep them at home. Regular contact on the phone proved to be much better than sending notes. We could have just dwelt in our calls on the negative but decided instead to always to try discuss positive developments'. Parental support had to be hard won however when the strategy to set up specific sessions for groups of five pupils to work with an external mentor was suggested. 'Although parents individually realised their children were having problems the notion of a strategy that involved external intervention with a group raised some concerns. We had a meeting of the parents to discuss the proposal and after a lot of discussion parents agreed to let the sessions proceed. In the event the group performed better in national tests than had been predicted and made a smoother transfer to secondary schools than had at one time been anticipated. Parents understood the bonus of having someone who could help their children in communicating on transfer with adults the children didn't know. The mentoring offered to the pupils helped them prepare and then cope with the transition to secondary schools. We believe what we did made a difference'. The support did not stop there. After the transfer to secondary schools, contact with the pupils was formally maintained for their first term. The learning mentor made regular visits and spoke with year staff and the pupils concerned. All the pupils are reported to have welcomed such continuing contact in the early stages of their transfer.

'We think listening to all parents is very important. It is a myth to say Black parents are not supportive' said the headteacher. 'We try to understand their aspirations. Families want it to be straightforwardly put. I believe we should take people from where they are and realise they have high aspirations. It might not always be expressed in the same way as other groups of parents but it is there. I have learnt constant dialogue, particularly by phone is important. You can get a bit distanced with paper'.

The school is very aware of the role content in the curriculum plays in signalling to the pupils a sense of belonging in the wider community. 'We recently undertook a project where pupils photographed the local area. It is very important that pupils of all backgrounds are at ease with what is around. We are a diverse school and I want all pupils here to be at ease with that' said the headteacher.

'We never thought to pare down the curriculum' said the headteacher. Another staff member commented 'It is not just about the 3 Rs. We are shaping the next generation. They have to be confident learners who can handle different sorts of knowledge and experiences. They need to be able to discuss their ideas, have respect for themselves and other people, and have an outlook'.

'As well as a broad curriculum we have to consider how accessible it is. Music is very important', said the headteacher. 'We wanted to reach out to as many pupils as possible and the resourcing implications of that meant we had to make choices. We carefully thought it through and decided that, when choices had to be made, all pupils in years 5 and 6 should continue to learn steel pans. We are now developing a focus on singing and dance across the school, through 'Creative Partnerships'. In year 3 all pupils are involved with work with the Royal Ballet and as a result some attend weekly classes after school'.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2002 has brought the duty to 'promote good relations between persons of different racial groups' into sharper focus. The school is considering the implications of this for teacher knowledge and curriculum content and delivery. 'We have developed a programme of in-service visits to places of religious worship. We are considering the implications of Black history in the curriculum and realising that dealing with events in the past raises the issue that you often can't have Black history without White history. The inter-relationships are crucial but the pain of some of those inter-relationships raises broader questions about how history has been presented and mythologised' said one teacher. Pupils in year 5, as part of Black history month, selected to study the biography of a famous Black person. They had to find the information using the internet. They then made their own booklets about what they had learnt. This forms the basis of a display in the school and the booklets will go into the school library. 'We really want to develop pupils' historical skills so that they can understand the

background and development of our diverse society. It has got to be much more than one week as part of a unit on Britain in the 1930s. We have to help pupils understand the roots go much deeper than the events say of 1950s migration. We do however latch onto things. We took part in the Windrush competition and that helped us all to realise how important it is for everyone to record their personal family stories and memories'. The school intends to extend the approach of studying biographies thereby giving pupils more opportunities to study the lives of people who have broken down barriers between groups.

A group of year 6 pupils of Caribbean background discussed what works well for them in the school with confidence and considerable insight. They all felt the school trusted them to have responsibility. They were proud to be able to be monitors and carry out specific roles in the school. These included helping in the computer room, the nursery, with games and PE equipment, organising selling biscuits, ringing the bell, and helping with the tea money. The pupils spoke with real enthusiasm about the things they liked about the school. One said 'It is really hard to choose because I like so much. I suppose golden time, steel pans and cricket are my choices'. Another said 'I love doing art and seeing my work displayed'. They felt the school was a friendly place. One said 'I was bullied at my old school but here it is different. The teacher gave me a welcome partner when I came. I have loads of friends now and I really like the school'. They liked circle time and the opportunity it gave them to discuss issues of concern. The opportunity the green box gave them to register any worries they might have was also something they appreciated particularly given the fact it was checked and followed up daily. The children were clearly very happy with their experiences of Sudbourne. The changes they suggested related in the main to opportunities such as a basketball team, steel pans every day, and a dance club to help shy people. Their only criticism was not getting enough warning of times tables tests!

The pupils felt that the teachers really listened to them. One said 'Our teachers listen with care. One of my friend's Mom and Dad divorced. The teachers really listened to her and helped cheer her up'. Another said 'I like them because they are funny but structured and they trust you'. Another said 'Some people's parents pass away, or a brother, sister or friend. They encourage and help that person'. They appreciated the atmosphere in their classrooms. 'It is nice working in groups and sharing all our ideas together. I love class discussions and the friendly debate'.

They spoke with enthusiasm about the work they had done as part of Black history month. They had studied the lives of a range of people including Nelson Mandela, Mary Seacole, Mohammed Ali, Jesse Owens and Bob Marley. They were confident in their discussion of their own ethnic identities, which they saw as complex. They took it for granted that they were British. Their discussion was rooted in an awareness of the importance of family links and associations in shaping their own sense of identity. Their definitions were as follows: African Caribbean European; African Caribbean European American; Jamaican English with Canadian and American connections; Mauritian African European; Jamaican English with Maltese connections; Jamaican English with American connections. Their skill in debating the influences of location, family links and other factors in developing personal identify were very evident. Their maturity in discussion was impressive.

Sudbourne

Secondary Schools

I. Archbishop Tenison's School

Archbishop Tenison's is a voluntary aided Church of England School. The school is a popular one and is oversubscribed. There are 606 boys on the roll. The school serves a relatively deprived community with nearly half of the pupils eligible for free school meals, a figure over three times the national average. Around 25% of pupils are of Black Caribbean heritage, with minority ethnic pupils comprising some eighty percent of the overall school population.

The performance overall of Black Caribbean boys at Key Stage 3 in 2002 was above the Lambeth average, with performance in maths approaching national averages. There has been a steady improvement in 5+ A*-C GCSE performance since 1997, from 17.8% to 56.2% in 2002. The number of Black Caribbean pupils attending the school has always been significant and they have shared in the success achieved by the school. In 2002, 75% of Black Caribbean pupils attained 5+A*-C compared to the Lambeth average of 33%. Black Caribbean pupils in the school achieved above national and LEA averages both in KS3 and GCSE.

The school has a long tradition of service to education in the local area. It was founded in 1685. Its declared aim is 'to educate boys to the highest standards in a calm, safe, secure environment where good relationships between staff and pupils flourish within a framework underpinned by Christian values'.

'Mutual respect is very important and has to be worked at' said the headteacher. A member of staff commented *'Showing mutual respect is the key. You can't expect it if you don't give it. You have to realise that apologising if you are in the wrong is one of the most important things you can do as a teacher'.*

Assemblies conducted on a daily basis are seen as very important in developing a shared ethos of mutual respect. *'I believe a daily assembly is important. It helps us all to focus on respecting one another'* said the headteacher. Other staff and pupils agreed. *'Assemblies are a very important part of the life of this school. Increasingly pupils are involved in their organisation and that is good for their self-confidence as well as a sense of a corporate community'* said one member of staff. *'It is good to have an assembly at the start of the day. It helps with the rest of the day. It gives me time to concentrate and think and pushes me into my education'.*

Praise of pupil achievement is built into assemblies. The school has worked hard in establishing an ethos where pupils are prepared to publicly have their achievements acknowledged. As one member of staff said *'There was a time when pupils sneered if someone was praised publicly. We have worked hard to change that both in assemblies and in classrooms'.* Themes for assembly are carefully planned and developed. In the build up to Remembrance Day, thought is given to the way different faiths see death. An assembly seen during the visit considered this in relation to Hinduism. It was a very well conducted event and pupils listened attentively to staff and pupil readings.

One assembly certainly had an impact on the staff who were present. In 1993, Archbishop Tutu visited the school. The visit was described by the headteacher and other staff as a turning point in the contemporary life of the school. *'I wouldn't have believed before it happened that one person could make such an impact on the consciousness of an institution. His theme was how we are all VSPs (very special people). The response of the pupils to his words was incredible'.*

It has also made a priority of focusing on what good teaching involves. *'A main priority has been to appoint good teachers who can motivate and interest the boys. Once interest is captured, any pupil is less likely to misbehave. Praise has to be the motivator. Adults in institutions have to take responsibility for the quality of the relationships between staff and pupils. What happens in classrooms is crucial'.* A recently qualified teacher commented *'The staff are prepared to share ideas and to discuss what works and why. There is consistency of approach that the pupils respond to* well'.

The quality of teaching is seen as crucial in the process of raising standards for Black Caribbean pupils. *'If a teacher's heart isn't in the job they stand out like a sore thumb. Then you get the blaming of the pupils. Thank goodness we have worked through that. We now have a staff who are really committed to their teaching and the pupils'.* Pastoral staff praised the quality of planning in departmental subject areas. *'The schemes of work developed in subject areas means that you can really teach. The underpinning of background information is there. It is then a matter of the quality of the interaction in the lessons that matters. Pupils should never be put down for making mistakes. Dealing with those mistakes and moving on is the essence of teaching. I think pupils like the subjects and the teachers. If that is the case then you can't fail. If teachers can make pupils feel they can succeed then the pupil will aspire to achieve. It is a matter of engendering a sense of 'I can do it too' in the pupils'* (headteacher).

The school has established a strong pastoral team whose role it is to monitor and support academic standards. *'It is not just about discipline or attendance or absence but about the whole issue of progress and standards'* said the headteacher. Pastoral staff saw the rigorous sharing of information and the focus on value-added for each pupil as very important in the process of raising standards. *'We have termly tracking data and details of term on term predicted grades culled from subject staff and the SENCO. This is the backdrop to our work'* said one. *'We spend a lot of time talking to our pupils. If a youngster feels valued he will give more commitment'.* In talking about the progress pupils made, staff indicate a determination to do the best by every pupil. *'Last year's year 11 had a number of pupils who had low attainment on entry, and some who had a poor behaviour record. We worked on that. In their final exams most got Ds or Cs and not one was ungraded. Very early on we adopted a common strategy. We looked at the needs of the individual. We made sure that the work was matched those needs. We worked on group dynamics and when necessary isolated an individual. Praise and challenging work were our priority'.*

Over the years, the school has established a strong buddy scheme with year 7 pupils in greatest need of being linked with year 10 pupils. This is clearly very well planned after visits to primary schools have been made. Time is taken to brief the year 10 buddy before the year 7 pupil arrives and preparatory meetings are arranged in the summer holiday to help the pupils get to know each other.

