RAISING THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SOMALI PUPILS

Challenges and School Responses

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Forward

I am pleased to introduce this research on the achievement of Somali heritage pupils in schools.

This research report examines the attainment of Somali heritage pupils in Lambeth schools, reasons for underachievement and strategies used in schools to raise achievement. It draws on detailed statistical analysis as well as case studies based on visits to schools to explore the views of headteachers, staff, governors, Somali parents and pupils.

The main findings from empirical data suggests that Somali children are underachieving in schools and they also form one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in London. One of the main reasons for Somali pupil underachievement identified from the case study schools and focus groups is the language barrier. It is also perpetuated by factors such as economic deprivation, poor housing, overcrowding, a disrupted or non existent prior education and parental lack of understanding of the British education system.

The report findings further show that schools have adopted a number of strategies to overcome some of the barriers to achievement, including parental engagement, effective use of black teachers, a more diverse workforce, developing an inclusive ethos and inclusive curriculum, effective support for EAL pupils, mentoring and monitoring performance of Somali pupils.

Detailed recommendations draw upon ways in which the Local Authority, schools and the Somali community can work together to best provide for the learning needs of Somali pupils.

Valuable lessons can be learnt from the case study schools' experience. We hope this research report will prove useful to schools and other educational services in their drive to raise standards. We urge all governors, headteachers and Somali community members to read this report and to use it as a basis for reflecting on policies and practices and relationships within their schools.

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Raising the achievement of somali pupils in schools

Summary

The aim of this research project was to study the experiences of Somali heritage pupils in schools. Specific objectives were to examine the attainment of Somali heritage pupils in schools and to identify both reasons for underachievement and the strategies used to raise achievement.

The empirical investigation of Somali pupil's attainment is supported by an ethnographical study of the school and home experiences of Somali children. Three complementary methodological approaches were therefore adopted, each contributing a particular set of data to the study.

Firstly KS1, KS2, KS3 and GCSE statistical trends and patterns of performance were analysed by ethnic background, levels of fluency in English and mobility rate to illustrate differences in attainment.

Secondly, using an ethnographical approach, detailed case study research was carried out to investigate the school and home experiences of Somali children including reasons for underachievement. Nine case study schools with a high Somali population were selected and visited between June 2005 and July 2007. A structured questionnaire was used to interview headteachers, teachers, parents and pupils to gather evidence on barriers to learning, how well Somali heritage pupils are achieving, the school's links with parents, and parents' and pupils' views about the school and its support systems.

Thirdly, parent, pupil and community focus groups were carried out with the aim to ascertain their views and to identify whether their experiences mirrored the views of those participants in the case study interviews.

The main findings from empirical data suggested Somali children are underachieving and their outcomes at each key stage are considerably below those achieved by all other ethnic groups. One of the main reasons for Somali pupil underachievement, identified from the case study schools and focus groups is the language barrier. It is also perpetuated by factors such as stereotyping, low expectations, economic deprivation, poor housing, overcrowding, a disrupted or non existent prior education and parental lack of understanding of the British education system.

Our findings further show that the case study schools have adopted a number of strategies to overcome some of the barriers to achievement including parental engagement, effective use of black teachers and a more diverse workforce, developing an inclusive ethos and inclusive curriculum, effective support for EAL pupils, mentoring, monitoring performance of Somali pupils and effective use of data for self-evaluation.

Introduction

The educational underachievement of black students in British schools has seldom been absent from the achievement debate in the last decade. Yet the achievement of Somali heritage pupils lag far behind the average achievement of the majority of their peers and the gap is growing at the end of primary and secondary education. Despite much academic debate and policy makers' concern about underachievement in schools, the needs of Somali pupils have not been addressed and have been overlooked by local and national policy makers because of the failure to recognise Somali as a distinct ethnic group in data collection. This apparent lack of recognition seems paradoxical considering Somalis have been present in British society since the late 19th century and are now a large ethnic minority in some Local Authorities. One explanation put forward by commentators and researchers (Harris, 2004; Diriye, 2006) is the 'social invisibility' of Somali people compared to the African Caribbean community in Britain:

'Both groups suffer racism, but African Caribbean are perceived to be part of British society…It is not the volume of research on African Caribbean (although this is considerable) that gives them a public presence, but their high visibility in a wider society'…'Somalis too are rendered visible by their dress. But the social distance between Somalis and…British culture increases their isolation. There is therefore a dissonance between the amount of information which actually exists, and what is believed to be known' (Harris, 2004:13).

Recently available evidence in Lambeth shows a pattern of continuous underachievement of Somali children compared to the Local Authority (LA) average of White British, African, Caribbean, Indian and other ethnic minority groups (Demie et al 2006). The KS1, KS2, KS3 and GCSE trend data in a number of London LAs also indicates Somali pupils were the lowest attaining group (Rutter, 2004). Figure 1 data also confirms the attainment gap at GCSE and that on average Somali pupils have not shared equally in the increasing rate of educational achievement. The data provides strong evidence that Somali pupils may generally be falling further behind the average achievements of the majority of their peers.

Figure 1. Somali GCSE Performance Compared to Other Main Ethnic Groups in England, 2006
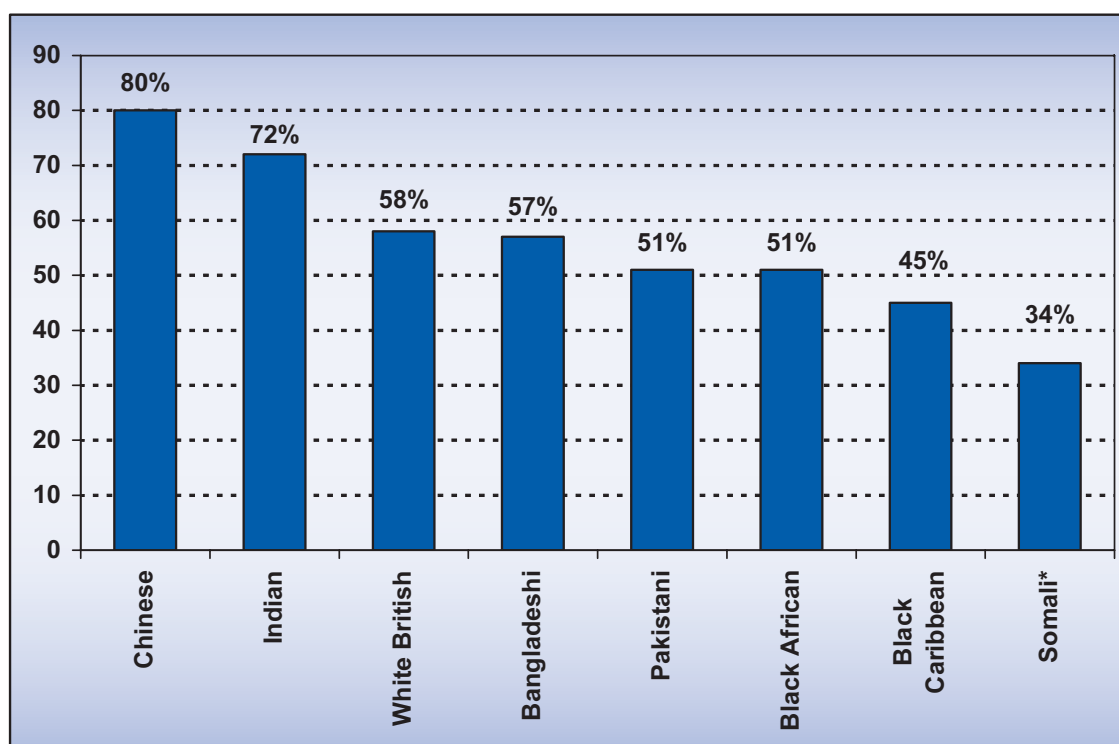
Source: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000708/SFR04_2007Tables.xls
*. The Somali figure here is the average of 10 Local Authorities in London with over 1000 Somali children in their schools. No reliable national data is available or collected by DfES.

Previous studies attribute the roots of Somali pupil underachievement (Demie et al 2006; Diriye, 2006; Rutter, 2004) to a number of factors including:

1. **Lack of understanding of the British education system** - Children pass from stage to stage according to their age in the UK but in Somalia according to their ability. Most parents don't understand levels (1-8) as measurement of their child's progress.

2. **Language barrier** - The idea of bilingualism is new to Somalis. Parents who are unable to speak English themselves (the majority of families) have limited ability to help their children with work. This may also diminish Somali parents will to visit school and speak to school staff about their children. Most schools don't have special arrangements to reach out to those parents.

3. **Lack of parental support** - Many parents are unable to offer help to their children because of lack of prior education or ability to use English.

4. **Single parent families** - There are a disproportionate number of single female heads of household. Rutter (2004:4) suggests *'between 20-70% of Somali households are being headed by women. This may be as a result of men being killed in Somalia, families being split up as a result of working in the Gulf States and also divorce'*.

5. **Overcrowding** - Many Somali families live in deprived neighbourhoods with overcrowded accommodation. A typical Somali family of six children can have little or no space to organise their learning materials and may experience learning obstacles such as excessive noise levels.

6. **Racism** - Despite claims of diversity and racial equality in the media and among educational professionals, teachers are a part of a wider community which, like every community, has cultural prejudices.

7. **Trauma** - The after-effects of civil war. Many Somali children in British schools may not have experienced the war in Somalia first hand but may have experienced a long process of unsettlement which finally brought them to the UK. As a result, traumatised children may manifest behaviour such as difficulty in settling in and concentrating, lack of motivation, withdrawal and depression, aggression or irritability.

8. **Other factors** reported include poor school attendance, poverty, the stress of living in large households, interrupted or non-existent prior education, negative teacher perceptions, poor school to home liaison, lack of exposure to written language and lack of role models.

Overall the body of available research suggests that most previous studies have focussed on the reasons why Somali children are underachieving (see Demie et al 2006). However, in recent years, the need for a detailed case study of successful schools in raising the achievement of ethnic minority groups has become apparent as a means of increasing our understanding of the ways in which schools can enhance pupil's academic achievement.

Previous research has looked at examples of schools that provide an environment in which Black African and Black Caribbean pupils flourish and identified key characteristics of successful schools in raising achievement, including strong leadership, high expectations, effective teaching and learning, an ethos of respect with a clear approach to racism and bad behaviour and parental involvement (for details see Demie et al 2006; DfES, 2003). The DfES (2003) argued there is no 'pick and mix' option.

An effective school will seek to develop all these characteristics underpinned by the practical use of data to monitor the achievement of particular groups of pupils to pinpoint and tackle underperformance. Much of the previous British research in this area is on African heritage and Black Caribbean pupils and there is a lack of research into the factors which contribute to educational success and high attainment of Somali heritage pupils in British schools.

