

## **RAISING THE ACHIEVEMENT OF PORTUGUESE PUPILS:** **Good Practice in Lambeth Schools**



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## FOREWORD

I am pleased to introduce this research on Portuguese pupil achievement in the London Borough of Lambeth. Supported by the Local Authority, schools have worked hard to raise the achievement of Portuguese pupils. This research focuses on the successful strategies that schools and the LA have used to raise achievement.

In Lambeth there is a continuing picture of improving schools and Portuguese pupils achieving well. The evidence this study shows is that:

- The numbers of Portuguese pupils attending LA schools has risen since 1992 from 377 to 2033 in 2007.
- Between 2000 and 2007 Portuguese pupils in all the case study schools improved from 43% level 4+ to 83%. This went up by 40 percentage points.
- In one case study school, the proportion of Portuguese pupils across the school achieving Level 4 and above rose from 47% in 2000 to 97% in 2008.
- The achievement gap between Portuguese and White British pupils has narrowed substantially since 2001.

There is no single reason why this is happening in Lambeth's primary and secondary schools. Fluency in English is vital. Portuguese children can 'fly' once they are fluent. But other factors are important too. Researchers highlighted reasons for improvement, including strong and purposeful leadership, teachers having high expectations of all pupils, effective use of data, effective use of diversified workforce, effective teaching and learning, an inclusive curriculum which meets the needs of Portuguese pupils, a strong link with the community, a clear commitment to parents' involvement, and good and well coordinated targeted support to Portuguese pupils through extensive use of TAs, EMAG, learning mentors and the Portuguese classes.

This research celebrates those schools that have created success for all their pupils ensuring that each Portuguese pupil makes the best possible progress. It is intended to provide evidence and practical tips to support other schools, I hope you will find it useful.



Phyllis Dunipace  
Executive Director of Children and Young People's Service  
London Borough of Lambeth

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Lambeth has the largest Portuguese population in Britain and also has a strong tradition in identifying Portuguese as an ethnic group. It is hoped that the findings in this report will be of value to policy makers, schools and practitioners. ***However the views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the London Borough of Lambeth.***

We would like to extend a particular thanks to Phyllis Dunipace, Executive Director of Children and Young People's Service for her support, encouragement and guidance throughout the project. In the Lambeth Research and Statistics Unit many people were involved in all stages of the research. Special thanks are due to Colette Hutter, Rebecca Butler, Robert Tong, Anne Taplin and James McDonald for their help with the analysis, preparation and editing of substantial parts of the manuscript. We thank them for their diligence and patience in the seemingly endless redraft and data analysis.

Our greatest debt is to the three case study schools, pupils, parents and teachers involved in the research that gave freely of their time and allowed us to enquire into one of the most important areas of Portuguese pupil's education. In particular our special thanks go to the Headteachers of the schools, Janet Mulholland (Stockwell Primary), Chris Toye (Wyvil Primary) and Principal Stephen Potter (Lambeth Academy).

We must also acknowledge the support provided during the project from a range of people. We would like to record our gratitude to the following staff in schools and Lambeth:

- **Luisa Ribeiro**, Advisory Teacher for Portuguese Achievement (Lambeth LA) - shared with us her work with the EMAG team to support Portuguese pupils. She also supported with the Wyvil case study.
- **Sarah Horrocks**, Director, Lambeth City Learning Centre (formerly Director CfBT/ Education Action Zone)- shared with us the story about the earliest support for Portuguese families by Lambeth Education Action Zone and her work with the Portuguese community in Lambeth.
- **Cidalia Fraga**, Assistant Headteacher (Stockwell Primary) supported with the school visit and shared with us her experience as a Portuguese teacher working in a London school.
- **Sally Bafour**, Assistant Headteacher (Stockwell Primary) shared with us the success story about Portuguese pupils in Stockwell Primary and the power of data in school self-evaluation and tracking pupil performance.
- **Jessica Burke-Peters**, Assistant Headteacher (Wyvil Primary) shared with us the details of school targeted support through use of community languages and an inclusive curriculum.
- **Miguel Janardo** Learning Mentor (Lambeth Academy) shared with us his experience as a Portuguese Learning Mentor and good practice in International links and support for Portuguese pupils at Lambeth Academy
- **Amanda Bellsham Revell**, Primary EAL Consultant and **Amanda Gay**, Secondary EAL Consultant for support and providing two photographs.