One of the key elements in the ethos of the school is the celebration in display of pupil achievement or involvement in events and activities in corridors or classrooms. Departments such as science, art, history and French amongst others have considered issues of access and relevance in curriculum content. In science, resources have been reviewed to enhance pupil access. *'We consider science in other countries and the implications of using different materials in our experiments'* said one teacher. In art, pupils have the opportunity to explore cultural diversity through a variety of themes using a range of media. Year 7 pupils, for instance, were considering death masks in Mexican culture and exploring this practically and through personal narrative accounts. *'In French'*, said a teacher, *'we have tried to make our subject accessible to all in the visual stimulus we use and the content we draw on. We consider French in the world and the use of French by leading Premiership players. It clearly has struck a chord. We don't get some pupils saying anymore 'I am a Black man not a Frenchman. I don't do French'. We have also tried to broaden pupils' exposure to French. Year 7 start off with French tea parties and then motivational trips in year 8 to Calais, and in year 9 a 3 day residential to Paris. In year 10 we visit the Europa Centre in Haringey where they converse with French speakers from all over the world. Last year we had a French rap group visit the school. We try to broaden horizons'.* In history, careful thought is given to the exploration in core study units of opportunities to explore issues of class, race and gender. Black people's involvement in world wars one and two are explored as is the Black presence in England from Tudor times. The school is involved in developing, with support from the Eagle Project, a history walk and tour of Lambeth in its year 9 course. This will have a special focus on the Black presence in Lambeth.

Older pupils, when considering the features of a good teacher, emphasised the importance of teachers being prepared to explain things carefully and being prepared to help groups work in partnership in lessons. They felt that the school was able to offer real and meaningful support to them *'We have teachers in this school who really help you inside and outside lessons. They take the best of you. They try to push you. They raise your awareness of what you are doing wrong but in a nice way. They build from your mistakes'.* Another said *'We are very lucky with our pastoral staff. One really looks out for me. He can be quite fierce but always fair. He expects you to do well. I really appreciate that, as I can be quite lazy'.* The pupils were clear that despite interventions and support from staff some pupils didn't reach

their potential. One pupil put it like this *'Some pupils shield themselves from teachers' influences. They aren't prepared to get engaged no matter what the pressure or the encouragement. It is a pity really because some are very bright in the top sets. They are really taking others' places'.*

Younger pupils thought the school was a friendly place. They thought the size helped. As one put it *'You can see the same person several times in the day'.* They were proud of the school's improving examination performance. They liked the after school clubs. They felt the staff encouraged them. *'Our teachers encourage us into our studies. They also talk to us about life. Our tutor talks to us a lot. We told him about problems in one lesson and he took it up. He is like the bigger spokesperson for the class. He is like the best of us'.* They felt the school uniform was important. *'It gives you a sense of identity. The school discipline is good here. It helps you to discipline yourself and respect yourself'.*

The parents met also spoke positively about the ethos of corporate and self-discipline that the school engenders. A White parent said *'There is a real sense of community. The school keeps in close contact with you. There is strong leadership in the school everyone knows their role'.* One Black parent said *'My son moved to this school because he was being bullied elsewhere, he has settled very well. The teachers show respect. He knows where he stands. He loves all the after school clubs. In fact it's very hard to get him away from school now'.* Another Black parent was very appreciative of the support her son first given after he was mugged and stabbed on the way home. *'The support from the school has been first class. There has always been a good one to one relationship but the help they have given my son is outstanding. The school has roots. There is mutual respect. They are in tune with the parents'.*
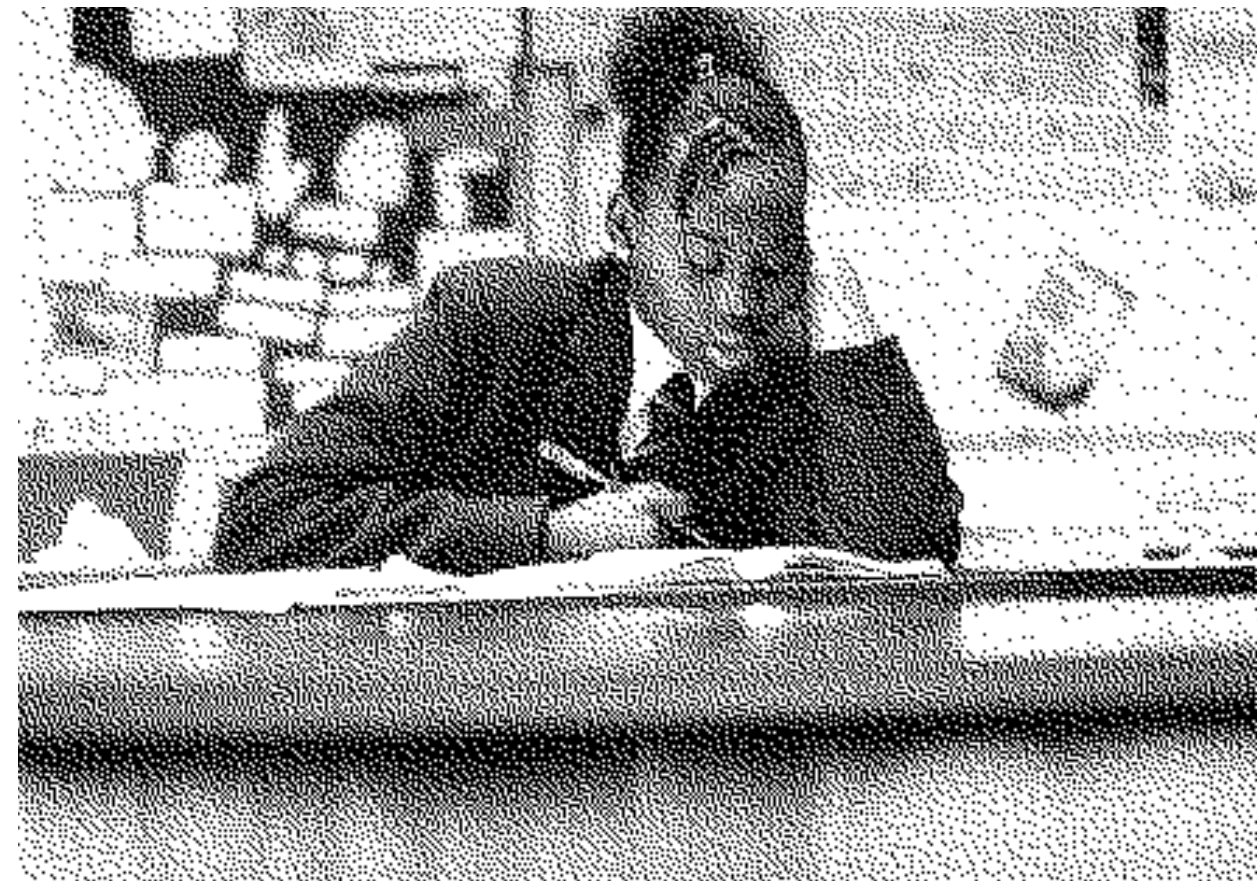
La Retraite

J. La Retraite RC Girls' School

La Retraite is a Roman Catholic Girls' secondary school in the Clapham area of Lambeth, serving a multi-cultural and diverse part of the Diocese. The school has 798 pupils in 2002. Of these, 22% are eligible for free school meals and 24% are not fluent in English. The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language is 55%; this is very high. Currently, approximately one quarter of the school's community are of Black Caribbean heritage but the numbers are declining in the school because of a stronger emphasis by governors on the catholicity of new applicants to the school. The headteacher describes the school as 'a very prayerful community in which pupils practising faith from Black Caribbean backgrounds contribute significantly to the overall spirituality of the school. Our school is a plural society that works'.

The GCSE results have shown significant improvement over the last few years and it is one of the fastest improving schools in Lambeth. Since 1997, the percentage of pupils achieving 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE has consistently improved, from 36% to 61% in 2002. Black Caribbean pupils have shared in the success of the school. In 2002, 56% of Black Caribbean pupils attained 5+ A*-C, compared with a Lambeth average of 33%. At KS3 overall, 77% of pupils attained level 5+ in English, maths and science, compared with 66% nationally. In both KS3 and GCSE, the school attained above the national average.

The visit to the school focussed on the diversity of the staff and the positive celebration of cultural diversity within the school. Interviews were held with girls on their Black History Project and with year 13 girls on their experience of the school and their future plans and ambitions.

The headteacher identifies four key features of the school's success in raising the attainment of Black Caribbean pupils:

* The target-setting strategy, which sets high expectations through the judicious use of prior attainment data.
* Attracting a more diverse staff, particularly from Black African and Black Caribbean backgrounds, increases the number of role models for the girls and collegiality among the staff.
* Positive celebration of cultural diversity in the school's mission statement, in the inclusive nature of the liturgy and in the organisation of the school.
* Opportunities for girls to be creative and serve the mission of the school through religious services such as the performance of the Sixth Form Gospel Choir at Friday Morning Mass.

Making the target-setting strategy explicit and transparent is extended not just to the girls but their parents equally. *'All the time we're talking about minimum targets based on National Curriculum levels. Marking schemes and level descriptors are made explicit to the girls – 'How could you have made that work a Level 5?' Similar items discussed in letters home to parents in advance of parents' evenings. We invite pupils and their parents into the secret garden of assessment'.*

Girls are grouped into five groups based on their SATs and year 7 CAT scores. Pace is the differential and good practice developed within the top sets is shared. For example, at the end of last year, the Gifted & Talented Group went off site to a study skills course, which was very successful; the next term the school bought in the consultant to work with the whole year group.