Aims and Objectives of the Research

This research project aims to raise the achievement of Somali heritage pupils at all key stages. Specific objectives are:

- To study the achievement of Somali heritage pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3 and GCSE.
- To examine the school experiences of Somali heritage pupils.
- To identify reasons for underachievement.
- To discover factors which contribute to the success of Somali heritage pupils.
- To explore strategies used by schools to raise achievement of Somali heritage pupils.

Research Methods and Data Collection

The empirical investigation of Somali pupil's attainment is supported by an ethnographical study of the school and home experiences of Somali children. Three complementary methodological approaches were adopted to explore performance, the views of teachers, Somali parents and their children of schooling and of education. Details of the methodological framework and activities are summarised below:

A. **Performance data analysis:** KS1, KS2, KS3 and GCSE statistical trends and patterns of performance are analysed by ethnic background, levels of fluency in English and mobility rate to illustrate differences in attainment.

B. **Focus groups and parent, pupil and community groups interviews:** Interviews with staff, parents, pupils and community groups took place including focus group discussion. The aim of the pupil and parent interviews and community focus groups was to ascertain the views of parents and Somali community groups regarding their experiences within the English and Local Authority schooling system and what practical steps need to be taken in order to improve levels of achievement for Somali heritage pupils. Headteachers had been asked to select a mixed group of pupils, parents and community groups.

C. **Teacher interviews and focus groups:** The aim of the teachers' focus groups was to ascertain the views of teachers regarding what practical steps need to be taken in order to improve levels of achievement for Somali heritage pupils. Specific objectives were to identify what black and minority ethnic teachers see as key issues, to share the experience of minority ethnic teachers and to discuss their role in raising levels of achievement. Headteachers were asked to select a mixed group of teachers with a range of teaching experience, gender and ethnicity.

D. **Case studies and observations:**
- Methodological approach for selecting case study schools and LAs: The methodological approach for this research comprised of case studies of selected schools. To compliment the research we selected 9 schools to get more information on experiences of raising achievement. The selected schools needed to have a minimum of 5% Somali heritage pupils.

- Case study school visits and observations with colleagues from schools to inform dialogue about what works and why: Consultants visited each of the schools for two days, to observe lessons and interview and hold discussions with headteachers, staff, governors and pupils to evaluate and gather evidence on how well Somali heritage pupils are achieving and the factors contributing to this. These included:
  - The school curriculum.
  - The quality of teaching and learning.
  - How the school monitors pupils performance.
  - How it supports and guides pupils.
  - The school's links with parents.
  - Parents' and pupils' views about the school and its support systems.
  - Race and ethnicity in the curriculum.
  - Quality of school leadership and management.
  - Positive views of diversity of life in Africa.
  - How teachers have the confidence, competence and materials to use the existing flexibility within the curriculum to make subjects more relevant to African pupils' own experiences and to reflect their cultural heritage.
  - A range of other questions centred on staffing policies, behaviour management and governors.

Schools Selected for Case Studies: Using a case study approach, 7 primary and 2 secondary schools with high number of Somali pupils were selected. The case study schools as a whole covered a range of ethnic groups, community languages spoken in school, free school meals, level of fluency and mobility rates data (see table 1). Each of the case study schools received a preliminary visit to collect background documentary evidence and to make arrangements for the interviews.

The main method of data collection was open ended semi-structured interviews with senior management, teachers, administrative staff and support staff as well as Somali parents and pupils. The aim was to then triangulate the voices of the various stake holders in the education of Somali pupils. Interviews were conducted by three researchers and the team were supported by a Somali translator for parent interviews. Fieldwork visits to each school lasted two days. Draft reports were sent to the schools for respondent validation and the data was duly amended to take account of any inaccuracies and omissions. The findings which emerged from this part of project are given in chapters that follow.

Table 1. Characteristics of the case study schools

	Key Background Data	Primary Case Study Schools						Secondary Case Study Schools	
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
School Roll Number	Total School Roll	423	406	447	489	390	449	983	624
	Somali Pupils on Roll	34	32	35	42	38	17	55	48
	% Somali of Total Roll	8%	8%	8%	9%	10%	4%	6%	8%
All Pupils – background factors	% Free School Meals	44%	57%	41%	49%	50%	21%	79%	73%
	% mobility rate	12%	12%	7%	10%	10%	13%	8%	12%
	% Bilingual (Stage 1-4)	69%	57%	47%	54%	53%	54%	50%	65%
	% Non fluent (Stage 1-3)	59%	39%	42%	51%	44%	50%	24%	25%
Somali Pupils- Background factors	% Non fluent (Stage 1-3)	97%	81%	100%	100%	97%	100%	58%	73%
	% Stage 4 only fully fluent	3%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%	42%	27%
	% mobility	29%	9%	40%	19%	24%	18%	15%	50%
	% Free school Meals	74%	94%	100%	81%	97%	94%	95%	100%

N.B. Somali mobility based on pupils joining after Year 7 for secondary schools. Primary pupils in Years 4-6 are mobile if they joined the school after Year 3. Pupils in reception to Year 3 are not mobile.

Background to Somali Communities in the UK

Since the 1960's there has been a steady migration of Somalis to Britain, but large numbers arrived in 1980s and 1990s following the civil war in Somalia. Somalis first came to Britain in the late 19th century (Little, 1948; Collins, 1957). *'The early migrants were working in the Royal or Merchant Navy and mostly settled in the docklands of London and Cardiff and a few in Liverpool, Hull, Bristol and other ports'* (Kahin 1997:31).

Several commentators have noted that little is known about the actual size of the Somali population resident in Britain, with the 2001 census figure for Somali born London inhabitants alone being less than half the figure estimated by some recent studies (Harris, 2004). The 2001 census records 43,532 people born in Somalia being resident in the UK, with the largest concentration in London, Sheffield, Birmingham, Cardiff, Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds and Leicester. However this is only a percentage of the full Somali population as it does not take account UK born children of Somali parentage. A survey in 2004 reported in the House of Commons also suggests there was a low level of participation by the Somali community in the 2001 census[1].

[1] Survey results were reported orally at a Somali Community Meeting held at the House of Commons, 29th March 2004. For comment see Hermione Harris' 2004 paper 'The Somali Community in the UK: What we know and how we know it'.

Estimates as to the actual number of Somalis in the UK vary considerably, with ranges between 95,000 to 250,000 (Lewis 2002; Harris 2004)[2]. It is important to note that the large increase in refugees who entered the UK in the 1980s and 1990s was mostly made up of women and children, some coming to join their husbands but the majority being single-parent families. This changed the makeup of Somali communities from mostly single male workers (who were present from the previous waves of immigration) to refugee communities with large numbers of children and young adults.

In recent years' the nature of Somali immigration to the UK has changed from being composed of refugees leaving Somalia itself, to those leaving other host countries (such as Sweden, Norway and Holland) for the UK. A major motivation for this is to join family members and settled Somalian communities in Britain. As Harris states:
'The UK hosts the largest Somali community outside Somalia, and the UK is described by Somalis as a 'meeting point', a 'more intercultural society' than many of the (European) states Somalis leave behind' (Harris 2004:24).

It was this wave of Somali migration that set the current pattern of Somali settlement in the UK and a focus of concern recently among national policy makers.

The Achievement of Somali Children in Schools

Table 2. KS2, KS3 and GCSE Attainment by Main Ethnic Groups in England

Main Ethnic Groups	Key Stage Results -Level 4+				Key Stage 3 Results -Level 5+				GCSE 5+A*-C
	English	Maths	Science	Average	English	Maths	Science	Average	
White British	80	77	88	82	73	78	74	75	58
Chinese	86	92	91	90	80	92	81	84	80
Indian	85	81	88	85	82	85	78	82	72
Pakistani	70	64	73	69	62	66	54	61	51
Bangladeshi	75	70	79	75	66	69	57	64	57
Black Caribbean	73	62	80	72	67	64	58	63	45
Black African	72	63	76	70	66	66	56	63	51
Somali*	58	58	68	61	41	50	39	43	34
All pupils-	**79**	**75**	**86**	**80**	**73**	**77**	**72**	**74**	**57**

N.B: *The Somali figure here is the average of 10 London Local Authorities with over 1000 Somali pupils in their school. No Somali national data is available.

The issue of Somali underachievement is complicated by the problem with categorisation of 'Somali' which is broadly defined nationally as African. As a result of the lack of data there were various limitations in past research into Somali underachievement in British schools. The absence of national comparative data which identifies patterns of children of Somali origins, places serious constraints on effecting targeting policy and practice developments at national and local level. However, recently a number of London Local Authorities with high Somali school populations began monitoring and collecting data which has provided an interesting example in research evidence.

[2] For recent estimate of 250,000 see Ioan Lewis, Liberation Meeting, London, 26th November 2002.

Table 2 shows KS2, KS3 and KS4 results for each main ethnic group at national level including aggregated data for 11 selected LAs in London which are noted as having over one thousand Somali pupils in their schools. The main findings from recent national data points out that Somali children were the lowest performing group. We have noted from the data:

- At Key Stage 2, 61% of Somali children were gaining level 4 or above compared to 82% of White British pupils, 70% of African pupils, 72% of Black Caribbean pupils and 85% of Indian pupils.

- At Key Stage 3, 43% were gaining level 5 or above compared to 75% of White British pupils, 63% of African pupils, 63% of Black Caribbean pupils and 82% of Indian pupils.

- At Key Stage 4, 34% were gaining 5+A*-C compared to 58% of White British pupils, 51% of African pupils, 45 % of Black Caribbean pupils and 72% of Indian pupils.

Broadly speaking there are marked differences in performance between different ethnic groups. Chinese, Indian and White heritage pupils are the highest achieving groups, followed by Black African, Bangladeshi and Black Caribbean at all key stages. Somali heritage pupils are the lowest achieving group. This is not surprising as the findings from a number of previous studies came to similar conclusions (Demie 2006; Diriye 2006).

However, there have not been sufficient rates of improvement for Black African, Black Caribbean and Somali heritage pupils to narrow the gap (see Demie 2006). As with findings from previous studies, the data highlights a particular disadvantage experienced by Somali and Black heritage pupils in English Education systems (Demie 2006). To date it has been difficult to draw generalised conclusions from research on Somali educational achievement because data at a national level categorized Somali pupils as African, making it difficult to accurately establish the relative achievement of Somali pupils compared to English/Scottish/Welsh and other ethnic groups. But, the data collected by London LAs is helpful and confirms that Somali pupils have not shared equally in increasing rates of achievement (see Demie et al 2006). The finding that Somali pupils are the lowest achieving group has important implications for strategies of raising achievement.

The findings makes it easier for researchers to examine the differences in experiences between pupils from different ethnic groups and for practitioners to identify appropriate strategies to tackle perceived problems of Somali underachievement in schools.