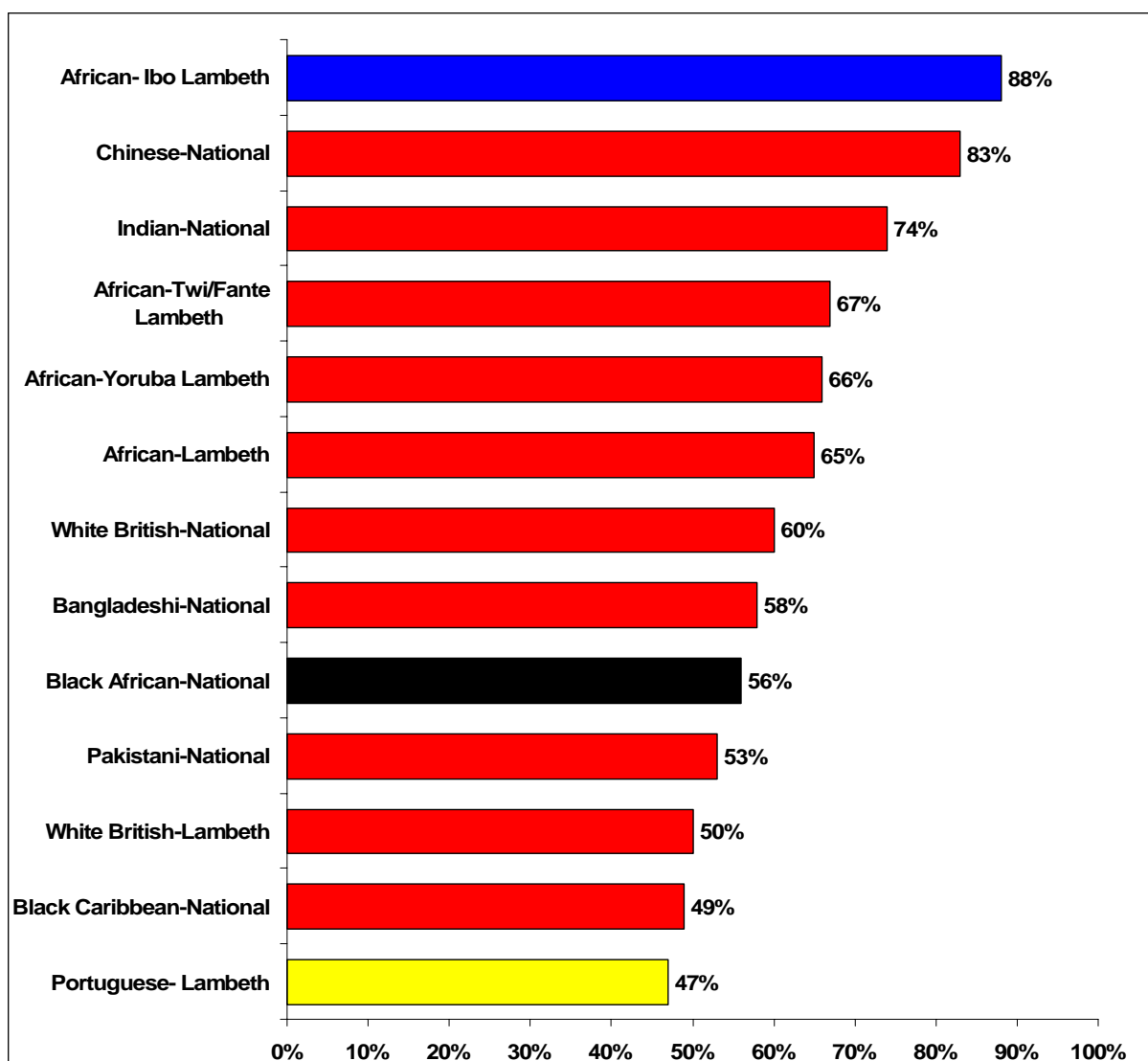
We are grateful to them and to others who supported during the research and gave us comments on the draft reports. We took heart from the knowledge that so many people, despite competing pressures on time and resources, were committed to exploring issues of Portuguese education and achievement in their own settings. We hope that all the above will feel that their time and effort have been worthwhile and we accept full and sole responsibility for any mistakes or unintentional misrepresentations in reporting the findings.

## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

### Background to the Study

English schools have been educating immigrant children for decades. Recently, however, new arrivals have brought additional challenges to schools as the majority are relatively new to English. Because of a lack of available data there is little research into the achievement of Portuguese pupils. There are no reliable statistics on the Portuguese population as a separate ethnic group in Britain and there is little clarity on the number of Portuguese pupils in schools. Additionally, the educational underachievement of Portuguese students in British schools has seldom been mentioned in the standards debate in the last decade. Yet the achievement of Portuguese heritage pupils lags far behind the average achievement of the majority of their peers and the gap is growing at the end of primary and secondary education.

**Figure 1. GCSE Attainment by Ethnic Background 2007 (5+A\*-C)**

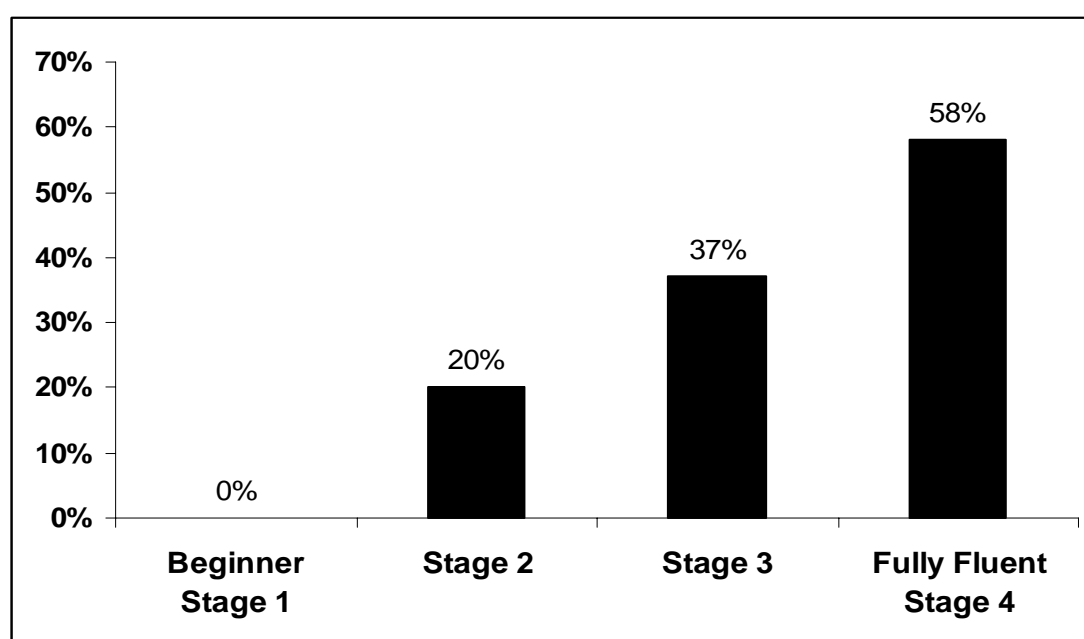


Recently available evidence in Lambeth shows a pattern of continuous underachievement of Portuguese children compared to the national average of White British, African, Caribbean, Indian and other ethnic minority groups (Demie et al 2008). The GCSE trend data in Lambeth also indicates Portuguese pupils were the lowest attaining group. However, to date it has been difficult to draw generalised conclusions from national research into Portuguese

educational achievement because national level data in Britain does not distinctly categorize Portuguese pupils, making it difficult to accurately establish the relative achievement of Portuguese pupils compared to White British and other ethnic groups. A number of Local Authorities (LAs) with high populations of Portuguese pupils started monitoring and collecting data which provides interesting research evidence. The data collected by the LAs confirms that Portuguese pupils have not shared equally in increasing rates of achievement (see Demie et al 2006; Aberu et al 2001). For example in the case study Local Authority (LA) the Portuguese pupils have shown a significant improvement at GCSE from 22% in 2001 to 47% 5+A\*-C 2007, up 25%. In 2001 the gap between the performance of LA and Portuguese pupils was 14%, but by 2007 this had fallen to 9% (Demie et al 2007).

Previous studies attribute the roots of Portuguese pupil underachievement (Demie et al 2008; Aberu et al 2001) to a number of factors including lack of understanding of the British education system, difficulties in speaking English, poor school attendance, poverty, interrupted prior education, negative teacher perceptions, poor school to home liaison and lack of exposure to written language.