The school has a number of Black Caribbean teachers who feel very confident in their roles as teachers – *'I am a well-educated Black woman in a position of authority which helps to confront stereotypes in British culture'* – and role models to all girls in the school. *'I bring my Caribbean background into my teaching and make common cause not just with Black Caribbean girls but also those recently arrived from Latin America, with a similar experience. I feel that generates a powerful discourse in a school where 75% of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds'.*

Some Black teachers use this 'insider' position to challenge assumptions and raise expectations by invoking a traditional view of what would and would not be acceptable 'back home' in their countries of origin. *'I ask the girls 'How many of you have been back home and seen such behaviour?' I use this as a powerful lever around confronting negative behaviour'.* They share their confidence in their own ethnicity

with the girls: *'I bring the resource of living and being educated in two countries (Barbados and England), which gives me bi-cultural competence. If the Black Caribbean students don't have a powerful sense of identity and culture, they'll be lost. I know this approach has had a positive impact on achievement'.*

A similar point is made by another Black Caribbean member of staff, *'I explain to the girls that they are at a disadvantage, I say 'go and prove them wrong, be better than the best, show that they're above the stereotypes. It is important for my self esteem, their esteem. These girls can be seen as underachievers and I feel it's my role to help them guard against mediocrity. I'm particularly hard on some of the most difficult girls in the school, trying to impress on them the realisation that they have to work at it to achieve. I say 'the ceiling is as high or as low as you make it''.*

Black staff tread a delicate line in their role as advocates to the girls. *'I am often asked about issues of racism by the girls. Clearly they see this as part of my role. I discuss informal and formal strategies to tackle racism in ways that build their confidence and experimentation. For example, if a girl comes to me and says 'Miss that teacher is a racist', I try to unpack that with the girl and ask her why that teacher might appear to be picking on her. I say 'Try courtesy and see if it works and report back to me'. I take on this role of informal monitor'.*

Black and White teachers take on a similar advocacy role in ensuring that the curriculum is relevant. The task of making mathematics and science attractive to all pupils is a particular challenge. *'I explain that science is important as a tool which teaches analytical skills that are transferable. The shutters go down once maths is mentioned so I've got to open the shutters. I adapt the language of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies to the Key Stage 3 science curriculum to facilitate that learning and meaning-making. I buy revision guides in bulk and sell them at cost price to students – all to make the curriculum as accessible as possible'.*

The historians see it somewhat differently: *'What I've found is that their experience of History in primary school is very different to the History in La Retraite in year 7. We are raising their expectations throughout the school so in years 12 and 13 the use of IT is assumed in presentations, the use of websites for research, the use of Powerpoint for presentations in class. We discuss conflicts across the world and use the strong cultural mix of the girls in every lesson'.*

Many girls had become very interested in aspects of Black history through the initiative of their history teacher who had set up a project associated with Black history month. Girls had been encouraged to research background information, to write stories, poems, letters, newspaper articles, draw pictures or make posters on the theme of Black history past, present and future. A careful briefing of aims had been prepared by the teacher, with the intention of displaying pupils' final work. The response from the girls was very positive and the work produced had clearly been carefully thought through and involved a good deal of personal research. One girl in year 7 wrote the following poem:

History is nice
History is our millennium moments
History is important
History is when people were fighting for their rights
Learning about history is saying that you care

It is not surprising that teachers contest the weighting of the individual elements, which contribute to a school's success with Black Caribbean pupils. But in common with their White peers, Black Caribbean teachers consider the main clue lies in its community and catholic ethos, which promotes achievement. As one member of staff knows from personal experience: *'I'm an old girl of the school. When I was here 21 years ago, the school had two mixed race girls; today the school looks totally different, but a consistent feature is the sense of community'.*

Others see the issues of gender as equally significant. *'This school has a female dominated staff team who seem to care about the welfare of the students'.* While others cite *'consistency in our language, it's the watchword of the school, the headteacher is always talking about this. We talk here about a 'La Retraite Lady' and the bottom line is that girls know what the school standard is and so they know what is expected'. 'This is a sharing, caring environment in which selfishness is discouraged. Staff and girls are expected to demonstrate Christian values in all our behaviours'.*

Black Caribbean girls in year 13 have their own views. *'It's the level of respect that you give and get in this school which is key'.* One girl who joined the school at sixth form felt the ethos was critical: *'I don't have to be bad to fit in here. There is a positive culture of celebration'.* They were unanimous in their view that it is not the ethnicity but attitude of teaching staff that is significant. *'Diversity is not the issue, it's about respect'.* One Black Caribbean sixth former talked movingly about the tenacity of the school and its consequences for her: *'Over the years, the school has worn me down, keep saying why not? Why not apply, just see if it's for you. And here I am applying to go to university in London. I can't leave my mum and go country, but I'm going to give it a try. If anyone had told me in year 7 that I might be going to university, I would have told them that they're mad!'*

La Retraite

K. St Martin-in-the-Fields High School

St Martin-in-the-Fields High School is a comprehensive girls' school with the majority of its pupils from Christian backgrounds. There are 656 pupils on roll. Black Caribbean pupils are a third of the school's population, which has 88% from minority ethnic group backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is 36.5%; double the national average.

At KS3 overall, 74% of pupils achieved level 5+ in English, maths and science, compared to a national average of 66% in 2002. The KS3 performance at the school for Black Caribbean pupils, both in raw and value-added, is impressive. In English, 86% of Black Caribbean pupils attained level 5+, in maths, 71% of pupils achieved level 5+, and in science 67%. Overall, 75% of Black Caribbean pupils in the school achieved level 5+, compared to the Lambeth average of 50%. In both KS3 and GCSE, Black Caribbean pupils achieved above national and LEA averages. Standards of attainment at GCSE are high and the improvement rate has been impressive over the last few years. In 2002, 59% achieved five or more A*-C grades. Since 1997, the percentage of pupils gaining 5+ A*-C increased from 35% to 59% in 2002. Fifty-six percent of Black Caribbean pupils in the school achieved 5+ A*-C compared to Lambeth average of 33%.

The school was featured in an OFSTED report Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils: Good Practice in Secondary Schools published in 2002, based on a survey conducted by HMI. The report highlighted some of the bases of success that made a difference for all pupils, but particularly for those of Black Caribbean background. It featured particularly St Martin's strength of ethos, leadership, developments in the curriculum, monitoring and support of pupil progress and links with parents.

As part of the Lambeth project, it was suggested that the focus for a one day visit should be on some key factors in raising achievement, namely the development of a shared ethos and strategies for pupil support, which include Black Caribbean girls with different needs. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior staff, staff involved directly in pupil support and some Black Caribbean pupils who are recipients of support.

The ethos that is being developed at St Martin's is based on a commitment to a vision of the school that serves its pupil community in the context of diversity. *'St Martin's is a multi ethnic school. We are what we are. We don't want it any other way. We try to affirm individuals, individuals with their own stories and backgrounds. Pupils in each year 7 class are asked to make a heritage shield that represents their own statement of background. We affirm our pupils with the understanding 'out of many one school''* said the headteacher. *'Our vision of a Christian community working in the heart of a challenging area is one that is true to our foundations. We are faith based with strong values. We are also a safe community where we understand the difference between right and wrong. We expect high standards in uniform and we set out clearly our expectations of what St Martin's stands for'.*

Staff are aware of the many pressures young Black Caribbean women face in the wider society. They actively consider this in their approach to education. *'I want us to break down barriers. It isn't just a matter of qualifications. I want us to give our girls confidence so that they can converse and compete with anyone from any part of the system. I want our girls to be young women who are good at examinations but also young women who can go anywhere and do anything'* said the headteacher. *'That is the core of the Macpherson challenge to develop their emotional and social maturity. We have to recognise racism exists and that pupils come from situations of great discrimination in the wider society. We cannot abdicate our responsibility to give them the confidence and resources to cope with the other pressures they face outside the school gate whether that be issues related to race, sex or neighbourhood'.*

There is an understanding that consistency and high expectations are crucial if girls are to fully develop their potential. *'Schools have a part to play in changing consciousness about overcoming barriers in the wider society. We try to get alongside our pupils. Nothing succeeds like success. Praise and nurture are crucial'* said the headteacher. *'A lived ethos is the key. Our vision and aims should lead to no one badmouthing our pupils. Clear expectations and clear boundaries are important. We should never take less than the best from anyone in our school community'.*

Ethos is seen as multi-faceted but has at its core an appreciation of the worth of the individual. *'When we say ethos is important we are not saying it is just an exercise in finding the right answer or saying something for the sake of it. It is what we believe about the worth of the individual. Inclusion is the hanger but the rail is ethos – an understanding of the worth of individuals in community'* commented another senior staff member.

The environment of the school reflects the vision and aims of the school. As one staff member commented, *'Displays are a reflection of our community. They are not put up to fill wall space. They are part of a community dialogue. They reflect what is going on in the school. They are part of an ethos of high expectations'.*

Display celebrates pupils' achievements, acknowledges the diversity of its pupil population and the wider society and recognises the continuity of the present school and its links past and present. Departments celebrate the part they play in the school by displaying the results of pupils who have made progress or attained well in their subject area. Photographs of departmental staff together with details of qualifications and responsibilities emphasise openness for all to identify their roles within the teams. Details of examination syllabuses are prominently displayed in subject areas for pupils to peruse. In all classrooms details of marking schemes are prominently displayed. In addition notices are evident outlining the expectations for the working environment in lessons. Some displays emphasise the diverse sources of knowledge in their areas of the curriculum such as one in the maths department that considers Arabic, Chinese and Roman number systems.

The display is a visible representation of many aspects of the work of the school. They include posters detailing the activities of the senior school choir as well as the year choirs; details and pictures of participants in the Business Traineeship Programme; activities celebrating involvement in events for charities such as Christian Aid and Tearfund as well a Poppy Day. One pupil commented *'The pictures on the walls mean a lot to me. I am in one of the choirs and I see my face. I look at the results some of my older friends have achieved and I say to myself if they can do it so can I'.*

The school has established a target group in year 9 of pupils whose achievement is below the national gifted and talented cohort. The project is called Widening Participation. Detailed examination of performance data has been undertaken and very detailed records of girls chosen to participate have been established. A teacher mentor has been employed to work two days a week in supporting the group of 42 pupils, many of whom are of Black Caribbean heritage. The mentor has observed pupils in different subject classes and undertaken small group interviews with pupils to set up general targets. The focus of such meetings is very specific and is concerned with enhancing skills in learning. One to one interviews also make it possible for girls to raise issues that they need help on, for instance, four-paragraph essay writing.

Pupils involved in this project spoke warmly of its impact, even though it had only been running since the start of the autumn term. *'The project made me realise I could be gifted and talented if pushed. This has changed my view of my own abilities'* said one pupil. Another commented *'We had a discussion of strengths and weaknesses with the mentor. What I like about the project is it helps me structure my time. I have drawn a table of things to do, which I share with my parents. It isn't the same, as people saying you must try harder. This time I am being helped in how to do that. I don't do homework in front of the TV anymore after my discussion the best ways of working'.*

These girls saw this project as helping them to change the way they performed and engaged in subjects across the school. *'I really have been coasting in a lot of lessons. I always stayed in the middle and let things wash around me. I now feel I have got to work harder for myself. I know someone is going to help me be focussed'* said one. Another put it like this *'I know if I wasn't pushed in this project I could drift. It is all a matter of realising you are working for yourself. If you are not taught to think for yourself then you don't think for yourself. I am saying to girls in year seven I know 'Try not to drift off. Try to keep your attention and be focussed on the work''.*

The girls are clear that involvement with the mentor has increased their confidence to talk about their work with teachers and friends. One said *'I had a high table friend and I started to discuss how she understood certain things I wasn't so clear about. I don't think I would have done that without the encouragement and focus of the widening participation cohort. It has given me the push I needed if I can do a bit more now I will be flying in year 11. I wish everyone could have the opportunity to be part of such groups'.*

Support and guidance is seen as crucial if girls are to achieve their individual potential. There is an interlocking pattern of provision, which also involves the parents. Tutors and parents meet in the autumn term and then in the spring term, parents meet subject teachers. Each pupil meets tutors as part of an individual action day twice a year. Achievement evenings are held for year 9 and year 11 parents to deal with issues in the run up to SATs and GCSEs. The headteacher meets every girl in year 11 to review progress. The widening participation cohort, like other interventions of support in the school, adds a depth of provision to the mainstream support and guidance structures. The school is extending this provision to two evenings a week to give pupils in years 8, 9 and 10 access to extra curricular mentoring on a fortnightly basis.