The above findings are supported by London LAs data known to have significant number of Somali pupils in schools. Figure 2 and 3 shows the worrying picture of the performance of Somali pupils in these LAs. In almost all these LAs, Somali heritage pupils achieve below the national average. There is significant and consistent variation between the performance of pupils from Somali heritage backgrounds across the 10 authorities. One LA recorded 13% 5+A*-C compared to another LA as high as 50% 5+A*-C. Despite the variation between different LAs, the view that emerges from the London data is that in at least in four authorities the range of performance is between 42% and 50% 5+A*-C.

Figure 2. Average GCSE Results for Somali Pupils by London LA (5+A*-C), 2006
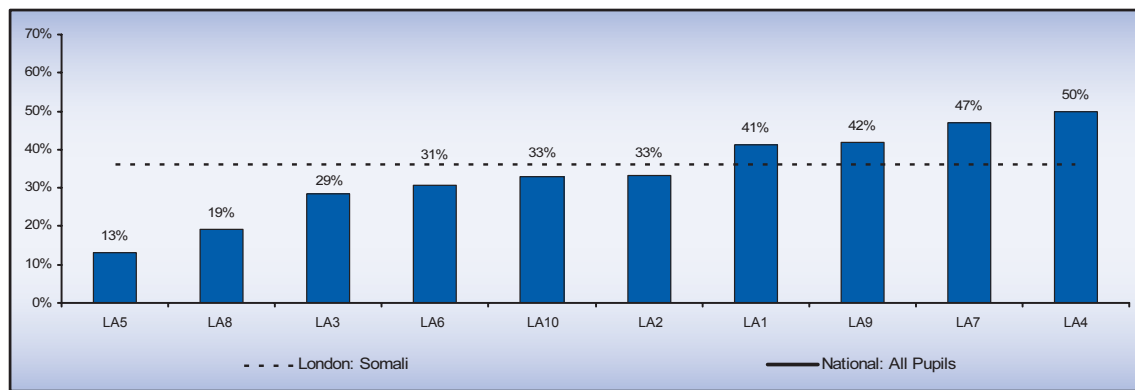
An analysis of KS2 data across selected London Authorities also reveals a contrasting picture of performance between different Local Authorities and suggests that Somali pupils are achieving below the national average and that there is great variation in performance between Local Authorities.

Figure 3. Average KS2 Results for Somali Pupils by London LA (Level 4+), 2006
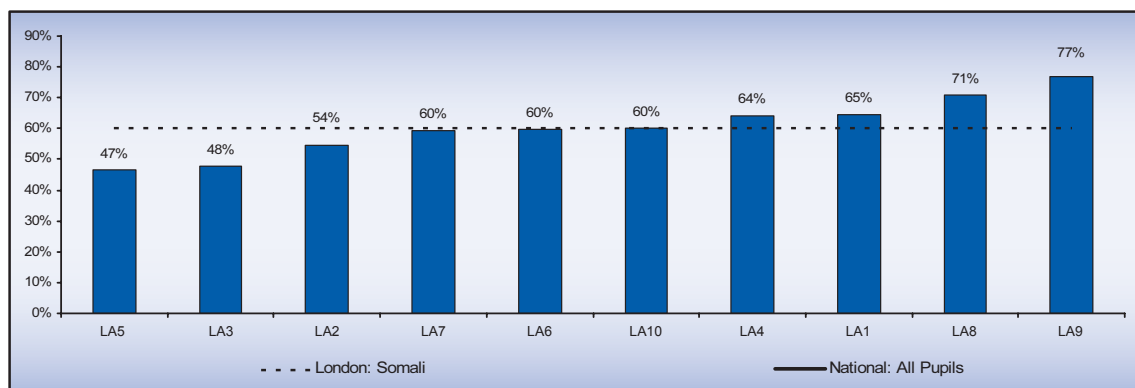
One of the most striking points from figures 2 and 3 is the marked difference between Local Authorities in raising achievement of Somali heritage pupils. In LA 5 only 13% of Somali pupils achieved five GCSE passes at Grade A*-C. But in four other authorities between 40% and 50% achieved 5+A*-C. There are a number of reasons for such differentials.

Firstly, performance could be related to the number of years in British education, some pupils could be new arrivals which is common in some authorities. Secondly, it could be due to the fact that standards generally in these four authorities (as shown in table) are higher than in other authorities. Thirdly, the inclusion and EAL support policy and practices in these four authorities could be more effective. It is impossible, on the basis of the information available to judge which of these three explanations is the most probable.

The differences in performance between authorities means that blanket statements about Somali attainment, either nationally or London wide, must always treated with extreme caution until good data is available.

Factors Affecting Achievement of Somali Heritage Pupils

Three factors that are helpful in understanding the effect of background factors on attainment of Somali pupils in schools were considered - eligibility for free school meals (FSM), gender, pupil mobility and levels of fluency in English. The findings from table 3 confirm that Somali pupils are somewhat more disadvantaged. For example the table shows that about 92% of KS2 pupils were eligible for FSM, 82% were not fluent in English and 55% were mobile.

A similar pattern was found at GCSE where almost all pupils were on FSM, 87% were not fluent in English and 44% were mobile in one London Authority.

Table 3. Social Background of Somali Pupils in an Inner London LA, 2006

	KS2 Cohort	GCSE Cohort
Eligible for free school meals	92%	100%
Bilingual stage 1-3- Not fluent in English	82%	87%
Mobile	55%	44%

Somali pupils had the highest average mobility at KS2, with an average of 55% of pupils joining the school after the start of Key Stage 2. They were closely followed by African and Caribbean pupils with about 25% mobility. A much smaller proportion of White British pupils were mobile, at around 13%, averaged over the last 4 years. At GCSE, the mobility rate was highest for Somali pupils (an average of 44% of pupils joined the school after Year 7), followed by Portuguese (23%), then Caribbean (17%), whilst the most stable group was again White British with only 11% joining their secondary school in Year 8 or later.

Gender Differences

Table 4 repeats patterns established earlier, whereby girls tend to outperform boys at each key stage (Demie et al, 2006). Overall, the findings of the results between key stages indicate that girls achieve higher averages than boys by a quite noticeable margin for the main ethnic groups. However, this is not true for Somali pupils. Somali boys at GCSE were more likely to perform above the level of girls in one LA which we have data by gender.

Table 4. KS2 and GCSE National Performance in England by Ethnicity and Gender – 2006

	KS2 Level 4+				GCSE 5+A*-C			
	All pupils	Boys	Girls	Gap	All Pupils	Boys	Girls	Gap
White British	82%	80%	83%	3%	57%	53%	62%	9%
Bangladeshi	75%	74%	76%	2%	56%	50%	62%	12%
Black Caribbean	71%	67%	76%	9%	44%	36%	52%	16%
Black African	70%	68%	73%	5%	50%	44%	56%	12%
Somali*	60%	55%	67%	12%	35%	40%	29%	-11%

* No national Somali data available. Data here refers to a London Local Authority.

Pupil Mobility Factor

It is now widely recognised that mobility can have an adverse affect on educational attainment. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector reported that high pupil mobility was one of the greatest problems, if not the greatest problem that any school can face. Mobile pupils are those who join or leave a school at a point other than at the age they would normally start or finish their education at a school[3].

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[3] For the purposes of this study, a pupil is defined as mobile at KS2 if they joined the school after Year 3. Similarly, at GCSE, a pupil who joins the school after Year 7 is classified as mobile.

Pupils who were at the school at the start of KS2 and GCSE were more likely than their peers of the same ethnicity to gain the expected level. Figure 4 shows at KS2 about 59% of non-mobile pupils achieved level 4 or above. At GCSE about 42% of pupils who had experienced non mobile schooling throughout GCSE achieved 5+A*-C compared with 20% of non-mobile pupils.

There was steady decline in average performance as pupils spent less time in the primary and secondary school where they were tested. Figure 4 clearly illustrates this point showing that, on average, pupils who spent all of KS2 in the same school achieved better than Year 4 arrivals, who in turn achieved better than Year 5 arrivals, and that pupils who arrived in the year of KS2 tests has the lowest levels of attainment. Figure 4 also shows that those pupils who had been in the school for the whole GCSE period did markedly better than others who joined schools in other years. However, the most marked differences in attainment were observed for those pupils who joined the school in Year 11 at GCSE.

Figure 4. Somali KS2 and GCSE Performance by Length of Time Spent in School
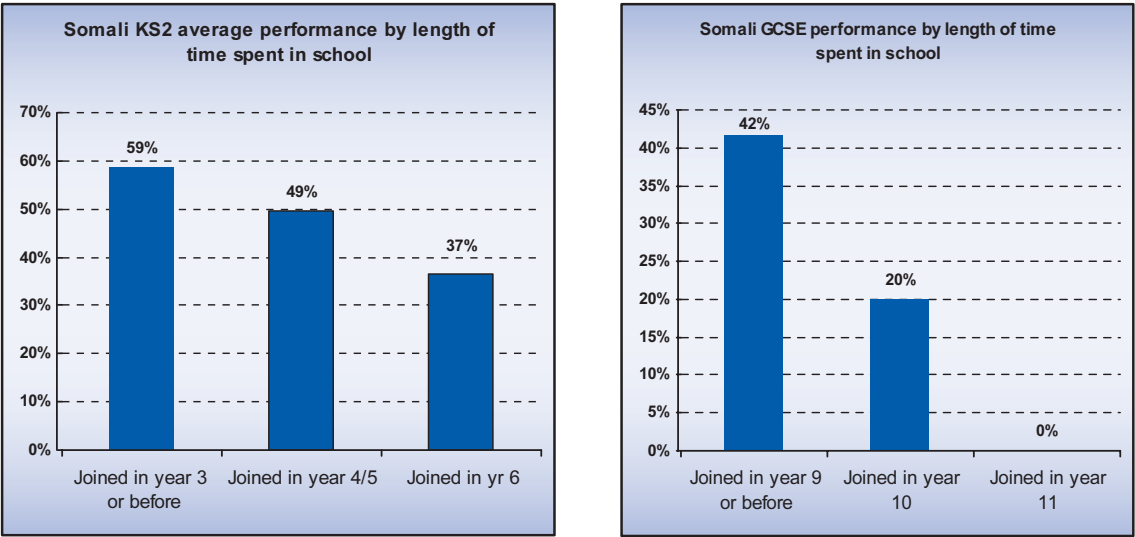
English Language Acquisition and Achievement

Another important factor related to ethnic background and African heritage achievement is English fluency. For students to have access to the curriculum it is clear that they need to be fluent in the language of instruction. Some students of African heritage are fluent in English while others such as Somali students may not be.

A number of studies have explored the relationship between English fluency and pupil attainment. Demie and Strand (2005) examined the results at KS2 and GCSE whilst at the same time controlling for age, gender, free school meals, ethnic background and mobility rate. The results indicated that pupils who spoke English as an additional language scored significantly lower than those who spoke English as a first language or were fluent in English.