**Figure 2. GCSE Attainment of Portuguese Pupils by Stage of English Fluency 2007**



Research in Lambeth also suggests that Portuguese pupils are underachieving in schools and that they form one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in London (Demie et al 2007). One of the main reasons for Portuguese pupil underachievement is the lack of fluency in English, creating a considerable language barrier. About 77% of Portuguese pupils in Lambeth schools are not fluent in English. A number of studies have explored the relationship between English fluency and pupil attainment. Demie et al (2008) examined the results at KS2 and GCSE taking into account factors such as 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 who were fluent in English. Figure 2 gives the average GCSE performance by level of fluency in English. Portuguese pupils' performance at KS4 increases as the stage of proficiency in English increases. Bilingual Portuguese speakers who were fully fluent in English were more likely to gain level 5+A\*-C, than pupils who only spoke English. 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.

Portuguese pupils assessed as fully fluent in English perform much higher than the national average at all stages.

These findings support a number of studies that 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. 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 good levels of achievement for all key stages.

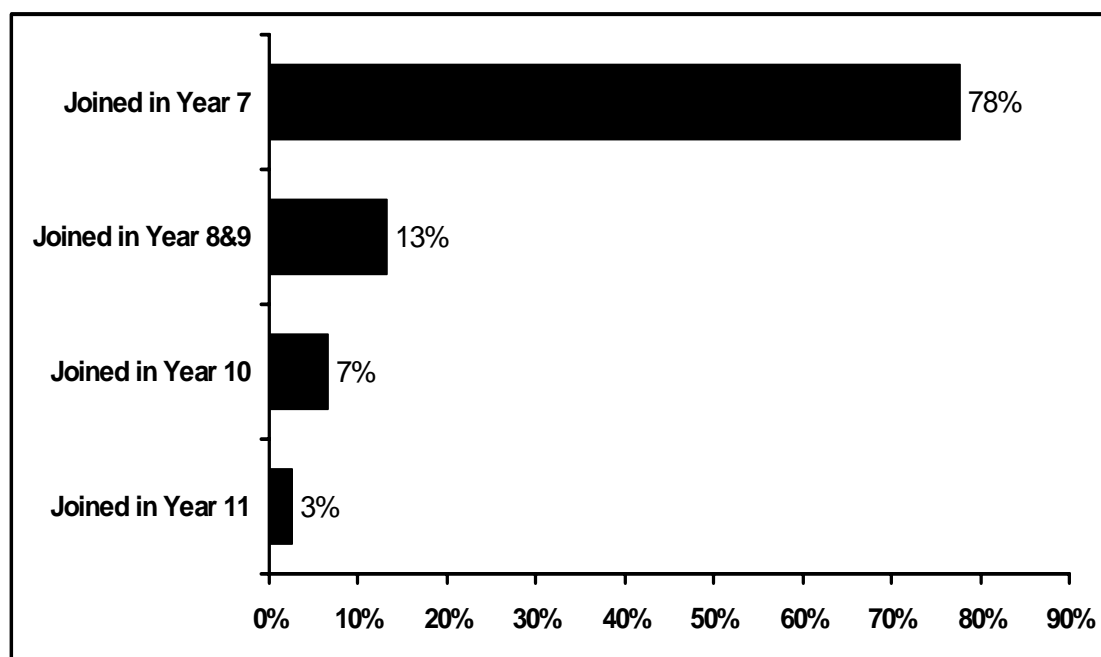
Another factor that influences the performance of Portuguese pupils is social deprivation. The free school meals variable is often used as a proxy measure of the extent of social deprivation in pupils' backgrounds and has been linked to underachievement in a number of studies (Demie, 2008). School level data demonstrates a clear relationship between the concentration of poverty levels in schools and tests and examination results. The proportion of pupils taking KS2 in 2005 who were eligible for free school meals (FSM) was 37%, and for the GCSE cohort it was 40%. Previous studies indicate that there is a marked difference in KS2 performance between pupils eligible for free meals and the more economically advantaged groups in schools. At the end of primary education, the difference between Portuguese pupils eligible for FSM and those not is significant, with about 60% of eligible pupils achieving level 4+, whereas 74% of pupils who are not eligible achieve this level. GCSE data shows 42% of pupils on free school meals gaining 5+ A\*-C, compared to 51% attained by those not eligible. Overall, the findings from the LA data confirm that pupils eligible for school meals did considerably less well than their affluent peers (Demie et al 2008).