The additional interventions are very well thought through and integrated within the overall system. The heads of key stage ensure that no girl is working with more than one professional. They play a pivotal role in deciding who could benefit from additional help. This works particularly well with the girls they refer to the Achievement Coordinator. This staff member works with girls in years 10 and 11 who, for one reason or another, are showing signs of disaffection. A key aspect of the role is the time given outside lessons to listening to the pupils. The staff member follows up any particular issues and encourages openness in the responses of the pupils and staff. There is no withdrawal from lessons; contacts are either informal in the corridor, or through interview in the lunchtime. The Achievement Coordinator also has a mainstream teaching timetable and will sometimes work alongside girls in the classroom to build up their levels of confidence and engagement. *'A 'can do' affirming rigorous approach is essential if achievement is to rise. We have a no excuses culture but take the time to look at why things happen'* commented a staff member. *'Disaffection can come from a lack of self-esteem academically or lack of progress through the curriculum. If the delivery of the curriculum appears relevant to their lives that is one way to really make progress. Many of our Caribbean heritage girls have parents who experienced a school system that was not affirming to Black people. This is passed on'.*

The Achievement Coordinator works with twenty-five girls. The rationale and approach to the work is very well worked out. *'We have to focus on what achievement means personally for the girls. We have to show them what can be done. We have to expect them to follow advice on conduct and approach but expect them to come back and say if they don't. We have to acknowledge pressures and prejudices, we can't deny they are there but they shouldn't be taken as an excuse for failings'.*

Girls working with the Achievement Coordinator were in no doubt about the value of the support offered. *'Backbone support is offered. It gives you a push and contact with someone who won't give up on you'* said one pupil. *'I am a demanding child. I need someone to support me and give me that extra push'* said another. *'He breaks the work down and helps us find and use different books. The report backs are straightforward. If no one is on your side you don't bother if one teacher keeps an eye on you feel a bit special'.* One put it like this *'There is loads of love for each other in this school. If you smile it is returned'.*

Another said *'I know this school is good but we are all human, teachers as well we can all have bad days. If you mention it to him he is a teacher who will try to sort it out. He will have a word as a human being on that level. Teachers are most likely to come back and say I didn't know it was like that. Can we sort it out? If you have a constant feeling of being neglected you can go to him and give him feedback. It is really important to have a guide. I think this holds onto people and changes lives'.*

The pupils as a group offered the following quotes of what a good teacher is like:

- someone who listens, helps people through their work, who splits up the work and is prepared to give extra help;
- someone who recognises that we don't all learn at the same speed;
- someone not into telling but patient;
- someone who if you are in trouble will listen sensitively and with understanding but not softly;
- someone who gets to know your strengths and weaknesses who recognises the spiritual side in you;
- someone with a young person's mind as well as a mature mind;
- someone who can joke and still do the work;
- someone who knows you can be anything and come from anywhere but not assume.

Effective use of performance data for self-evaluation and target setting is also a strength of the school and is central to the school's work and strategies for raising standards. An improved system of assessment and tracking of pupils' performance has been developed in the school and is led by the deputy headteacher. The school has found that systematic and detailed ethnic monitoring is an effective method for raising achievement levels. The school is proud of its approach to ethnic monitoring and uses it as a means to identify individual strengths and weaknesses. A breadth of baseline tests is administered: NFER tests in year 7 and this, along with Key Stage 2 data, is used for monitoring progress; CATs in year 8.

The school also undertakes extensive assessment at Key Stage 3 and GCSE and keeps careful records for tracking all pupils (see following table and graphs for data used in the school). Using this data, they are able to effectively track pupils' performance and to construct their own analysis situation, based on internal scrutiny of performance data, and are able to tailor action to context. It is possible to look at CATs results, KS2, KS3 and GCSE, and at all year groups, by any combination of ethnic origin, language fluency, date of admission, eligibility for free school meals, EAL stages of fluency, SEN stage, mobility rate, years in school, which teachers' classes have been attended, attendance rate, and types of support. In addition to these assessments, teachers are encouraged to administer non-statutory assessments to their pupils at periodic intervals.

Furthermore, all teachers in the school are expected, as a matter of good practice, to undertake classroom forecasts for individual pupils' performance. The school produces its own value-added predictions and scatter plots in addition to the KS2 to KS3 and KS3 to GCSE value-added reports and predictions provided by the LEA. Teachers are encouraged to plot their own pupils' results onto these graphs and scatter plots. By doing so, they are able to identify groups of pupils who may be underachieving and evaluate the overall effectiveness of their teaching. By ensuring that individual pupil performance is tracked and that the performance of different ethnic groups is identified by gender on value-added median lines (see scatter plots[12]) in such analyses, it is possible for senior management and classroom teachers to see whether a particular group is underperforming. Use of the detailed data has resulted in teachers setting challenging and reliable targets.
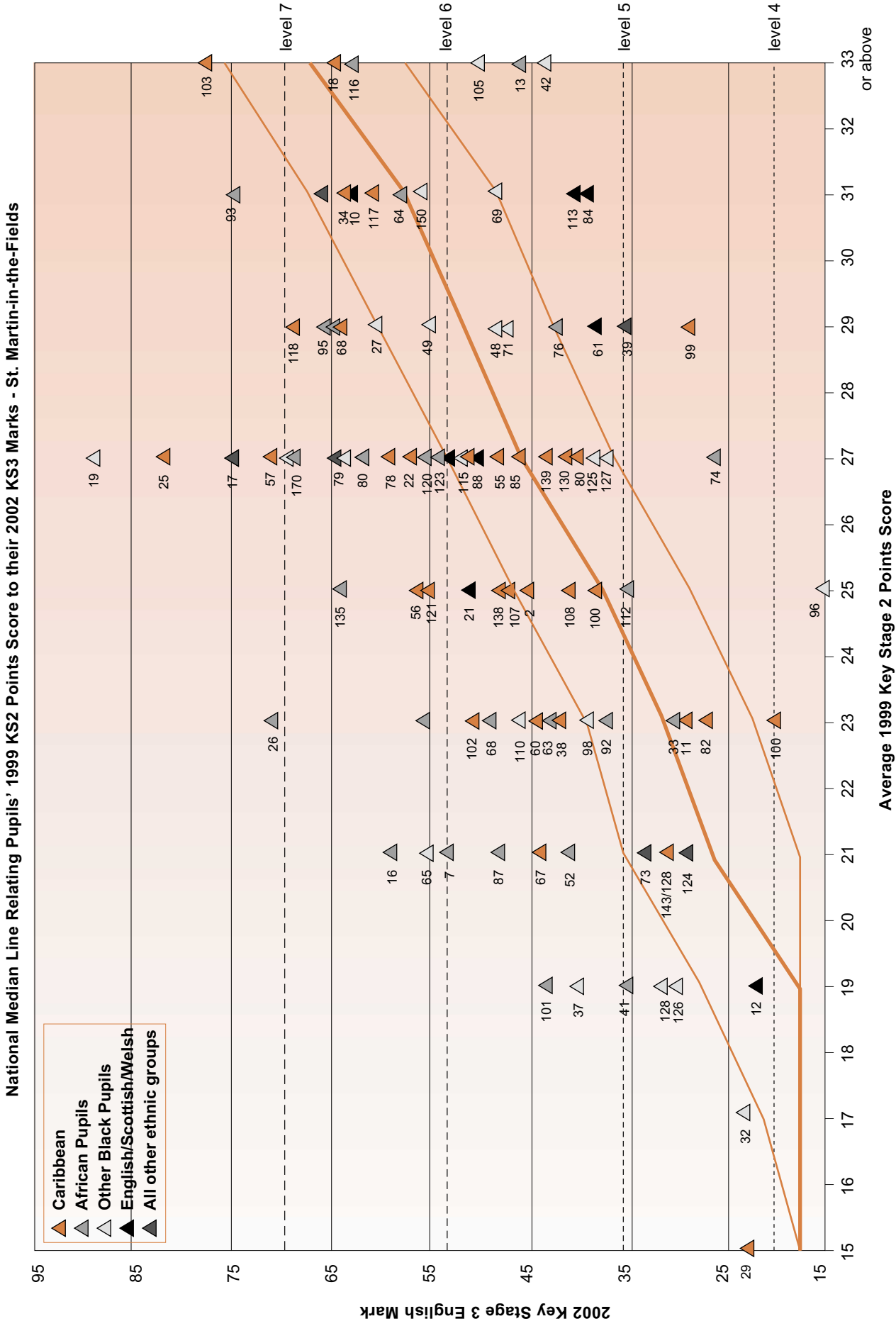
This detailed pupil level data held at school, along with national data in PANDA, LEA school profiles and contextual and value-added reports, has provided teachers with the necessary tools to identify underachievement, set targets, monitor progress and evaluate performance. The school and governors also extensively use the LEA contextual and value-added data for each key stage to monitor progress over time and factors influencing performance, to identify key areas of action to ensure improvements and to set targets.
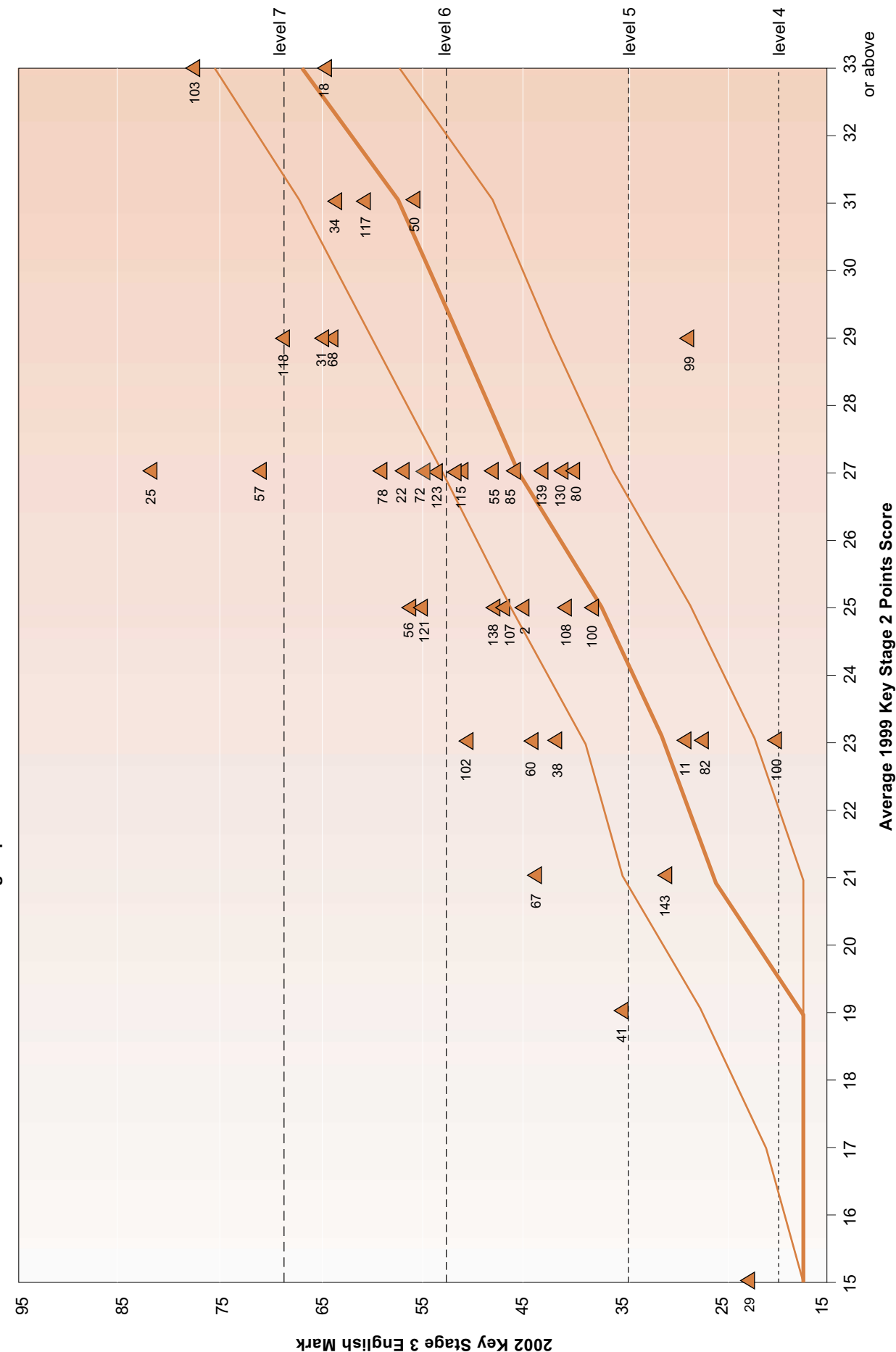