Figure 5. Somali KS2 Attainment by Levels of Fluency in English in Inner London LA (Level 4+)
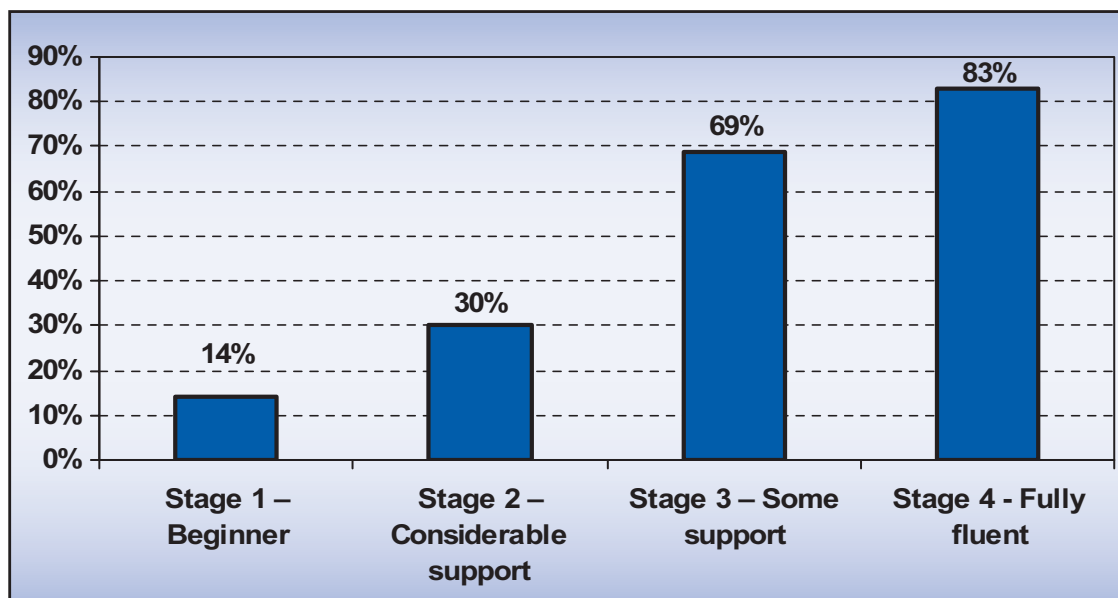

Figure 5 and table 5 gives the average KS2 performance in the tests by level of fluency in English for the major ethnic groups in Lambeth. Somali pupils' performance at KS2 increases at the stage of proficiency in English increases. Bilingual Somali speakers who were fully fluent in English were more likely to gain level 4+ than Somali pupils who only spoke English.

Analysis of KS3 results also shows that fluency in English continues to have a strong influence on the performance of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) (see table 5). Overall empirical evidence at the end of secondary education from the Authority suggests pupils in the early stages of fluency perform at very low levels, while bilingual pupils who are reasonably proficient in English perform better on average than English only speakers. Somali heritage pupils assessed as fully fluent in English perform much higher than the national average at all stages. These findings offer much encouragement for policy makers and school improvement practitioners. They demonstrate that once the language barrier is overcome, it is possible to attain high levels of achievement for all key stages.

Table 5. Somali KS3 & KS2 Attainment by Levels of Fluency in English in Inner London LA

	Stage 1 – Beginner	Stage 2 – Consider able support	Stage 3 – Some support	Stage 4 - Fully fluent
KS3 cohort	4	11	12	15
KS3 English Test 5+	0%	0%	17%	67%
KS3 Maths Test 5+	0%	27%	25%	73%
KS3 Science Test 5+	0%	18%	17%	60%
KS3 Average Test 5+	0%	15%	19%	67%
KS2 cohort	7	28	30	12
KS2 English Test 4+	0%	21%	67%	92%
KS2 Maths Test 4+	14%	29%	70%	75%
KS2 Science Test 4+	29%	39%	70%	83%
KS2 Average 4+	14%	30%	69%	83%

Barriers to Learning and Experiences of Somali Pupils in Schools

Introduction

The aim of this section of the research was to develop an understanding of the schooling experiences of Somali pupils and to ascertain views of parents and pupils with regard to what practical steps need to be taken in order to raise standards. Specific objectives were:

- To examine the school experiences of Somali pupils in relation to classroom experiences, relationship with teachers, relationship with peers and support from home.
- To identify levels and types of parental involvement in the education of children at home and school.
- To identify what Somali parents and pupils see as key issues and identify what steps need to be taken to raise achievement.

Headteachers were asked to select a mixed group of parents and pupils for focus groups and interviews. Separate parent and pupil focus groups and interviews were run in five schools, in which the researchers introduced themselves, welcomed parents and pupils and explained the purpose of the one hour interview. Pupils involved were from Key Stage 1, 2, 3 and 4 cohorts.

As part of the interview, parents, pupils and teachers were asked 'what are the main barriers to achievement in schools?' The main findings are summarised below.

Somali Parents Lack of Knowledge of the English School System

Few Somali parents have any experience of the British education system. *'In Somalia entry to a particular year of education does not necessarily depend on age. Recently arrived Somali children are seriously disadvantaged by the British education system which is 'year-governed', grouping children according to their age. This hinders a flexible response to the many children who need more time to acquire literacy and linguistic skills. Somali parents occasionally suggest that a child be put down a year because of their low language and literacy'* (Kahin 1997:68).

A senior community leader and parent in the focus group also expressed similar concerns that *'there are different issues for Somali children who are born here and those that come from Somalia and enter schools at non routine times. Children coming from Somalia will have had different exposures to education - either rural or city. They have also been moving around neighbouring countries. They do not have the language or any background in education and can therefore 'drop out.'* Another community representative stated that, *'if language is not there, everything is not there.'*

Children who have been born here have a cultural gap between themselves and their parents. Each may not be able to speak each others language. Young people therefore tend to ignore their parents' help or suggestions, thinking that they are already in a better position as they speak the language. Two secondary schools in Lambeth have mentoring programs which help bridge the gap when links between home and school are not working or children do not feel supported at home.

There is also a lack of awareness amongst Somali parents. They often do not know the system well and the triangular relationship between parents, teachers and children is not strong. Parents see the home / school agreement as an added pressure or as a blame culture. Many parents assume that because children move up a year they are doing well, as in Somalia children stay in the same year group if they are not progressing regardless of their age. Some parents use supplementary schools, others will just drop off and collect their children. It makes a difference if parents were educated in Somalia.

One school governor commented: *'Parents come to the UK thinking that they will have a better life. With a lack of education in Somalia they don't believe they can do it here. Many lose interest in education; the situation back home makes them hopeless. They cannot work here. They can only do security jobs and bus driving.'*

Many Somalis arriving in school in the UK have had little or no educational experience. Not only do they not have any English language but they have no knowledge of the school system: *'It is unknown what type of schooling children coming from Somalia have had, whether it is rural where they have spent time growing things or city based or whether it has been maybe more consistent. Many Somali children find it difficult to fit into routines e.g. sitting quietly in the classroom, the school ethic'.*

'It takes time to fit into the school context social, behaviour wise, the inter-personal skills that are culturally bound in schools, what they have to do to be a good student, to 'play the game' in order to succeed. Part of 'playing the game' is being responsive to the teachers'.

Many Somali parents have a lack of knowledge about the school system. They do not know the system and the triangular relationship between parents, teachers and children is not strong. *'Parents often see the home / school agreement as an added pressure or 'blame culture.' When schools talk to parents about the 'Code of Conduct and highlight 'not fighting', parents are inclined to offer nothing on children's backgrounds which might include their experience of trauma and fighting in Somalia. Information of this nature is more likely to come out later if children are involved in incidents then they might talk to a mentor or the headteacher. Interpreters at induction interviews are also surprised or suspicious when teachers ask families about children's emotional state / background believing that children come to school to learn and do what they are told, any background is irrelevant to this fact. They do not share the holistic approach to educating the child'.*

In some cases there is a lack of a good working relationship between the school and community. Parents often do not know what is expected from them from schools. Some schools suggested the need for community leaders to work with schools in order to act as a bridge in communications between parents and schools. *'Somalis respond to their own kind, the nominated people in their own community. The Authority also needs a small team of Somali professionals who can work with the school / broker discussions between the school and parents that have the knowledge of education that lay translators from the community do not possess'.*

As children learn more English, children communicate less with non English speaking parents. Parents are less able to support them generally. Children who have been born here have a cultural gap between themselves and their parents. They might not be able to speak each others languages. Young people therefore tend to ignore their parents' help or suggestions thinking that they are already in a better position due to the fact that they speak the language. Two secondary schools in one Authority have mentoring programmes to bridge this gap when the link between home and school is not working and children do not feel supported at home.

Somali Role Models and Curriculum Issues

There are few positive male role models in many Somali families. Few fathers take part in their children's school life. The male 'displacement' and 'limbo' is often transmitted to the children. Sons' attitudes to mothers can be disrespectful, this goes for teachers too. It manifests itself in inappropriate behaviour in the classroom.

Parents in a number of school focus group interviews also reported that the largest prison population in the UK is now Somali and that this trend is increasing. There are also concerns that only small numbers of Somali young people go to university. These concerns were raised by parents as an issue in their children's education. Parents commented that *'our children do not have any role models.'* Young Somalis disaffected with the system create both a threat to themselves and general community cohesion. When children are young they stay at home but when they are older, boys may hang around the street due to underachievement at school whereas girls who are more 'responsible' will go out with friends. *'Girls are more successful. They are patient, they give education a chance. Boys are not the same.'*

There are no Somalis in positions of influence to develop the school curriculum. Community representatives feel there is a dire need for Somali teachers to contribute in order to make school life more inclusive for Somali pupils. Although parents stated that they found dual language story books useful, the community representatives are more sceptical: *'There are many story books that are translated into Somali but the stories do not reflect Somali culture, instead they might be Indian and other cultural tales and therefore Somali parents are not interested. There are also issues to do with the translation due to different dialects, writing the word, reading the word. There needs to be negotiation over the written word. There is also an issue with translation for exams. Language is an issue for children taking exams, they might be able to speak Somali but not read the written word, the same could be said for their English too.'*

Parents felt although it would be good to see more representation of Somalia in the curriculum, if children were to do for example projects about Somalia, parents would not be able to help them.