It is now also widely recognised that mobility can have an adverse affect on educational attainment. Mobile pupils are those who join a school at a point other than at the age they would normally start or finish their education at a school. About 18% of Portuguese pupils at KS2 and 22% at GCSE are mobile pupils in the LA. Demie et al (2008) confirm that pupils who were at the school at the start of KS4 were more likely than their peers of the same ethnicity to gain the expected level. Figure 3 clearly illustrates this point showing that, on average, pupils who spent all of KS4 in the same school achieved better than those arriving in Years 8, 9, 10 and 11, and that pupils who arrived in the year of KS4 tests had the lowest levels of attainment. At KS4 about 78% of non-mobile pupils achieved 5+A\*-C or above compared with 3% of those who joined in year 11.

The research evidence shows a steady decline in average performance, as pupils spent less time in the secondary schools where they are tested. The data also shows that those pupils who had been at the school for the whole GCSE period did markedly better than others who joined in later years.

The study also confirms that, as highlighted in other studies, underachievement of Portuguese pupils is perpetuated by factors such as low expectations, economic deprivation, poor housing, overcrowding, a disrupted prior education and parental lack of understanding of the British education system. The LA study also identified strategies that have been adopted to overcome some of the barriers to achievement which face Portuguese pupils in schools. These include parental engagement, effective use of a more diverse workforce, developing an inclusive ethos and strategies, developing an inclusive curriculum, support for EAL, mentoring and role models, monitoring performance and the effective use of data for self-evaluation (Demie et al 2008).

**Figure 3. Portuguese GCSE Performance by Length of Time Spent in School (5+A\*-C)**



Overall the review of literature confirms that much of the previous study focussed on secondary schools and there is a lack of national comparative attainment data to identify patterns of achievement of pupils of Portuguese origin in British primary schools. This places serious constraints on targeting policy and practice developments at national and local level. The body of available research suggests that most previous studies have focussed on reasons why Portuguese pupils are underachieving (see Demie et al 2008; Demie 2008) but with scant research on positive experiences of Portuguese pupils in British schools. Previous research has confirmed that there is a lack of understanding of the factors which contribute to the educational success and high attainment of Portuguese pupils (see Demie 2006, McKenley et al, 2003).

This highlights a clear need for detailed case studies of successful schools in raising the achievement of Portuguese heritage pupils as a means of increasing our understanding of the ways in which schools can enhance pupils' academic achievement.

### **Aims and Objectives of the Research**

The aim of the research was to study the experiences of Portuguese heritage pupils in Lambeth LA. Specific objectives were:

- To examine the attainment of Portuguese heritage pupils in schools.
- To identify the key factors contributing to underachievement.
- To explore strategies which need to be taken to raise achievement.

## SECTION 2: METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The case study schools are located in Lambeth. Three complementary methodological approaches were adopted to explore performance; gaining the views of teachers, Portuguese parents and their children, and an analysis of schooling and of education. Details of the methodological framework and activities are summarised below:

### 1. Performance Data Analysis:

KS2 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.

### 2. School Interviews:

Using an ethnographic approach, detailed case study research was carried out to study the school experience of Portuguese pupils including reasons for underachievement. Three schools with a high Portuguese population were selected for case studies. A structured questionnaire was used to interview headteachers, teachers, to gather evidence on how well Portuguese pupils are achieving, specific strategies used to raise achievement and pupils' views about their school and its support systems.

As part of the two day case study visit the team decided to focus on the many strengths of the school including outstanding leadership and management, valuing cultural diversity, effective use of targeted EAL support, diversity of workforce, and partnership with parents and the wider community the school serves. The evidence used to inform judgements made includes interviews with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, governors, staff and Portuguese pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils work and attainment data, and observation and discussion at the achievement award ceremony.

### 3. Parent, Pupil and Community Focus Groups:

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

### 4. Case Studies:

- **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 three schools to obtain more information on experiences of raising achievement. The selected schools have significant numbers of Portuguese pupils
- **Case Study School Visits:** 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 Portuguese 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 the Portuguese speaking world.
- How teachers have the confidence, competence and materials to use the existing flexibility within the curriculum to make subjects more relevant to Portuguese 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, the following schools were selected:

1. Stockwell Primary School
2. Wyvil Primary School
3. St. Helens Primary School for data section & Lambeth Academy for International links.

The case study schools as a whole covered a range of ethnic groups, community languages spoken, free school meals and EAL (see table 1). Key criteria for the selection of schools were as follows:

- A headteacher and/or senior managers who understand ethnic minority achievement (EMA) and inclusion issues.
- Portuguese pupils in the case study schools make good progress.
- Over 15% of the school population are Portuguese.
- Strong links with the community.

The schools were identified from LA data held in the Research and Statistics Unit.