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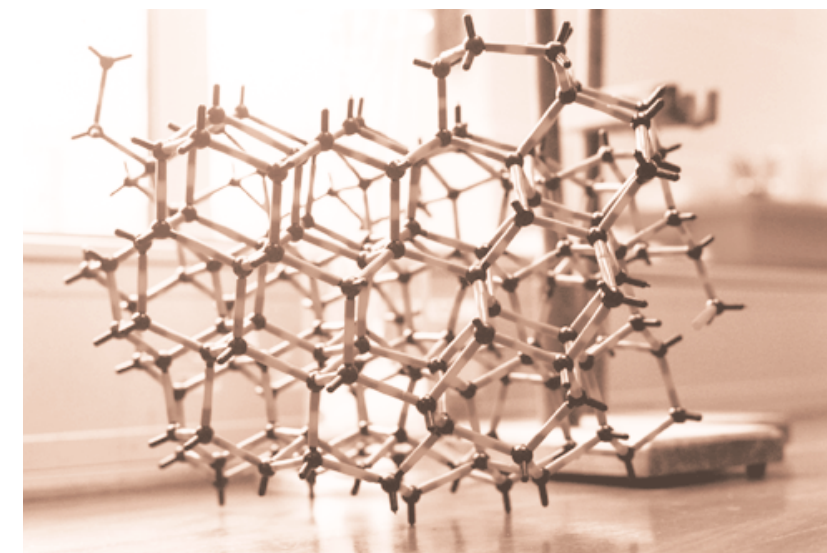
[12] The school extensively uses value-added scatter plots for all subjects between KS2 and KS3 and KS3 and GCSE with a confidential code number for each pupil. In the attached sample of a median line value added chart, the solid red line shows the median performance, i.e. 50% of pupils nationally with a particular KS2 score achieved a KS3 result above the line, and 50% achieved a result below it. The two thin outer red lines represent the upper and lower quartiles, and pupils above the top line are in the top 25% nationally, conversely, the pupils below the lower line lie in the lower quartile and are making the least progress. As the attached scatterplot shows, Black Caribbean pupils are doing well in this school, as most of them are above the median line.

	ST MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS PERFORMANCE DATA	USED BY
School Data	**YEAR 7:** Social information distributed prior to pupils' arrival • Predicted levels if known • Medical information • If on G&T register • Social concerns • Specific skills	HoD
	ALL PUPILS: Termly Reports – Updated termly For all teachers, giving details regarding each of their teaching groups as follows: • NFER/CATs mean SAS • Previous KS Test level • If on G&T register • SEN level and need • EAL Level • If on Widening Cohort register • Special Talent – Subject	All staff
	Other Data Used by Departments/School	
CATS Data	Year Group and Tutor Groups Prediction for 5+ A* – Cs and 1+ A* – G Mean SAS 95+ and Mean SAS 100+	SMT, Curriculum Co-ordinators
	Maths overall scores	HOD Maths
	Verbal reasoning	HOD English
NFER Data	Mean SAS 95+ and Mean SAS 100+	SMT
School Analysis	**Key Stage Test Results**	
	Used in association with Autumn package and using teachers' professional judgements to set individual end of KS targets for pupils in each subject. These to be reported to pupil and parents and judgements made as to whether pupils are a) on track, b) below expectations, or c) exceeding expectations.	Departments, SMT
	Individual targets set for English/Maths/Science using Autumn package for KS3 & KS4 for school target setting.	SMT
	Progress plotted on scatter graphs for KS3 & KS4 results and used to pinpoint specific pupils who are in upper and lower quartiles in order to help analyse why pupils achieved so highly or underachieved.	HODs
	Individual Action Planning – Pupils each have an individual interview in September and January. Each interviewer has details on (Each subject level (Effort (using colours) (Class mean (Year mean	All Staff
	Exam Analysis – Results analysed as follows: KS3 by: Ethnicity, SEN Levels, Date of Birth, EAL Level KS4 by: Ethnicity, SEN Levels, EAL Level, Mobility Value-added evaluated using CATs and Autumn Package	All Staff
LEA Data	**School Profile** – Used to compare results, attendance, etc with Lambeth, and to help set targets	SMT
	KS3 and GCSE Contextual Reports – Used to compare results and socio-economic influences with Lambeth/national and to look at performance by indicators including gender, ethnicity, fluency in English, mobility and free school meals, as well as overall trends over time	SMT, HODs
	Year 7 Key Stage 2 Data – Used for monitoring and tracking year 7 pupils	SMT, HODs
	GCSE Value-added Subject Residuals – Used to compare subjects with Lambeth and national results.	HODs, SMT, governors
	KS2 to KS3 and KS3 to GCSE value-added reports – Used to compare pupil progress with similar pupils in Lambeth	SMT, HODs
National Data	Panda Report – Used to compare results and monitor progress compared with similar schools	SMT, governors

Key Stage 3 English Value-Added Line 2002 -All Pupils

National Median Line Relating Pupils' 1999 KS2 Points Score to their 2002 KS3 Marks - St. Martin-in-the-Fields

Legend:
- Caribbean
- African Pupils
- Other Black Pupils
- English/Scottish/Welsh
- All other ethnic groups

X-axis: **Average 1999 Key Stage 2 Points Score**

Y-axis: **2002 Key Stage 3 English Mark**

Commentary

In this section, we have sought to capture some of the issues and dilemmas that Lambeth schools face in maintaining the momentum of raising standards. We hope this commentary reflects the spirit of inquiry and openness, which characterised the approach taken by the team and the schools involved in the project. The commentary is organised around a number of themes and questions, which emerged in discussions with staff, governors, councillors and parents in the project schools, but was particularly informed by the visits to Woodmansterne and Hill Mead Primary Schools.

Issues of identity and categorisation

How did we arrive at the definition of 'Black Caribbean'? Would this include Black or dual heritage pupils with White mothers or those of Indian heritage from the Caribbean?

Our view was that it was important to be clear that the focus of the research should be on Black pupils who were born in the Caribbean or whose parent/s had Caribbean origins. We saw Black Caribbean as an inclusive term, which would encompass those pupils of dual heritage, with one parent of Caribbean heritage[13]. We were also keen to reflect the ethnic categories of the new Pupil Level Annual Schools' Census (PLASC), which engage with the dual heritage of some pupils in a more sophisticated way. We made no distinction between the different cultural histories of people in the English-speaking Caribbean other than by the 'colour' of their skin. No schools have raised the issue of pupils whose heritage is both Indian and Caribbean, Chinese and Caribbean, but pupils defined themselves in a range of ways. However, a common trend was for pupils to identify themselves as bi-cultural, for example, English and Caribbean or Caribbean and Mauritian; or more interestingly as Londoners.

We were struck by the number of Jamaican pupils in some of the project primary schools. Is there any evidence of the increasing numbers of new arrivals coming directly from the Caribbean into Lambeth schools?

A number of primary schools report an increase in the numbers of pupils coming primarily from Jamaica, to join families in Lambeth. Numbers of Jamaican pupils (unaccompanied and accompanied) have been settling in other areas with long-established communities, such as Hackney and Brent. This is not confined to London. Indeed the numbers, while small, are seen as sufficiently significant to have led the Multi-Cultural Education Service in Wolverhampton to produce a booklet for schools entitled: *Meeting the Needs of New Arrivals from Jamaica: Information and Advice for Schools* – a booklet which a number of Lambeth schools are using.

Schools serving some of the more disadvantaged parts of the borough also report anecdotally that many Jamaican pupils and their families are (like their Columbian peers) coming to the UK to escape the 'drug wars' in Kingston. Sadly, this is not always achieved, since families tend to settle in areas where similar tensions exist in London. Schools also report the difficulties that some teachers face in establishing relationships with some of the Jamaican pupils, partly because they are traumatised by the cultural shock of moving to the UK in terms of school and community norms. But also because for a minority of unaccompanied pupils, there is a degree of secrecy about their backgrounds and even current domestic circumstances, which pupils feel they have to maintain out of a sense of family loyalty. Understandably, such pupils require sensitive handling to win their trust and additional resources to ensure their access to the curriculum.