All the indicators relating to child poverty are pertinent to the Somali community: overcrowding, lone parents, large families, an unemployment rate of 82% and the existence of a disabled child or adult. Few children have access to computers or the internet at home.
A community representative who works as an advocate for a Somali women's group stated that *'It is difficult, it is just Mum at home with 5 or 6 children. A lot of Somali men when they don't have a job turn to Khat. It causes family breakdown. They get homesick, they go to the community centre to chat, take it and then get hooked. They look normal but are in hell inside. They are awake all night and in bed all day. Many therefore have mental health problems, they might be shamed and reclusive. They lose their family because of it. Sometimes boys of 14 and 15 take it.'*

Language Barriers to Learning

Language issues present barriers to learning. The official language of education in the schools here in Britain is English; therefore fluency in English is essential to succeeding in education. In this regard, the Somali community in the UK are in a disadvantaged position compared to a number of former British colonies where English is the academic language and or an official language used for administration, business and politics. Other studies now confirm that *'The Somali community in the UK speaks Somali language in their homes, community centres, parties and gatherings. The only time they usually speak English is when speaking to non-Somalis in the workplace, schools, colleges, Doctor's, etc'* (see Diriye 2006). Many Somali adults are unable to read and write and less than 20% were educated before the Civil war.

Parents are not able to support Children with homework. *'Some parents do not know how to help. It is the language that is the issue; they might understand how to do the maths but can't explain it in English. They need help with the language. The school is the main teacher. The children do not have enough language and neither do the parents'.*

Parents felt that the Authority should invest in helping parents learn to speak English:
'LAs should support this.. in teaching.. if you understand the language you can learn other things. This teaching of parents should go on during school time'.
'If they get support with their language they can do everything better. Education is important, you can't live without education, it's for the future.'

Many Somali Children in schools are beginners in the English language and new to the British educational system. Nearly all receive some kind of EAL specialist support.
Somali children do not make the transition from superficial to academic English easily. Many children talk to each other in Somali at school and appear reluctant to engage in constructed talk in the class:
'Maths: pupils can cope with basic numerical skills but the language needed often limits them. Perhaps translations would help. We put up the vocabulary around the room, but if they don't recognise a written form of their own language that doesn't help'.

Not all Somali children make the progress from superficial English language to academic language easily. They do not show a *'desire to learn it; they talk to each other in Somali'.* Many are passive in the classroom.'

Cultural Issues

Many Somalis don't mix with others, they remain *'with their own'*. Many parents rarely travel out of the immediate area and consequently children have few opportunities to experience the wealth of cultural and social opportunities other than those offered by the school. Schools try to encourage parents to accompany classes when they go out on visits and have also arranged specific visits for parents, for example to the Natural History Museum. A parent governor in one school observed that whilst children in the school tend to mix well, their parents are more reserved:
'cultural / religious community events are a good idea, there seems to be a lack of knowledge about different customs… for example, very rarely would Asian children come to another classmate's birthday party'. *'Boosting the value of learning English should be a priority. It will give parents access to much more. Perhaps parents could be encouraged to pair up and befriend other parents in the playground. Sometimes the culture doesn't encourage this however, despite some mums wanting to take this up'.*

Poverty Factor

All the indicators relating to child poverty are pertinent to the Somali community: overcrowding, lone parents, large families, an unemployment rate of 82% and the existence of a disabled child or adult. Housing issues resulting in the stress of living in overcrowded conditions in deprived areas is common to many Somali families. In some areas of Lambeth there are also tensions on the estates between community groups 'living on top of each other' who adopt different life styles. *'Some community groups party all night whilst the Somalis are trying to pray, tensions from the estate spill over into the playground'.* Many Somali children have interrupted schooling in this country due to re-housing. The experience of one child now in Year 3 is not uncommon:
'I was in my current school from Year 2 but before that I was in Leicester and then we moved to Northampton. I have been to four schools'. Few children would have computers or access to the internet at home.

Single Parent Households and Disjointed Family Lives

There are a disproportionate number of single female heads of household. Rutter (2004:4) suggests *'between 20-70% of Somali households are being headed by women. This may be as a result of men being killed in Somalia, families being split up as a result of working in the Gulf States and also divorce'.* Our study also confirms that many Somali pupils have disjointed family lives. They may have had to leave their parents and come over to the UK with relations or on their own. Many do not have extended families here. Many families are headed by a woman who has competing domestic pressures on her time. *'It is difficult if it is just Mum at home with 5 or 6 children'.* There are few positive male role models in many Somali families. Few fathers take part in their children's school life. *'Many males get homesick, go to community centres to chat and take khat. When they get hooked they get mental health problems, they might be shamed and reclusive. They lose their family because of it. Sometimes boys of 14 and 15 take it.'*

Male 'displacement' and 'limbo' is often transmitted to the children. As a result sons' attitudes to mothers can be disrespectful, this goes for teachers too. It manifests itself in inappropriate behaviour in the classroom. Confrontational behaviour can act as a barrier to learning for Somali children. Confrontations with staff and peers are based on childrens feelings of fair play and holding your corner. Boys are more confident to begin with. This manifests itself in the ability to confront teachers and their profile is upped in a negative way. Also it is unfortunate that the ways boys can show friendships e.g. holding hands, being physical with one another attracts negative attention from peers so that their one positive way of being is taken away from them. This can have an impact on their social development.

Traumatic Experiences

The civil war in Somalia caused immense suffering for the Somali people and their children. Somali pupils have witnessed killings and violence. There has been large scale distraction and displacement with many ending in refugee camps which are in appalling conditions. Evidence now indicates a relatively large number of Somalis have lived through the traumatic experience of war and displacement (Kahin, 1997: 73). Many of the children in British schools may have also experienced a long process of unsettlement which finally brought them to the UK. Some children interviewed had trekked across the border through the Ogden desert to escape the destruction and the killing.

Some children have seen the brutality of war, the killing of a father or mother or loved one and the destruction of their home. Some have been orphaned and looked after by extended families. Some have been brought here by extended family after their families were killed in the war or may have died in refugee camps in neighbouring countries where they had been given refugee status. Some do not have any extended families and may have ended as looked after children. They face the uncertainty of not knowing where their parents are and they are often rejected by their carers. As a result traumatised children may manifest behaviour such as difficulty in settling in and concentrating, lack of motivation, withdrawal and depression, aggression or irritability.

Housing Problems and Pupil Mobility Issues

The Somali community generally faces unsettling housing problems when they come to UK. This is mainly influenced by immigration status and housing policy. It is now a well known fact that large numbers of Somali families are either refugee or asylum seekers who are not offered refugee status. Most asylum seekers are in temporary accommodation. They are frequently housed in run-down properties, high-density estates and in overcrowded accommodation which does not provide a conducive environment for education. For example one family interviewed were living with 5 children and two adults in a one bedroom flat. This parent was frustrated by the lack of response from the Housing department to her request for re-housing.

Our discussion with this parent revealed that she first came to this country for medical treatment of her left hand which was paralysed when she was gunned down while defending her property in Mogadishu by a war-lord group operating in Somalia. She has full refugee status which allows her access to local services. Hers is a remarkable history but she still faces challenges in looking after her five children and extended family.

A typical Somali family in one focus group reported a family of six with additional extended family members living in flats insufficient to meet their accommodation needs. There is a lack of suitable study area in such overcrowded living conditions. Such experiences no doubt damage the education of Somali children. Accommodation is a major issue and definitely has implications for raising the achievement of Somali children in schools. This has been raised in every parent focus group interview as an issue to be addressed. What is even more worrying is that some of the families in temporary accommodation move house many times, disrupting Somali children's education at a critical time when they need to settle in school. We interviewed a pupil who moved over 8 times throughout England and is now in a LA school.

Mobility is an issue, many arrivals are refugees. Many are in temporary accommodation and will be re-housed several times. The Housing department needs to work with the Education department to lessen the moves or lessen the impact through moving at non routine times.

Although there is a One Stop Shop, many Somalis may not have confidence in this service as they do not have the language to approach the centre or access to translation when they have a problem. Leaflets are not often translated into Somali. The centre needs to employ a representative from the Somali community.

Somali Parent and Pupils Views: The Focus Group Evidence

Somali Parents Views of Education and Barriers to Learning

Community representatives feel that as far as school expectations are concerned schools that have to raise achievement generally tend to get fed up with the issues that young Somalis present, language being one. They would like to see more Somali staff in schools and the school and community working together. They posed the irony that many Somalis who used to be teachers in Somalia are now jobless and that there needs to be opportunities within teacher training for them *'it is a vicious circle, they need experience to work but can't get the experience.'* There is an initiative in West London regarding training mentors.

Community representatives feel a summary of the main reasons for underachievement to be:
- The lack of English language acting as a barrier to learning.
- The general lack of role models in the community for young Somalis.
- A lack of knowledge about the school system.
- Lack of working together between the school and community.
- Parents not knowing what is expected of them from schools and the Local Authority.

Discussions with parents in schools reveal further challenges not only as members of the Somali community but also as families. One of their main concerns is that their children become fluent in English and integrate into the British way of life.

Parents view themselves as African first, then Somali. Parents view their children as British, in contrast to their children who see themselves as Somali. Mothers in one primary school were concerned that their children speak to each other in English and that they are not always able to understand them. This can present problems later on as children feel that parents are not able to support or understand them as they do not share a language. Children may feel they do not have to follow the guidance of their parents and if they do not feel supported in their teenage years at school can drift towards street culture.

A Somali mother of three children, whose eldest daughter is now studying at Lambeth College was anxious that her daughter had some knowledge of Somalia, even though she did not expect the family to return there in the future: *'Our children see themselves as British. I took my daughter back home to Somalia… she liked it. She speaks just a little Somalian at home. The children there are very different. In Somalia the girls wouldn't work, they would stay at home and look after the children. Here there are more opportunities.'* What these opportunities might look like are different for pupils and parents, for example three boys aspired to become footballers, two pupils had not thought about what they might become, whilst only one girl saw herself going to university. One parent commented *'we would like our children to become doctors… but we don't have a fixed view.'*

Two Somali mothers discussed their attitudes to their children's education. One mother is a recent arrival straight from Somalia arriving in May 2001, the other mother who was privately educated in Somalia arrived in London in 1999. Both women described themselves as African and Somali. They stated that education is important, *'you can't live without education, it's for the future.'* One mother felt that by sending her children to school they would be able to help her to improve her own English.

Both mothers felt that despite cultural differences children settled into school quickly, *'they cope because they are children. We haven't seen any problems integrating with others.'* Mothers felt that there was no need for their children to underachieve, *'they should be able to do as well as any children here. They should do the same as their age group.'*

However they felt that it might be difficult for children of 8 or 9 arriving in this country with no English but praised their children's school for its intervention with children with EAL needs. *'If they get support with their language they can do everything better.'* One mother cited examples of friends with secondary aged children who had little or no English language and who would need support. They were all aware that their children had found reading and writing difficult when they first arrived at school and that they were not able to help them with homework because they did not have the necessary English. They were all keen on the library books that came home in Somali and English.