The main method of data collection was open ended semi-structured interviews with senior management, teachers, administrative staff and support staff as well as Portuguese parents and pupils. The aim was to then triangulate the voices of the various stake holders in the education of Portuguese pupils. Interviews were conducted by two researchers and the team was supported by a Portuguese 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 the project are given in the chapters that follow.

**Table 1. Characteristics of the Case Study Schools**

	Roll	Portuguese Pupils on Roll	% Portuguese	% EAL (School)	% EAL Stage 1-3 not fluent in English	% FSM (School)
A	501	205	41%	71%	63%	46%
B	438	83	19%	55%	47%	43%
C	320	74	23%	86%	82%	33%
<b>Lambeth</b>		<b>2033</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>35%</b>

## SECTION 3: THE ACHIEVEMENT OF PORTUGUESE PUPILS IN SCHOOLS

This section examines the achievement of Portuguese pupils in London schools at the end of KS2 and GCSE. Two methodological approaches are used to draw the Lambeth picture. First, the study looks at the pattern of the Portuguese pupil population in Lambeth schools. This is followed by detailed data analysis on the performance of Portuguese pupils in Lambeth compared to the other main ethnic groups in UK. The main questions it seeks to answer are:

- What are the total numbers of Portuguese pupils in Lambeth schools?
- How well do Portuguese pupils perform in Lambeth schools? What are the differences in level of attainment at the end of KS2 and GCSE?
- What are the factors influencing performance?

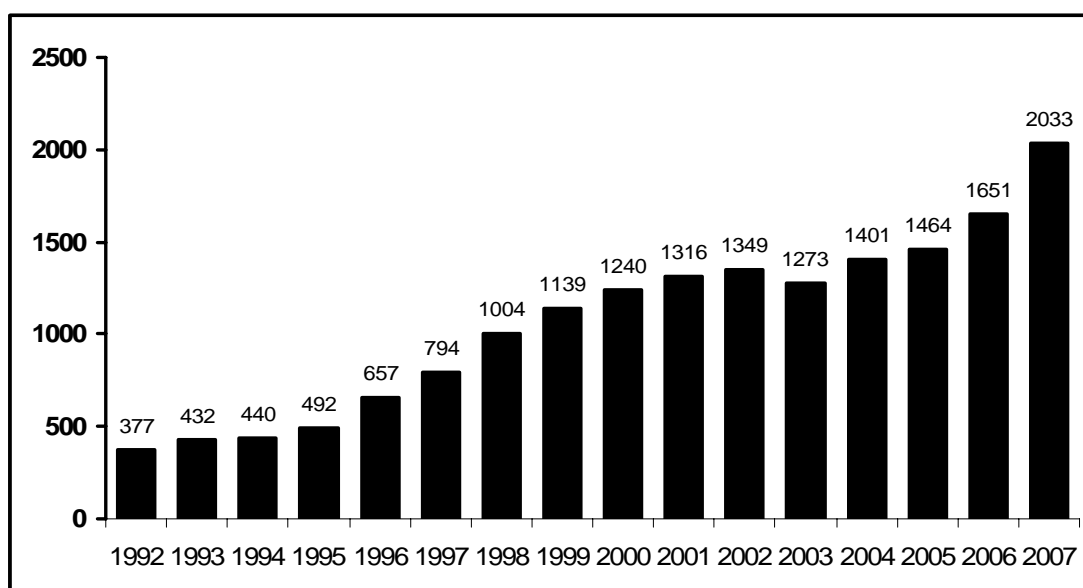
### The Context of the Case Study Local Authority (LA)

This research paper considers evidence from Lambeth, an inner London Authority. Lambeth LA is one of the most ethnically, linguistically and culturally diverse boroughs in Britain. About 83% of pupils are from black and ethnic minority groups. The 2008 census shows that there were 30517 pupils in the LA's schools. Of these, African pupils formed the largest ethnic group with 24.3% followed by Black Caribbean 18.9%, White British 16.7%, White Other 6.7%, Portuguese 6.6% and Other Black 4.6%.

There has been a change in the overall composition of the black and ethnic minority population in Lambeth schools. The 1991 census showed that overall 66% of pupils in the LA's schools belonged to black and other ethnic minority communities compared to 83% in 2008.

Of all England LAs, Lambeth serves the largest proportion of Portuguese pupils and findings from this study are therefore of significant importance for formulating policies and strategies aimed at raising the achievement of Portuguese pupils at both national and local level.