[13] The group often over-represented in the category 'Black Other' although this should change with the new Pupil Level Annual Schools' Census categories for 2002.

Key Stage 3 English Value-Added Line 2002, Caribbean Pupils

National Median Line Relating Pupils' 1999 KS2 Points Score to their 2002 KS3 Marks - St. Martin-in-the-Fields

2002 Key Stage 3 English Mark

Average 1999 Key Stage 2 Points Score

Achievement

Has the project defined achievement only in terms of the core subjects?

This was a key question in our proforma. Without exception, schools in the project have a strong sense of the contribution of the 'Arts' – drama, music, art – in raising the self-esteem of and engaging the imaginations of Black Caribbean pupils. The contribution of the CfBT/Lambeth Education Action Zone deserves credit in unleashing the resources of the South Bank for Lambeth schools. The range of arts experiences which pupils in the Zone schools have been able to access has been impressive. The return of 'artists' to schools has been motivational for staff as well as pupils.

The Curriculum

The need, as one headteacher put it, for a 'mesmerising curriculum' to engage inner London pupils?

The use of role-play has been mentioned as a key to deepening pupils' knowledge and understanding in a number of schools. There is a powerful sense in the project schools of a multi-cultural curriculum which is academically robust and well resourced but which also reflects pupils' heritage, culture and experience. In these schools, headteachers see their role now to encourage teachers to use their creative intuition to deepen the quality of pupils' learning. This is because they feel that the majority of teachers are now technically competent to deliver literacy and numeracy skills and the strategies have done what they set out to achieve. The strategies are no longer according to one headteacher as 'mesmerising' as they were in the first years. Now the task is to apply those skills to other subjects and areas of experience, particularly to address the Key Stage 2-3 transition more effectively for Black Caribbean pupils.

Is the unique diversity of London culture sufficiently reflected in the work pupils do in the project schools?

The views of one project headteacher summarise the feelings of many: *'There is no substitute for building the concepts that work in Black History Month into the mainstream curriculum – I see that as the responsibility of the Senior Management Team. My anxiety about Black History Month is that it still has a US Civil Rights focus. Last year we had a Family Histories focus which was much more powerful. I'm well aware however that we do not do the same for other communities in the school. Black History Month does not really include our Muslim pupils. I see 'movements of people' as a significant theme in the National Curriculum as an underpinning principle and a key learning point in our school. Conflicts and struggles based in economic developments which force upon communities movements and changes are key issues for us in London – the barometer of the world stage. This is not a secret to children, they know there are wars. In my school we have a Somali child who was blinded by a hand grenade. The world is not a secret to children. The key is to give them the tools to understand and interpret it. Understanding the factors and forces of change and their impact is key whether pupils are dealing with dinosaurs or volcanoes'.*

Black Caribbean Culture – embraced in some schools, avoided in others?

The majority of the visits coincided with Black History Month (Lambeth Archives, 2003) and as a consequence teachers and pupils were generally more attuned to discussions about culture and identity. As one headteacher confessed: *'I worry about the Americanisation of Black Caribbean culture in this country. Girls appear marginalised in US culture'.* This headteacher felt the key to counter this Americanisation was to open up definitions of British culture and Englishness. *'It's back to the question of an inclusive British culture in which the contribution of Black Caribbean communities and others is affirmed'.* One teacher admitted that it was difficult for teachers to feel confident about the value of the 'cultural strategies' of some communities. For the majority of the primary schools in the sample, the issue is posed as a curriculum resources matter. For the secondary schools, the degree to which 'youth culture' can either be accommodated or embraced is an issue of more general contention among staff teams. There was insufficient time in the project to consider these matters.

And yet a more representational curriculum is a strong demand of Black Caribbean parents.

Schools face a renewed demand from Black Caribbean parents and their children for a more inclusive curriculum where their experience, heritage and participation in British life are more adequately

acknowledged. One secondary school reported that at this year's prospective parents evening, a number of Black parents talked of their desire to see more representational texts which reflect Black Caribbean culture. Or as one of the learning mentors echoed: *'What switches our children on is the key question'.* The response by many teachers to this challenge has been impressive and is recorded in the case studies in this report. But it remains a national issue to which the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority is trying to respond.
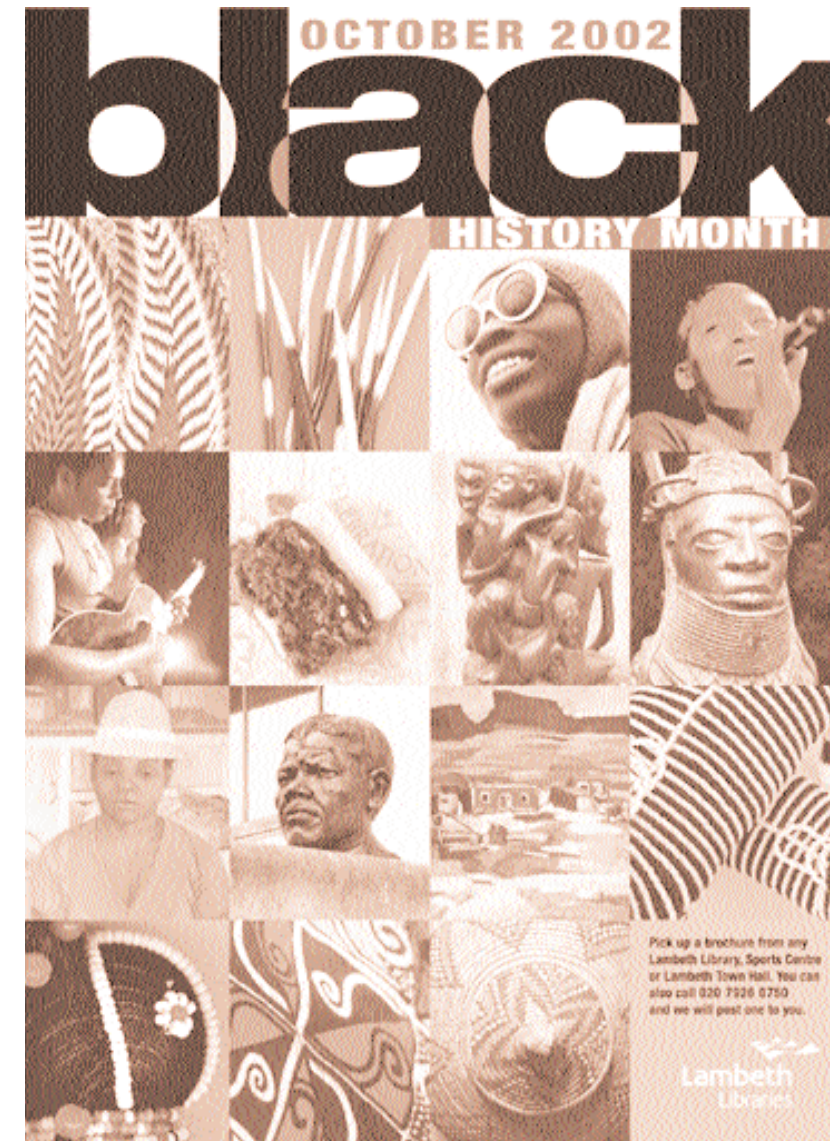
Assessment

Returning the learning experience back to the pupil.

In project schools, the aim is to shift the focus of assessment to the dialogue between teacher and pupil at the point of interaction. This arose in one school out of some research the school was involved in with Professor Dylan Wiliam at Kings College. It is now adopted as an approach throughout the school, monitored and evaluated by the deputy head. The school feels this approach returns the learning experience back to the pupil and has been critical in the school's improvement.

Parental Involvement

Do the project schools adopt a different approach to working with Black Caribbean parents?

Not as such, but they recognise and legitimise the parental aspirations of Black Caribbean parents for

their children. Historically, this has not always been the case in the UK and Black Caribbean parents were perceived to be deluded about the capacities of their children (Taylor, 1981). Sadly, this is a common experience of immigrants and refugee/asylum seeking families who feel that education is critical in securing economic mobility. The primary schools in this study actively seek to ensure that Black Caribbean parents receive positive messages about their children's achievements. Parents at one of the primary schools in the project regularly receive letters, which congratulate them on their role in their children's achievement.

Does the project engage with the issue of negative parenting styles?

The project schools have all developed direct and indirect non-judgemental strategies to support the minority of pupils whose parents/carers provide a negative parenting experience which impacts adversely on their children's confidence, self-esteem or ability to access the curriculum. As one headteacher put it: *'I genuinely believe that there is too much Jerry Springer in our community, too much soundbite love and I see the effect of that on pupils in my school, yet we try to avoid being judgemental and show we care'.* There is no evidence to suggest that this occurs more frequently in Black Caribbean families, but when it does, it is often compounded by wider social issues of poverty, poor experiences of school on the part of parents/carers, discrimination and racism.

Traversing the divide between parental involvement in school and school involvement in parenting.

One project school is involved in a two-year research project on parenting with Stephen Scott. The head described the project: *'We have worked with a self-referring group of parents whose children were in reception. Using funding from the Education Business Partnership we have run Parent Workshops on various activities and topics from 'First Aid' Courses to 'Keeping up with your children'. We have deliberately used the concept of the community school to hook children and their parents into the school and its systems. It is in the job description of my learning mentors that they host coffee mornings on a fortnightly basis in partnership with parent-governors. Our starting points are important. I believe that any lack of understanding that parents have about school processes is our communication problem not theirs'.*

In some cases, depending on the relationship between the parent and the school, headteachers in primary schools engage in a subtle sensitive dialogue by sharing the strategies which appear to work for the child in school and suggesting that the parent/carer might wish to use these at home. Clearly, the ethos and values of the school are key. Approaches by headteachers in traversing the boundaries between school and home are more likely to be successful in schools where the rewards and sanctions operate fairly and consistently and the communication between parents and the headteacher and/or Year Directors/Heads of Year is generally good. Support staff can often play an important role in reinforcing some of the key messages in the community, as well as in school. Again, these boundaries have to be sensitively managed or issues of trust and confidentiality may be undermined. A positive respectful appreciation of the aspirations of Black Caribbean parents was a key feature of many of the project schools.

Schools need to operate 'damage-limitation' exercises with a small minority of parents and on these occasions, schools tend to put their energy and additional resources into supporting the child and increasing their range of coping strategies. Again, Black Caribbean pupils benefit in the project schools from access to the wide range of staff and agencies that come into such schools. In the project schools, leadership teams are becoming more skilled at identifying with their staff, specific, almost customised, packages of support for individual Black Caribbean pupils as part of intervention strategies. These are not always formalised but are increasingly part of a school's creative, almost intuitive repertoire.