Parents are generally happy with the information they receive in the form of reports on the progress their children are making and what they are being taught. When asked how they helped their children at home, parents said that they did try to help their children with homework but also observed: *'some parents do not know how to help. It is the language that is the issue; they might understand how to do the maths but can't explain it in English. They need help with the language. The school is the main teacher. The children do not have enough language and neither do the parents.'* Parents felt that the LA should invest in helping parents learn to speak English: *'The LA should support this.. in teaching.. if you understand the language you can learn other things.'* They felt that this teaching of parents should go on during school time.

Another issue is that of childcare. One mother who has been in the UK for 10 years was finding it difficult to learn English.

For the past ten years she had been raising her children and had no time or support with childcare to pursue learning. She had found Family Learning supportive and a way around this. She is now able to attend college as her child is in Nursery.

Whilst schools try to meet the needs and expectations of parents, Somali parents expressed their frustrations with the lack of leadership within the Somalian community itself, in addressing some of their concerns, one parent observed: *'There are fifteen to twenty community groups but no-one is doing anything. We do not know much about England, but we are here for good because of the Civil War in Somalia. Anyway it would be difficult to adapt now to that way of life.'*

These mothers look to the Somali Community in their areas for support with arising issues such as housing and school places. One mother had recently been written to by one LA school admissions to notify her that her child had not got a place in the reception class at school. Unfortunately the letter was in English so she was seeking support from the community and school for this issue.

Parents spoken to were generally happy with the curriculum but they would like to see more about Africa and Somalia. In one school *'they have started to do this in global citizenship. The school is doing the best it can with forty languages.'* They do not especially want to see more black staff in school *'white or black it's just the same'* but they would like to see more Somali staff in school *'it would be good for the children, they speak their language.'* They teach their children about their roots and culture at home.

Parents in one school attended the 'Global Citizenship' day where they talked about Somali culture. They also attend parents' meetings but felt that an opportunity for Somali parents to come together as a group to talk to school personnel about problems and issues would be helpful, this could be informal with coffee. Examples of issues to be discussed with the school might be reluctance for their children to take part in sex education or religious education.

Parents revealed that they know little about the UK with only one having visited cities like Birmingham or Cardiff. They rarely travel out of the immediate area and consequently children have few opportunities to experience the wealth of cultural and social opportunities other than those offered by the school. The school tries to encourage parents to accompany classes when they go out on visits and has also arranged specific visits for parents, for example to the Natural History Museum. English language and IT classes for parents have also been arranged over recent years. Successful international evenings where parents bring their national dishes have enabled participation by Somali parents, more than traditional events such as quiz evenings. One parent governor has observed that whilst children in the school tend to mix well, their parents are more reserved: *'cultural / religious community events are a good idea, there seems to be a lack of knowledge about different customs… for example, very rarely would Asian children come to another classmate's birthday party.'* She pondered whether birthdays are celebrated in other cultures and this could be a reason why, although she was sure that:
'parents must feel happy if they see their children mixing with children from all over the world.'
One teacher commented: *'Boosting the value of learning English should be a priority. It will give parents access to much more. Perhaps parents could be encouraged to pair up and befriend other parents in the playground. Sometimes the culture doesn't encourage this however, despite some mums wanting to take this up.'*

One parent, community representative and father of five, who had himself experienced the frustration of not using his accountancy skills in the UK, summed up his attitude to the education of his children: *'I give up a lot for the sake of my children. I had a lot of gaps in my education and I don't want them to have gaps. I am mostly doing part time jobs. I cannot support my children if I am working full time. I like to take them forward in their education. If they are in Reception I teach them what they need to know in Year 1.*

My uncle was a model for me. He worked at the BBC, broadcasting here. He gave up full time work to support his children. Now he does a full time job because they are in university. They got 'A' grades in everything. If he left this world today, he would have left something. If you invest in something, invest in your children.'

Somali Pupils Views of Education and Barriers to Learning

Children were interviewed in each school regarding their attitude to and views about their school and education. All children felt that the teachers at their schools were:
'good at explaining things. They show you something and if you don't understand they show you again.'

Similarly they felt that their friends helped them to learn English. The children in Year 5 recalled how their teacher taught them *'their ABC'* and their teaching assistant read with them every day. One boy described how *'it is hard to understand some words in maths but my talk partner helps me.'*

Children generally enjoyed first hand learning. *'I enjoy science, you get to do stuff, experiments and building something and working with money, this is the most important thing.'* A boy in Year 5 felt that learning science was important as *'you can tell the doctor where the pain is'* a curriculum relevant to his life.

A teacher confirmed this view: *'They seem to enjoy science – the experiments, they want to learn more and question, they feel more on the same level as the rest of the class because no-one knows the answers. Although shy about their home language, they can be persuaded to share. Children of this age do not like to be different – they just want to be the same as everyone else.'* On maths: *'pupils can cope with basic numerical skills but the language needed often limits them. Perhaps translations would help. We put up the vocabulary around the room, but if they don't recognise a written form of their own language that doesn't help.'*

The pupils speak candidly about their own experiences of school and the challenges they have had to overcome: *'when I started here I wasn't speaking English and my teacher was teaching me. Everything was brand new. It took me two years to learn to read and write.' 'I started here in Year 3. I was at another school before that. I speak Somalian at home and I was born in Somalia' 'I started here in Year 5. I went to London and then to Scotland and I started at school there in Year 4. Then I came to this school.'*

A child now in Year 3 had also experienced many changes of school: *'I was in Granton from Year 2 but before that I was in Leicester and then we moved to Northampton. I have been to four schools.'* Only one out of the six children in the group was born in the UK and attended the school's nursery.

All pupils interviewed speak Somali as well as English and some speak a third (European) language. They identify themselves as Somalian. An articulate Year 6 pupil said: *'I speak English and I speak Somalian, but I think I am mostly Somalian. I went back there last year and I was scared. I saw lots of people with guns. It was a nice place, kind people, lots of animals, big houses.'* Would she like to live there? *'If there was a President and it was run properly. If the war stopped I would think about living there.'*

The children enjoy school, particularly clubs: cricket, football, Indian dance, and art. They like the teachers and the way they teach and enjoy the chance to go on school trips. At the end of the school day, Somali pupils attend a Madrassar until 6.30 pm. Some children reported that they completed their homework in bed at around 9pm or after their evening meal.

An older sibling might help with homework but the children felt that their mother's lack of understanding of the English language did not enable them to help. They did not talk about school to their parents and of the children interviewed, only one had a father who was working (in Tanzania) whilst all the rest are unemployed.

All children cited sources of support for school work at home: *'my brothers help me with maths'* and *'my brother teaches me maths in a different way. They check my homework and help me with things I don't understand.'* *'My mum and dad help me with science and timetables and read books to me in Somali.'*

Children in Years 3, 4 and 6 spoke of their families giving them support with their homework. *'My dad gives me ideas'*, *'my mum buys me books of tests from WHSmiths'* and *'when my uncle came to visit from Egypt he always asks me to get my homework out to help me.'* All children had or still go to Arabic school in London: *'My dad takes me all the way to Deptford because it's the best.'*

A group of Year 2 children who were interviewed at the school about their school experiences stated how their parents and older siblings helped them with homework. This however was not the case with older children in the school when support might require a better grasp of English. One boy in Year 5 stated: *'I don't do homework. My mum only asks me about work if I have a test'*.

Children talked about opportunities for learning about the world in the curriculum. They enjoyed 'Global Citizenship Week' when each class in the school studied a different country. They talked about Somalia in geography *'the temperature.'* There are opportunities for children to read books in Somali and listen to story tapes. Many watch Somali TV at home on Sky TV.

The Year 2 children enjoyed taking books home that were in English and Somali language: *'We didn't know what happens there. I like learning a bit more Somali, its my language. My mum and I, we can help each other'*. One girl felt that the teachers helped her with English but she would like a Somali teacher at school who *'would know what I was saying. My mum sings Somali songs at home. I would like us to sing them at school too. I would like all my class to talk in Somali.'*

Boys in Year 4 and 5 felt they would like to play more games in the classroom. *'I like playing maths games.'* When asked about writing at school, these boys stated that they fund it difficult, *'It's getting lost and having to read it again'* and *'I don't like planning stories.'*

Some of the children attended 'Somali school' held at a neighbouring school two evenings a week. *'We copy from the board, we learn about the human body and learn the ABC in Somali language. We read Somali books'*. Other boys studied from the Quoran after school.

When asked whether they felt that girls and boys were treated differently at school their opinions varied. There was a general feeling amongst the boys that the girls in school were kind, whereas boys *'are bullying and fighting. They watch wrestling and get swear words.'* One boy felt that whereas girls might only get a caution for bad behaviour, boys might be excluded for the same behaviour. One girl said that *'if girls and boys are dancing around in wet play, when the teacher comes in, girls will stop, they have more respect, they will stop messing around.'*

Children interviewed felt that it *'is only boys that get in trouble, they don't listen they fight. They get really angry if someone snatches the ball. Then they want to fight.'* A Year 4 boy stated that, *'boys are normally bad, girls are too embarrassed to fight, too shy. Boys are not treated well. They get into fights because they are strong.'*

Eleven young people from all year groups in a secondary school were interviewed regarding their attitude to and views about their education. All the young people felt that their teachers cared about their achievements and supported them towards their aims. Many of the young people wanted to go on to university and wanted *'good things for our lives.'* One boy wanted to be the president of Somalia in order to bring *'peace and pleasure to many lives.'*

Pupils felt that Lambeth should do the following things for Somali children:

- Schools and the Authority should employ teachers from the Somali community.
- They would like to see a reflection of Somalia in the curriculum.
- After school classes to raise achievement, although these classes are available but not always attended.
- Work experience opportunities over the summer.
- Sports clubs in the community for the Somali youth.
- Language support. *'We just need to focus on the language. Although we have the informal language we do not have the e.g. scientific language, that is hard.'*
- Leaflets from libraries etc in the community to be published in Somali so Somali people can access local services.

The majority of the Somali young people interviewed felt that they would like to have the opportunity to do a Somali GCSE in school. They felt that parents needed to go to college as they have problems with the language. *'They need to stick together, they need to talk to their children. It is difficult for all Somalis to care about education. We are born in a country with civil war.'*

A school governor, the chair of the community and welfare committee believes that it is imperative for schools to be at the centre of the Every Child Matters agenda, in order to get to the root of underachievement of certain groups. She believes that one way of tackling this would be for schools to cluster together to provide family centres and facilities for the community. Because extended day activities are so important to children's learning she believes that there should be feedback to teachers on individual children from these activities for example through the homework club, although realises the current pressures on school staff.