**Figure 4. Number of Portuguese Pupils in Lambeth Schools (1992-2007)**



The focus of this research is Lambeth schools. Data on the number of Portuguese pupils in primary, secondary and special schools, as well as performance data relating to KS1, KS2,

KS3, and KS4 was analysed. In addition all the LA's schools were asked to provide details of their pupils' backgrounds such as name, date of birth, sex, ethnic background, free school meal eligibility, date of admission or mobility data and level of fluency in English for contextual analysis. Where available we also drew evidence from national data published by the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

The main findings in Figure 4 above illustrate that, overall numbers of Portuguese pupils attending LA schools has increased since 1992 from 377 to 2033 in 2007. This trend is largely due to changes in the composition of the primary school Portuguese population.

### The Attainment of Portuguese Pupils in all Lambeth Schools

The issue of Portuguese underachievement is complicated by lack of identification of Portuguese pupils within data. Broadly speaking, Portuguese pupils are found within the wider definition of 'Other White' in national level data. As a result of this lack of data there are limitations in past research into Portuguese underachievement in British schools. The absence of national comparative data which identifies patterns of children of Portuguese origin, places serious constraints on targeting policy and practice developments at national and local level. It is also important to note that some LA Portuguese populations are very small and so any percentages are prone to large fluctuations.

**Table 2. KS2 and GCSE Attainment by Main Ethnic Groups in England 2007 (%)**

Main Ethnic Groups	KS2- Level 4+				GCSE (5+A*-C)
	English	Maths	Science	Average	
White British	81	78	89	83	60
Chinese	85	92	92	90	83
Indian	85	82	89	85	74
Pakistani	72	67	78	72	53
Bangladeshi	77	72	83	77	58
Black Caribbean	74	65	82	74	49
Black African	72	67	79	73	56
<i>Somali</i>	58	57	69	61	42
Portuguese	62	64	81	69	47
<b>All pupils</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>62</b>

However, the LA has collected data which has provided an interesting example in research evidence. Table 2 shows KS2 and GCSE results for each main ethnic group at national level. The main findings from recent national data shows that Portuguese and Somali children were the lowest performing groups. We have noted from the data:

- At Key Stage 2, 69% of Portuguese children were gaining level 4 or above compared to 83% of White British pupils, 73% of African pupils, 74% of Black Caribbean pupils and 85% of Indian pupils.
- At Key Stage 4, 47% were gaining 5+A\*-C compared to 60% of White British pupils, 56% of African pupils, 49% of Black Caribbean pupils and 74% of Indian pupils.

The above findings are supported by trend data collected since 2001 and show the worrying picture of the performance of Portuguese pupils. In almost all the years, Portuguese heritage pupils achieve below the national average. However, they have also made the most improvement and closed the gap with their peers. The KS2 Portuguese pupils showed the

strongest performance over the seven years, albeit from the lowest starting point. They improved by 11%, more than double the average LA rate. Portuguese was the only group to close the gap with the highest performing group, White British, who improved at the same rate as in the LA overall.

**Table 3. KS2 Attainment by Ethnic Background (2001-2007)**

Ethnic Group	Key Stage 2 Average (% Level 4+)							Change 01-07
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	
African	74	74	72	78	76	78	79	+5
Caribbean	68	67	65	65	68	69	71	+3
White British	78	77	79	80	81	83	83	+5
Portuguese	58	58	58	63	63	66	69	+11
Black Other	76	67	76	68	75	80	73	-3
<b>LA</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>+5</b>

*N.B: At KS2, the test average is calculated using the actual outcomes in English, maths and science.*

The gap between the highest (White British) and lowest (Portuguese) achievers has narrowed, from 20% in 2001, to 14% in 2007.