Headteachers are also made aware of the social and economic pressures their school community faces through the involvement of the many ordinary Lambeth residents who work in Lambeth schools. As one learning mentor reflected: *'I am currently working with a year 4 pupil who is very bright but cannot manage to communicate without a song and dance – all show. I see myself as liaising with the parents in a partnership of trust, which is possible in schools, without social services involvement. Mum doesn't always come to school to hear the good things about her son so I do a home visit to make sure she does hear'.*

Emotional literacy

How are schools engaging with the emotional and social pressures that a minority of Black Caribbean parents and their children bring into school?

We define this as emotional literacy – a growing ease with the language required to engage sensitively with the emotional lives of Black Caribbean pupils, parents and staff. A growing bi-cultural competence, in which all staff engage with issues of racism, prejudice and their impact on self-esteem. In some cases, it is an explicit requirement of the curriculum to develop understanding and empathy, and in this regard there is nothing unusual about the work of these schools or this group of pupils. But staff have an acute awareness of the impact of family breakdown and poverty compounded by racism and discrimination, on some members of the communities they serve. As one headteacher noted: *'It is manifest in the deep sense of anger and disappointment that many children feel, not only those of Black Caribbean heritage, about the absence of a father, the mobility caused by anti-social behaviours by their own parents; the trauma of living on the edge of criminality and drug abuse; the fear of youth-on-youth crime'.*

The majority of schools in this project are engaging in the transmission of emotional literacy to Black Caribbean pupils and in some instances their parents; this is not a one-way process and many of the teachers in project schools have gained from the patience with which pupils and parents have shared the reality of their day to day lives in Lambeth.

Managing diverse staff teams – the new school workforce?

The extensive use of learning mentors in primary schools has been an unexpected feature of this project. Primary schools have taken the concept developed in the Excellence in Cities (EiC) initiative for secondary schools and have adapted it to serve the needs of individual pupils. Pupils from Black Caribbean backgrounds are the main focus of such initiatives.

In some schools, a range of staff (including teaching assistants, lunchtime supervisors and premises officers) act as learning mentors on a formal and informal basis and form a pastoral team which the headteacher can draw upon. This is seen as a particularly important safety net for Black Caribbean pupils, predominantly boys, who need as many additional adults involved in supporting their learning as possible. Anger management, issues of masculinity, an opportunity to talk and receive positive attention are part of the agenda which these 'mentors' address with pupils and for which increasingly they are receiving training and proper supervision.

Interestingly, the secondary schools in the project are more ambivalent about the Learning Support strand in Excellence in Cities. They are selective about which elements are helpful in their schools. They do not want to erode the primacy, in their view, of the form tutor as a learning mentor.

Much of the attention has been centred on the underachievement of Black Caribbean boys, but the performance of girls is also beginning to cause concern in some schools, as teachers become more skilled at scrutinising the evidence of pupil progress and challenging assumptions. In one primary school, concerns about Black Caribbean girls' achievement have been the unforeseen outcome of a project, which was designed to tackle boys' underperformance.

The use of other professionals – how many people hold the school up?

The project team has reflected on the growing number of adults involved in providing what we have called the 'safety net' of agencies and additional adults whom we see as essential support, when working in schools in challenging circumstances. In the past, we have conceived of that as the range of other agencies such as Social Services and other welfare agencies. But increasingly in areas like Lambeth, such agencies are barely functioning in a climate of recruitment difficulties, increased workload and a focus on delivering the core task. However, in a number of project schools, the support is delivered by a network of adults who come into school which include counsellors, art therapists and drama specialists from the growing range of voluntary organisations involved in important supplementary activities in schools. Most headteachers see these staff as having different but complementary expertise, which allows teachers to focus on their core professional task. Schools are also defining what they need and recruiting people to fill that identified gap or new area of provision.

Black role models – White teachers?

The contribution of White staff is affirmed in the project schools. This report is not about what Black Caribbean staff are doing to raise the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils. For example, the primary mentors mentioned in this report are not necessarily from Black Caribbean backgrounds themselves. Interestingly, pupils in interviews were more concerned with the quality of the adult attention, rather than on the ethnicity of the deliverer. This is summed up consistently in reports like this by the term 'Respect' – who gives and gets respect in a school is used universally by Black and White secondary pupils in particular, but is also described less explicitly by primary school pupils when they talk about the behaviours and attitudes of teaching staff. It is about a shared respect and awareness among all staff of the lives of Black Caribbean pupils and their culture in Lambeth, which the majority of staff in the project schools demonstrate.

The contribution of Black and African teachers and support staff.

Despite this seeming ambivalence about Black role models, it is clear that the diversity of staff teams in the project schools is a significant factor; the presence of confident, assertive Black staff is important to their White colleagues, to parents and the wider community. It may well be that once there is a critical number of Black staff in a school, pupils take the diversity for granted. Certainly, the confidence and contribution of Black staff changes as the numbers increase. One project school leader admitted in their view Black Caribbean teachers raise the professional profile and image of the school because they take their positions as 'role models' more personally than other staff in terms of their appearance and presentation. Clearly this is a road down which angels fear to tread since the headteacher did not wish to be quoted!

More and more of the support assistants and learning mentors in primary schools are local Black Caribbean men and women, often in their late 20s or early 30s, who are keen to 'give something back to the community'. They are recruited to provide an important role model to all pupils, but also act as a source of learning and support to other staff.

The experience of a Learning Support Assistant is typical. He used to run a local football team for under 16s and responded to an advertisement in the Voice Newspaper. *'I was originally appointed to work as a Learning Assistant to work with a young Black Caribbean boy but I also work in the playground. When I arrive the girls come running up to me and say 'Sir make me laugh, tell me a joke and then they run off and use my jokes all day and that makes me feel good. I approach the kids who are on their own in the playground and they say 'I haven't got a friend' and I say 'I'll be your friend'. I look out for Black Caribbean boys who appear angry. I tell them I was 10 and my teacher used to tell me: 'You're on a negative vibe, think positive'. So I run some jokes and make them laugh. I give them strategies. I replay their words back to them and say: 'The way you spoke to me today, go home and tell your parents your problem in that way. I thought I came here with no skills, but I know I'm making a difference'.*

The engagement of such staff in primary schools in particular, is a new development and school structures are changing to reflect the increasingly diverse roles, which comprise the school workforce.

The role of the school leader in managing all these different elements is already unrecognisable from the same role five years earlier. The role of the school leader of schools in challenging circumstances in Lambeth requires a multiplicity of approaches, which are dynamic, flexible and yet consistent.

Extending staff as well as pupils' horizons.

As one headteacher put it succinctly: *'I like to put people into a position where they do things they didn't think they could do before. Our children performed in the Millennium Dome and that gave them the message 'Stick with us and we'll get you places' and that works for staff too. I succeeded in getting two of my teachers to visit the US to look at the work on gifted and talented pupils. We've got a fantastic dance company 'Wise Moves' and they are without exception the best professionals I've ever seen and governors buy them in to work with our boys and girls 1 day a week. That's what we learned from the US (study trip in 2001), that you have to provide the opportunities for children to be engaged and confident. Standing in front of an audience and getting applause is about as good as it gets. I ensure that every child in my school gets at least one moment of glory in primary school. There was a wonderful moment recently when a child said: 'Miss I didn't know I could do that but now I can''.*

Sustainability – did schools mention resources as an issue?

Headteachers describe their schools as raising achievement, despite the local funding formula and its impact on different phases and different areas of the borough. Schools in the project register concerns about the 'bidding culture' of both central and local government, the complexity of funding regimes and difficulties of implementing innovation in such an environment, which detracts from the key task. A number of schools who were involved in initiatives such as the Education Action Zone, or were part of time-limited initiatives with voluntary organisations, expressed concerns about the sustainability of some effective activities, which schools felt added value to their provision.

The sample

How were the schools chosen?

The LEA identified 22 schools where the performance of Black Caribbean pupils was above average or the most improving on a straight statistical basis. The project team was provided with a list of schools, which had been invited to participate in the project. Participation in the project was entirely voluntary. Thirteen responded positively.

Are all the project schools run by long-serving headteachers[14]?

Not all of the schools in this project are run by headteachers who have worked in inner London for the majority of their professional careers. But over half the sample have worked in Lambeth for at least 10 years. They are not atypical of their non-project colleagues; clearly headship in Lambeth is a rewarding professional experience. We are not reporting that it takes 10 years to improve the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils. Those schools with recently appointed headteachers have been very effective in accelerating the progress of pupils and staff in their schools. New energy is just as significant as length of service!

The LEA has a number of long-serving headteachers who will retire in the next two years. Such a long-serving profile is not unproblematic and poses a key challenge for the LEA and its schools in terms of sustainability and succession planning. A curious feature has been the feeling among these senior headteachers that they model a commitment to the job, which they feel their younger colleagues should not be encouraged to emulate. They recall the sense of vocation that motivated them to stay and teach in inner London but feel that is no longer well articulated by government or those smaller LEAs which replaced the Inner London Education Authority with its grand, pan-London vision[15]. As one headteacher reflected wearily: *'Can this job be done on a 9-5? We model commitment but is there anyone out there who wants to take on the mantle? We're being asked to solve the world's problems and here's the money, but at what point do we say 'No and no more''.* The profile also provides a rich resource for training and management development within the LEA and beyond, in managing effective schools for Black Caribbean pupils.

The secondary schools in the sample are single-sex and denominational – how is their success relevant?

Four secondary schools (one mixed, one boys' schools and two girls' schools; three denominational) were identified as having above average attainment for Black Caribbean pupils. All were invited to participate and the three single-sex schools responded positively. Transforming the ethos of a school from one where the attainment of Black Caribbean pupils was not improving to one where a significant number of Black Caribbean pupils are sharing in the overall rise in standards is worthy of consideration by any school, since national data confirms that this rarely happens. Even in schools where standards are rising, Black Caribbean pupils are often over-represented in the underperforming groups. Even in the three schools in this sample, some Black Caribbean pupils did not achieve at Key Stage 4 what their Key Stage 2 and year 7 tests indicated that they were capable of achieving.

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[14] See *Staying Power: the relationship between headteachers' length of service and PANDA grades* produced by Professor John Howson for the National College for School Leadership (September 2002).

[15] As we write, Professor Tim Brighouse has been appointed the Education Commissioner for London as part of the government's initiative for London, known in policy terms as the London Challenge. Raising the achievement of minority ethnic pupils is also a policy strand of the London Challenge.