Conclusions

The focus groups were a useful mechanism for gauging pupils and parental views and feelings about the education of their children in schools. The findings from the focus group indicated that:

- Despite a host of difficulties, Somali children are committed to their education and have high ambitions and aspirations to go to university to get a good degree. Parents also share this view of high aspirations for their children. Both parents and pupils have high regard and respect for school and teachers.
- Many of the Somali children are new to the British education system and many more are either not fluent in English or have little previous formal schooling in Somalia due to the war. Some are literate in Somali and / or Arabic having had erratic schooling in Somalia.
- Few Somali parents have experience of British education, most are recent arrivals and large numbers have not been in school due to disruption caused by the war in Somalia.
- The Somali community remains isolated from mainstream British culture and local community groups through a combination of social deprivation, linguistic barriers and racial prejudice. Somali families have little social interaction with British families.
- Somali parents generally feel welcome at their children's school, although they generally maintain minimal contact with school and the Authority services because of linguistic, cultural and practical constraints.
- Many Somali parents with language barriers do not attend parents' evenings and school meetings but many middle class educated parents help their children with homework.

- Somali parents and pupils have unsettling housing problems which do not provide a conducive environment for children's education. In addition to the issue of overcrowding there is high mobility, which disrupts schooling.

- Some Somali parents occasionally keep children out of school to help with interpreting in housing and social security issues as this issue is of great importance and survival for them.

- Black and white teachers in the case study schools play a critical role in supporting, encouraging and educating Somali pupils. They also validate Somali pupils' culture and identity and provide positive role models as much as they can.

- Somali pupils and parents in all focus groups expressed the view that more Somali bilingual teachers were needed in schools.

- Schools were keen to attract applications from Somali bilingual staff and other minority staff who could act as role models. One school was processing an application from a Somali bilingual teacher who previously taught maths in Somalia.

- Parents expressed great appreciation of the way they were supported and treated in all the schools. All schools regard liaison with Somali parents as vital to raising standards in schools. All schools developed a number of initiatives and support through Family Learning centres where Somali parents learn English and are supported with childcare.

Schools Strategies to Raise Achievement of Somali Children

Discussion with school staff, parents and pupils gave an insight into practices that minimise the impact of these barriers to achievement for Somali pupils. The main characteristics are parental engagement, inclusion strategies, the curriculum and teaching strategies to support Somali pupils as well as the monitoring and tracking of their performance.

Parental Engagement

Schools work hard to engage Somali parents. As well as termly reports, individual consultations and target setting days, initiatives such as Family Learning sessions and adult education classes such as ESOL and parenting have developed trust in Somali parents. These hidden messages are taken to the children and parents who have very high aspirations for their children communicate regularly with teachers about their children's education and how they can support them at home. One school Inclusion manager stated that ESOL classes: *'helped give Somali mothers a presence in the school. They came on masse and then started to come to other things.'*

Schools enable Somali parents to 'engage with the system and make the most of the system'. One school does this through a *'package of support'* that they provide to parents regarding secondary transfer. This involves early meetings with parents in Year 5 to discuss the process, taking parents to visit local secondary schools, support with application forms and if necessary, appeals. Consequently Somali parents in this school were very aware of this process and the schools they wanted for their children. Many schools confirmed that:
'Somali parents are educated and articulate; they help with homework. Even one who doesn't speak English is still very involved and wants the best for her child'.
A Year 6 teacher described one family as *'having high aspirations for themselves, as parents and their children, they have a thirst for knowledge.'*

In one school the Parent Teachers' Association is working hard to include more representation of the ethnic mix of the school. They are an inclusive group who are moving away from the traditional model of a fund raising body. It is aware though that the Somali group already support each other and don't necessarily need to attend coffee mornings when they do this as a group anyway at home. When the Citizenship co-ordinator organised a Global citizenship week, parents were invited in to share recipes etc. The Somali parents organised their input of food, recipes and stories as a group together at home, and were involved in a way that they wouldn't have been if it was a quiz evening.

A parent governor is sensitive to the challenges posed when parents cannot speak English and she comments:
'parent partnership is crucial now as teachers do not have the time to give individual attention, so it is vital for parents to know how they can help their children. The whole point of school is to be community focused so we need to make things available. As a parent I make a point of finding out what is going on, but what about those who cannot speak English, or are very shy? I see the teachers really trying hard to engage parents to come into school, they really do their best. Anything that helps parents communicate with the school will be good for their children. Everyone needs help and you can never get enough help or support. We are prioritising the children but the other part of the partnership is the parents.'

Effective Use of Black Teachers and a More Diverse Staff Team

Diversity in terms of the range of staff roles, skills and ethnicity has provided good and well co-ordinated to support Somali pupils in the case study schools. Diversity is one way in which schools promote good relationships and racial harmony.

Headteachers actively recruit Black Caribbean and African staff from the local community. One headteacher who recruits his Teaching Assistants and Learning Mentors from the local community prefers *'intelligence and capability rather than qualifications'* recognising that many people have not had the life chances which enable them to acquire qualifications that reflect their skills. Not only is it motivational for pupils to have role models from their own community groups in school, but staff from the community know the families and the issues they face on a daily basis and any potential barriers to learning.

Teaching staff in the case study schools come from for example South Africa, Australia, the Caribbean and Africa and have true empathy for pupils/ families newly arrived at the school. Many are sensitive to the issues arising from settling into a new country. All case study schools are in the process of looking for staff and parent governors from the Somali community.

In all the case study schools Somali pupils had expressed a desire to see Somali staff in school as someone to listen to and understand their issues as well as to support their language development and communicate with their parents.

Inclusive Ethos and Strategies

Schools have strong inclusion policies to ensure support for and the success of Somali pupils in their schools. The overall range of inclusion strategies is extensive and innovative.
In one school a support co-ordination group reviews any students whose welfare or progress has been identified as causing concern every two weeks. Support includes a full time social worker, counsellors and access to mental health support. Students with difficult circumstances are well supported by school mentors and counsellors from the community e.g. Somali organisations, South Bank University and King's College.

In another school the two assistant headteachers who lead an Inclusion team feed directly into management discussions / decisions so that the needs of each child are truly included in all decision making processes. An example is the recent discussion regarding staffing structure where they have the knowledge to contribute to placing different teachers' strengths / specific groups of children. There are Teaching Assistants and Learning Mentors attached to this team who are deployed for specific pupil support. Teaching Assistants and Learning Mentors are involved in year group meetings, staff meetings, and *'anything to do with the children.'* Issues and concerns to do with individual children are picked up and dealt with immediately. Because the Inclusion team share a working space, there are many informal as well as formal discussions regarding children; *'children's needs are paramount.'* One assistant headteacher is responsible for analysing data in school and specifically applying the results of this back into the classroom curriculum.

Another school employs a Learning Mentor whose role is to try to remove barriers to learning, she explains:
'children underachieve for a variety of reasons, could be economic, social, family bereavements, learning difficulties in general. Children are referred to me by class teachers via the Inclusion Manager; we look at an issue together and identify needs, then put a programme in place'.

Schools have strong induction processes which welcome pupils and families new to the schools led by learning mentors and other staff. In one school the EMAG co-ordinator prepares the teachers beforehand with background information on the child if it is available and alerts the lunchtime supervisors and other children who speak the same language in school. New children have a buddy. EAL pupils have 15 hours of bilingual assistant support from the Lambeth Interpreting and Translation service. Mentors might be allocated to Somali pupils if they are having difficulties settling.

When they arrive, Somali pupils might join younger classes for conversational purposes. When they can converse they move up to their chronological age classes. This is dependent on the class size and how well children might get on. One child made it known when she began to find it difficult socially, so was moved up to her age appropriate class.
In one school there are clubs for children who speak the same minority language led by different members of staff e.g. Culture club, French club, Bengali club. Class assemblies reflect the different languages and cultures with the class.

There is a general sense of pupils' pride in their backgrounds which is nurtured throughout the schools. Somali girls interviewed were proud to talk about their country and their culture. The EMAG co-ordinator in one school spoke of the enthusiasm and interest the staff exhibited about *'everything that comes up- Refugee Week, Black History Month.'*
One secondary school has an unofficial head girl and boy from the Somali community. These students might liaise with staff and Somali students and will certainly let staff know of any friction within the community. Incidents within the Somali group take a lot of mediation in school. The school also works with mentors from the Somali community.

The strong inclusive ethos that permeates through each school is summed up in the words of one Year 6 teacher that there is a general feeling that: *'every child is important and can achieve'.*

Inclusive Curriculum

In all of the case study schools there are moves to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of diverse school communities. In one primary school the development of pupils' cultural understanding is at the centre of the school and the curriculum. Pupils firmly understand their own cultures and how cultures can be different. The curriculum has been planned with great care to meet the needs of all pupils and to ensure equality of access and opportunity.

The children themselves have been involved in generating the questions about what they will learn, i.e. *'what do we want to know about?'* The school has planned a curriculum based around these questions and careful thought has been given to mapping out themes across the school using the National Curriculum rather than the QCA schemes of work which were considered to be:

'too limiting….we wanted more visual input, especially as we have so many children with EAL and our focus is on skills and knowledge. We identify topics that can be taught with a history, geography / environment, or science / health related area. Our planning identifies specific vocabulary and language structures. Literacy is planned on a two week cycle with one week focus on speaking and listening and one week on reading and writing. The entire curriculum has been worked out in this way. It starts with us asking the children who are going to be doing the work what they would like to find out and that question may last up to two weeks. We ensure that the National Curriculum content is in there and it is underpinned with the six keys to learning which include reflection, planning, presenting ideas, and working co-operatively. At the end of every term we hold concerts and exhibitions to share our work. Children acted as curators to show parents and visitors their history work on display, confidently explaining what they had learned'.

'Our curriculum is very structured and planned carefully and we create time for staff to come together collectively to discuss EAL and speaking and listening strategies.'

The headteacher reinforced this point by adding:
'We put a high focus on speaking and listening through role play, hot-seating, speaking and listening partners, and scaffolding structured talk and repetition of language. The make up of the school is more diverse than it has ever been so we have developed whole school approaches to speaking and listening and EAL.'

Teachers in this school use opportunities very well to explore and support the gathering of knowledge of other cultures, often through first hand experience. The school understands the cultures within its community and uses them wholeheartedly as a resource for learning e.g. drawing on the languages spoken, e.g. Somali as well as Urdu / Gujarat, Swahili, Polish, Arabic and Polish.

Schools use local expertise to enhance the learning of their pupils. Examples include Indian Dance classes which involve pupils learning the meaning of hand, eye and foot movements in classical Indian dance, visits to The Globe theatre and trips away, study programmes including residential weekends e.g. to Juniper Hall to study film making and the extended day activities to enrich the curriculum. Artists, dance groups, authors, poets feed into the curriculum in a creative and innovative way.

In the secondary school as part of working with Southwark TV a community TV station, Somali students have worked with a film maker making cartoon animations of their experiences. These animations were shown on 'Southwark hour' in May and at the Blue Elephant Theatre at their recent film night and will be shown at Southbank and the National Film School. In this school students have access to special curriculum materials. Students, including Somali students with a low reading age get an extra one hour support a day. Bilingual books are also available for Somali students.