Other indicators in these schools are worthy of consideration and are shared by their primary colleagues in this project:

- low exclusion rates;
- improving performance in core and foundation subjects;
- different approaches to reporting progress to parents;
- stronger focus on improving pupils' study skills;
- judicious use of challenge and support;
- robust recruitment and selection processes which tackle issues of racism and cultural awareness,
- strong sense of the school workforce as a team
- constant reinforcement of high expectations that Black Caribbean pupils can pursue further and higher education routes.

Last but not least, strong motivated curriculum specialists who saw teaching in Lambeth as a highly challenging, often draining but largely valued job of work. As one headteacher says repeatedly to the staff: *'I know I can make a difference to the pupils who come to my school, can you?'*

National concerns – local setting

Key Stage 2/3 transition – has the project anything new to say on breaching the gap between primary and secondary schools?

There is already a strong national focus on transition between key stages 2 and 3, addressing in particular the dip in attainment and progress in Key Stage 3. Concerns about the impact of that 'dip' for Black Caribbean pupils in Lambeth would require a further study, which might focus perhaps on the progress of a number of pupils from years 5-9. project schools did, however, reflect on local concerns about the ability of Lambeth families (including those from Black Caribbean backgrounds) to exercise real parental choice of secondary education. The following reasons were cited: the number of secondary schools in the borough has fallen; standards and quality are a concern in half of the borough's community schools; and access to the denominational and beacon secondary schools is limited.

There is a dilemma about the sustainability of approaches, which are effective in the primary school setting for Black Caribbean pupils and their transferability to a secondary school environment. As one headteacher said: *'Secondary schools feel primary schools 'contain' pupils too much. We're too soft, too supportive – and there's a little bit of truth in that. Maybe, but I'm sick of being at the wrong end of the pantomime horse'.* Other staff echoed the point made by a member of a primary school leadership team: *'We can already identify in primary the children who are going to fail in secondary. They are the children that do not as yet have the internal strength required to handle secondary schooling. Their numbers are far greater now than ever before. Secondary schooling in Lambeth anticipates a level of self-knowledge and academic capability which primary schools cannot deliver for all children. We need to design Key Stage 3 schools that are able to bridge that gap – we need to experiment'.* Or similarly, by the SENCO in another primary school, *'There are a lot of very able children whose parents do not support the school and whose values are counter-educational. Their children get level 4 and below; they're going to struggle in secondary school. Yet very few parents and secondary school staff approach primary schools to find out about our strategies'.* Clearly, project primary schools reflect a national frustration among primary practitioners who would welcome the opportunity for more dialogue and shared strategies in working across Key Stage 2 and 3.

Summary

The themes explored in this section are not exhaustive and were raised as part of the contextual framework in which schools in Lambeth are positioned. The headteachers involved run schools which face the same pressure of rapid staff turnover both in schools and in the leadership of the LEA; pupil mobility and a volatile economy as do their colleagues in Lambeth and across London. Nevertheless, the tone of the conversations was always reflective, rarely negative.

Conclusion

Staff in the case study schools take the responsibility of character building very seriously. They put into daily practice core principles of respect, fairness and social justice. They review constantly and confidently, and cast to one side strategies or initiatives that have outlived their purpose and their capacity to engage pupils, whether these are rigid behaviour policies or new funding for provision, which does not further the mission of the school. They face what Collins (2001) calls 'the brutal facts' for Black Caribbean pupils and their families in Lambeth.

Teachers in project schools believe the mantra that education can set you free and they adapt, revise and design new curricula to meet the needs of inner London pupils and their families. They know the curriculum can provide a voice for pupils to express the joy and pain of their lives; can provide explanations for circumstances that seem outside their control and can enrich and expand horizons and opportunities. The world comes into classrooms in Lambeth, not just in the biographies of the pupils and teacher, but also in the topics that are carefully chosen to aid interpretation and deepen understanding. The work of pupils is everywhere in these schools and pupils recognise and appreciate the efforts that are made on their behalf. The best teachers recognise that teaching is a performance and that in role, being your most creative as an expert practitioner is critical to engaging the imaginations of Black Caribbean pupils; but with that knowledge comes the recognition that the job is draining.

In these schools, if teaching is a collaborative effort, so too is ensuring that pupils learn. They use increasingly sophisticated performance data and detailed monitoring of pupils' learning styles to design interventions that will unleash their potential and remove barriers in both systematic and intuitive ways. Staff are at ease with the concepts of emotional intelligence in a school setting – the importance of knowing as much as possible about the emotional challenges facing staff as well as pupils in an area such as Lambeth. They work in partnership with parents to meet the high aspirations that the majority of Black Caribbean parents have for their children.

School leaders managing these teachers and their assistants try as much as possible to shield them from the additional responsibility of dealing with the emotional and behavioural baggage that, understandably, a significant minority of Black Caribbean pupils and their parents bring into school – the rage at themselves and the 'system'. The safety net of additional adults and agencies to cope with these issues has to be strong and constantly reinforced by creative funding and being aware of the range of relevant research and partnership projects in which the whole school community can participate and learn. Everyone in the school has a contribution to make and most feel empowered by the headteacher to do so. It is a team effort.

Michael Fullan (2002) describes five hallmarks of effective leaders in a culture of change, which we feel are of relevance to this project. We ascribe Fullan's leadership to all the staff, not just headteachers, whom we met on our visits.

- Moral Purpose – the achievement challenge. Fullan says this means 'closing the gap between high performing and lower performing schools, high performing and lower performing students by raising the level of achievement of all'.

- Building collective meaning and commitment to new ways of working. A feature of the project schools was that they made these change processes explicit to pupils and their families. As one teacher described: *'Marking schemes and level descriptors are made explicit to the girls. We explain them in letters home to parents in advance of parents' evenings. We invite pupils and their parents into the secret garden of assessment'.*

- Building relationships with diverse people and groups. 'In complex times, emotional intelligence is a must.'

■ Knowledge creation and sharing. The power and relevance of a global curriculum – is there a Lambeth curriculum?

■ Connectedness and coherence making. This is where the challenge to school leaders is greatest. How to put rhetoric into practice is most critical in designing, implementing and sustaining the policies, programmes and the infrastructure to raise the standards of individual pupils.

That coherence and connectedness is evident in the importance of language and communication in the project schools. It is embodied in the way schools convey what matters and why to pupils and their families through the rituals of each school.

The majority of the school staff teams in this project are comfortable with the profile of pupils who attend. They do not see raising standards in their schools as a means of securing a different, less disadvantaged intake as a 'reward' for their efforts. And what's more, they have fun doing it, not all the time, not every day, but enough to make it worthwhile and to know that they are doing valuable and valued work. *'Our teachers come very early and leave very late and this is noticed and appreciated by our pupils'.* (Chaplain).

Above all, these are confident schools who take risks and trust their hunches. They are innovative because they are focussed on the moral purpose of raising the achievement of inner London Lambeth pupils and through the accumulated experience of the past turbulent decade of educational change, they have emerged as strong advanced practitioners in raising the achievement of Black Caribbean pupils.

Next Steps

The headteachers involved in this project have taken responsibility as a group for the publication, launch and further dissemination of the project findings in partnership with the LEA and as part of the network of schools in Lambeth. This report is seen as a signal of a renewed energy to tackle the issues of underachievement and underperformance by other groups in Lambeth schools, involving other schools as well as their own in a spirit of collegiality, collaboration and shared purpose.
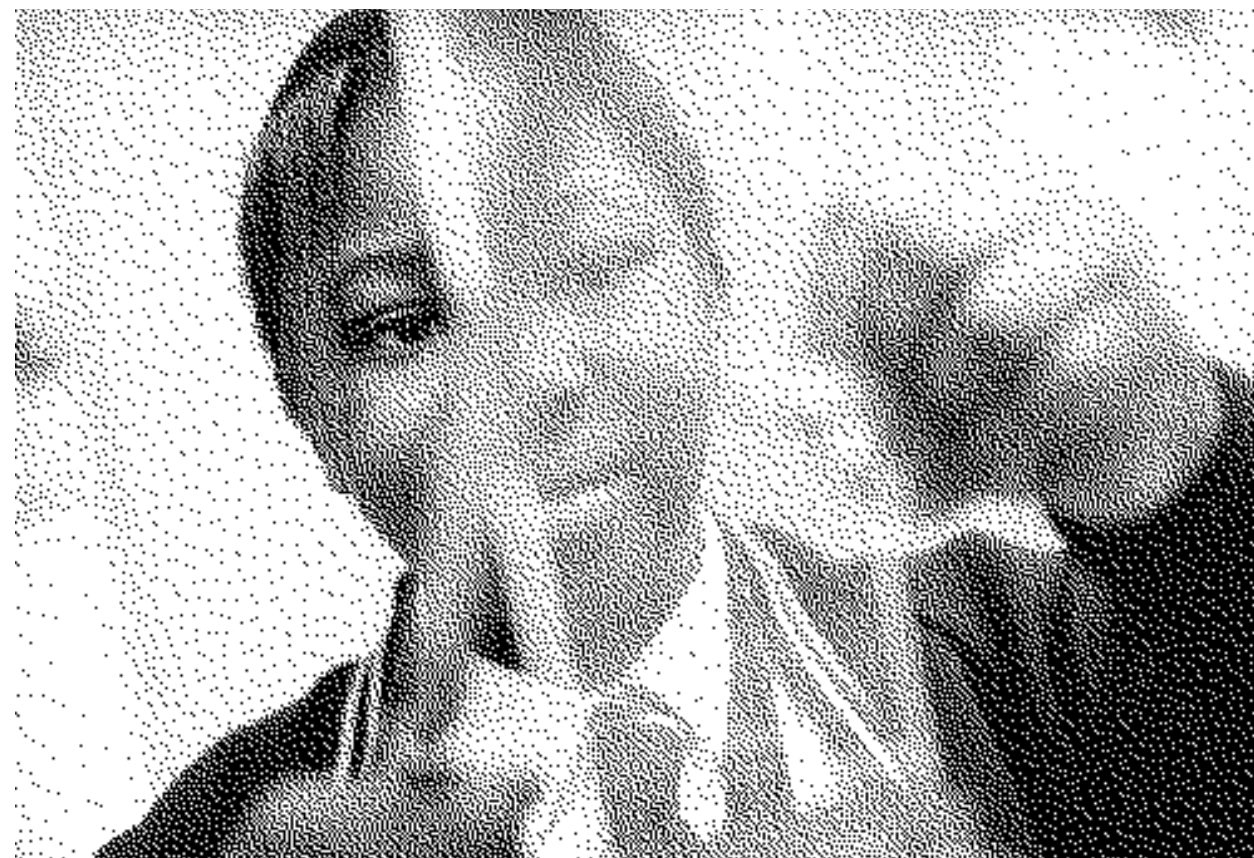
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