Many Year 5 and 6 Somali pupils in one school have recently come to maths club after school. This has been run by a maths teacher from the Somali community who has been able to discuss many issues which face Somali children within the school which has helped staff to have a better understanding of these children.

There is an alternative accreditation- Grade Assessment Profile in English for e.g. the 6 students who will not get GCSEs. Their profile of work is sent to GAPE and they receive a certificate.

Effective Support for EAL

The schools recognised that proficiency in English was the key to educational success for their bilingual learners. Ethnic minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) funding was, in the main, used to meet the needs of early stage learners of English.

Teaching strategies to engage EAL learners have been carefully planned in all the case study schools, as engaging all pupils is vital to success. One member of staff confirmed that:
'The EAL pilot project which promotes talk partners, talking first and talking frames has moved the school and the Somali pupils on. Some of the Somalis are in the gifted and talented groups for science. Talking models and the school ethos encourages them to talk in Somali which they are not embarrassed to do.'

In one school the Year 6 teacher felt that teachers were confident in methods of delivering lessons that all pupils could access regardless of their language needs.
In another school the EMAG co-ordinator has moved away from the model of taking small groups out of the classroom to working in class with teachers by peer teaching and planning with one teacher per half term, supporting teachers to support groups.
'They are building up their practice with talk partners, collaborative groups, visual curriculum and planned specific language structures per lesson- this leads to academic language / talk for writing. Teachers here are positive- people are building a little more into their daily practice'.

Schools are sensitive to the need for planning first hand experiences that Somali pupils enjoy and benefit from:
'Somalis seem to enjoy science- the experiments, they want to learn more and question, they feel on the same level as the rest of the class because no-one knows the answers.'
'I enjoy science, you get to do stuff, experiments and building something and working with money- this is the most important thing.'

Students in the secondary school are supported with their English language development through:

- An English language assessment for new arrivals which is done on arrival.
- Bilingual Somali translators to help in any translations for pupils and parents.
- An after school homework club for bilingual students and Somali children.
- Parents' literacy classes, lunchtimes clubs and after school clubs for refugees and Somali children. There are links with Somali community groups.
- Somali pupils are supported individually in class and bilingual resource packs are provided by schools, including books.
- A community language day at Kings College where existing Somali students come and talk to students at one secondary case study school.

Mentoring and Role Models

One case study school has developed good mentoring programmes that support Somali children. The mentors where recruited from the local community and are there to both support and encourage Somali children and to be a role model. They relate well to the students and speak to them about the school. Mentoring has the ability to enable students to address weaknesses and improve their learning skills, to discuss targets and to identify appropriate strategies to meet the targets and to offer positive role models. It has also been used to challenge the perceptions of pupils and their parents by celebrating success openly.

Monitoring Performance and Effective Use of Data to Raise Achievement

Use of performance data for school improvement is a strength of the case study schools. All the schools studied had effective pupil assessment procedures which were detailed, relevant and constantly updated to reflect staff feedback. Each school also focuses on tracking and monitoring Somali students' progress and achievement throughout their school life. One school for example has a well developed pupil tracking system and has detailed CATs, KS2, KS3, GCSE and non statutory assessment data followed by background data such as ethnic background, language spoken, level of fluency in English, data of admission, attendance rate, eligibility for free school meals, EAL stage of fluency, SEN stage, mobility rate, years in school, which teacher's classes have been attended, attendance rate, types of support, and postcode data. This data is used to set challenging targets for attainment. Early intervention and a wide range of support mechanisms are in place to help pupils achieve them e.g. booster groups, one to one, tailoring teaching levels, mentoring.

In another school the EMAG co-ordinator keeps a register of all children with EAL needs in the school by year group. This register records their name, sex, date of birth, date on roll and whether they have received Nursery education, SEN, family origins, home language/s, their stage of English fluency by each year throughout their school career. This information is updated once a term.

All class teachers are given this information so that they have an up to date picture of their children's EAL stage. There is an expectation that they will use this information in their individual target setting for individual children during independent activities. Strategies might include talk partners, or speaking frames all to reflect their level of fluency. Teachers could incorporate language structures into their planning- e.g. for Stage 1 speakers key words, for Stage 2 speakers a fuller response and for Stage 3 / 4 an academic language response. These features are starting to be built into teachers' planning, especially those that the EMAG co-ordinator has worked with closely.

Each class also has a year group profile, which is copied to the headteacher, assessment co-ordinator, literacy and numeracy subject leaders, SENCO and EMA co-ordinator. This sheet records EAL pupils' National Curriculum level. Target groups of children who will need pushing to get a level 4 in Year 6 are shaded. This information can be cross referenced with children's stage of English. It is possible to see that a particular child in Year 3 who is at level 3a in maths and 2a does not have the academic language for recording. It is likely that he does not have the academic language in either English or Urdu, which is impacting on his academic progress.

In summary, the case study schools work hard to support the induction and subsequent progress of Somali pupils into their schools. They know the value of engaging parents in their children's learning, plan a flexible curriculum in order to accommodate the learning needs of pupils in their schools and adopt teaching strategies that enable Somali pupils to engage with this curriculum. Overall these schools place a great emphasis on individual monitoring and tracking of pupils with individual support available on a number of levels, all carefully documented. Their progress is tracked and monitored and interventions planned in order to support their next steps of learning.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

This paper has examined the educational experience of Somali children at the end of all key stages in Lambeth schools, focussing exclusively on empirical evidence within the last five years, the main findings summarised below:-

1. Data for 2006 and before indicates that Somali children have consistently been the lowest achieving group across key stages in most subject areas. For example:

    - At Key Stage 2 in 2006, Somali children were the lowest performing group with 61% gaining level 4 or above compared to 82% of White British pupils, 70% of African pupils, 72% of Black Caribbean pupils and 85% of Indian pupils.

    - At Key Stage 3, Somali children were the lowest performing group with 43% gaining level 5 or above compared to 75% of White British pupils, 63% of African pupils, 63% of Black Caribbean pupils and 82% of Indian pupils.

    - At Key Stage 4, Somali children were the lowest performing group with 34% gaining 5+A*-C compared to 58% of White British pupils, 51% of African pupils, 45 % of Black Caribbean pupils and 72% of Indian pupils.

2. Available data across all key stages since 2006 paints a picture of lower levels of achievement for Somali pupils than any group in the Authority. This did not suddenly appear at secondary school as with Black Caribbean pupils, but was evident by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in primary school. The achievement gap simply widened at each key stage.

3. It is clear that Somali pupils form an underperforming group at each stage of the National Curriculum and at GCSE level. Their outcomes at each key stage are considerably below those achieved by all pupils across the LAs.

4. One of the main reasons for Somali pupil underachievement is the language barrier. At Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 the vast majority of Somali pupils are non-fluent in English and to a lesser extent this is also true at Key Stage 3 and GCSE. It is not particularly surprising therefore that they are an underperforming group in schools. We also know that many Somali pupils and families face economic disadvantage factors such as economic deprivation, poor housing and overcrowding, a disrupted or non existent prior education due to home circumstances, have refugee status or are recently arrived from Somalia or other countries with an underdeveloped and poorly resourced education system. The educational underachievement, disengagement and disaffection that is evident among some Somali pupils is also perpetuated by factors such as stereotyping, low expectations, inequitable practice by some teachers, poor communication, and poor school to home liaison.

5. The case study schools adopted a number of strategies to overcome some of the barriers to achievement including parental engagement, effective use of more diverse workforce, developing inclusive ethos and strategies, an inclusive curriculum, support for EAL, mentoring and role models, monitoring performance and effective use of data for self-evaluation. They work hard to engage parents through classes to learn English and through support at critical times such as transition to secondary school.

They adopt innovative ways of tackling the curriculum to ensure inclusion of Somali pupils and employ teaching strategies that help Somali speaking pupils to access the curriculum. They work hard to represent the community in their staff profiles and to celebrate children's heritage in every part of school life.

Overall the analysis carried out in this study reinforces previous research findings (see Diriye, 2006; Harris, 2004; Ali and Jones, 2006; Ahmed, 1998). The empirical evidence from London confirms that the English schooling system has produced poor academic results for Somali pupils compared to other main ethnic groups of children. The underachievement of Somali children remains a cause for concern and is an issue that policy makers, schools and Somali parents and communities need to address. There is a significant need for strategies to be developed to raise levels of achievement of Somali children in schools.

Recommendations:

Schools

To help raise the achievement of Somali children, schools should ensure that:

- Data on pupils performance is used to track their progress and to plan actions to meet their needs.
- A range of strategies is used to improve the English language skills of pupils at different levels.
- Somali bilingual staff are effectively used to build links between schools and Somali families.

The Local Authority

- Undertake further case study research into good practice for raising achievement of Somali children in schools.
- Provide Somali contextual performance data to schools to raise awareness of teaching and school management staff of the issues of Somali underachievement.
- Support schools in the target setting process.
- Explore possibilities to employ a Somali Bilingual Teaching and Learning Consultant to support schools across the Authority with high numbers of Somali pupils.
- Examine a way to provide additional EAL and induction support to improve English language skills in all schools with a high population of Somali pupils.
- Improve the awareness and understanding of the British Education systems for Somali parents and pupils.

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Table 6 . Somali Pupil Attainment in Selected London LAs in 2006, KS1, KS2, KS3 and GCSE

Measure	LA 1	LA 2	LA 3	LA 4	LA 5	LA 6	LA 7	LA 8	LA 9	LA 10	Average across London LA	National
KS1 no. pupils	263	100	73	152	85	118		96		71	958	
KS1 reading L2+	66%	69%	51%	74%	58%	66%		72%		72%	66%	84%
KS1 writing L2+	55%	66%	47%	63%	53%	63%		67%		65%	60%	81%
KS1 maths L2+	68%	82%	73%	84%	80%	74%		78%		79%	77%	90%
KS2 English L4+	68%	56%	40%	61%	51%	53%	60%		74%	56%	58%	79%
KS2 maths L4+	57%	50%	48%	61%	42%	61%	59%	67%	74%	59%	58%	76%
KS2 science L4+	69%	58%	56%	70%		65%		75%	84%	65%	68%	87%
KS3 no. pupils	143	59	45	57	46	54	56	39		42	541	
KS3 English L5+	45%	54%	47%	35%	35%	48%	36%	36%	43%	29%	41%	72%
KS3 maths L5+	50%	59%	53%	47%	54%	50%	54%	44%	45%	40%	50%	77%
KS3 science L5+	40%	49%	40%	37%		41%		39%	33%	31%	39%	72%
KS4 no. pupils	121	60	42	72	38	39	45	26		18	461	
5A*-C	41%	33%	29%	50%	13%	31%	47%	19%	42%	33%	34%	58%
5A*-C inc E and M	21%	27%		25%		23%		8%			21%	45%

Source - London Data: Kim Price, Ealing LA.