### **The Attainment of Portuguese Pupils in the Case Study Schools**

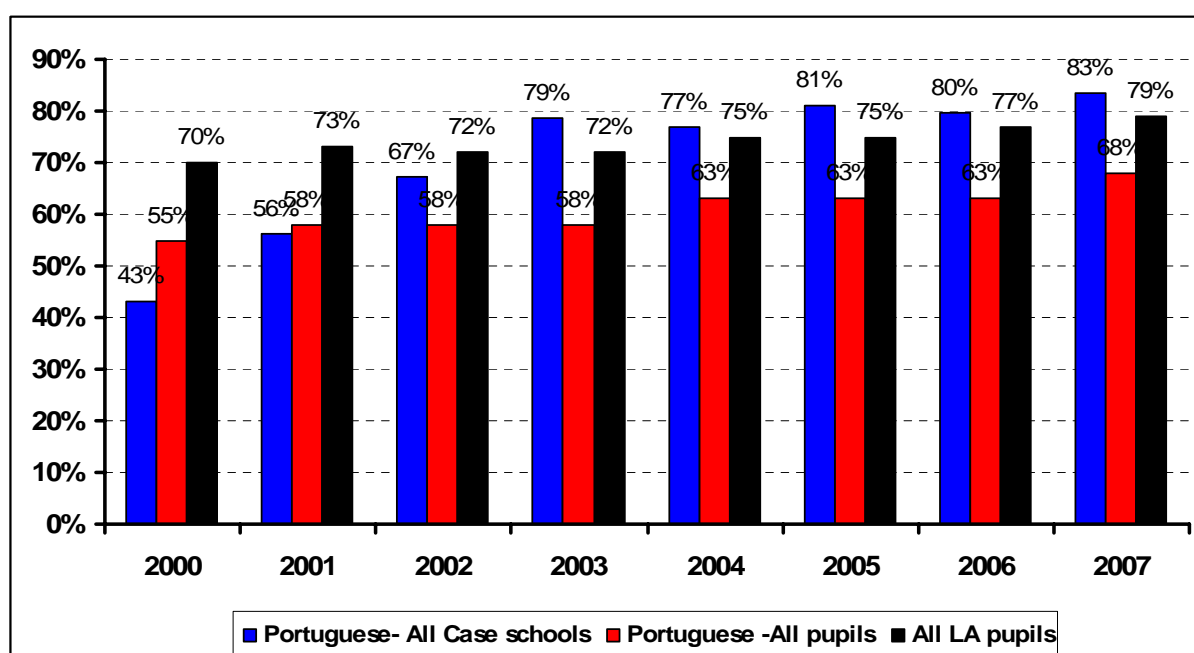
The previous section covered the attainment of Portuguese pupils in the context of the overall LA and national performance. The purpose of this section is to examine in detail the attainment of Portuguese pupils in the case study schools, comparing them with other schools in the LA that are not included in the project. In order to keep the amount of data to a minimum and to give credit for overall performance, average performance data across all subjects was used for KS2 evidence.

**Table 4. Key Stage 2 Attainment at the End of Primary Education**

Key Stage 2 attainment (Level 4+ Average)								
Primary Case Study Schools	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Portuguese Pupils School A	17%	41%	50%	57%	59%	85%	57%	73%
Portuguese Pupils School B	22%	41%	56%	90%	81%	67%	89%	86%
Portuguese Pupils School C	90%	87%	96%	89%	91%	91%	93%	91%
Portuguese- Case schools	43%	56%	67%	79%	77%	81%	80%	83%
Portuguese Pupils-All pupils	55%	58%	58%	58%	63%	63%	63%	68%
<b>All LA pupils</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>79%</b>

The LA has a number of excellent primary schools that offer good education to Portuguese pupils and where pupils achieve results above the national average. There is much to celebrate about the achievement of pupils, particularly in the case study schools. Table 4 and Figure 5 show the attainment of pupils in Key Stage 2 tests compared with the data on the performance of Portuguese pupils in other LA schools. The main findings from the data show:

**Figure 5. Portuguese KS2 Attainment in the Case Study Schools (Level 4+ Average)**



- Attainment of Portuguese pupils has been high for a number of years in the case study schools and Portuguese pupils make good progress and do better than Portuguese pupils in other LA schools.
- The improvement rate of pupils in the case study schools is impressive. Between 2000 and 2007 Portuguese pupils in all case study schools improved from 43% level 4+ to 83%, up 40 percentage points, compared with an improvement of 13 percentage points in the LA schools overall since 2000.
- In one case study school KS2 results have shown significant improvement over the last few years and it is one of the fastest improving schools in the LA. Since 2000, the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 at KS2 has consistently improved, from 49% to 74% in 2007. Portuguese pupils have shared in the success of the school. In 2007 73% of Portuguese pupils attained level 4+ compared with 79% Black Caribbean 77% African and 65% White British. Improvement of Portuguese pupils continues to improve from 17% in 2000 to 73% in 2007 (an improvement of 56 percentage points).
- In another case study school, despite challenging circumstances and low attainment at entry, results for all pupils at KS2 have improved consistently over the past seven years under the transformational leadership of the headteacher. Overall performance of the school is very impressive and evidence from Table 3 shows that the proportion of pupils across the school achieving level 4 and above rose from 47% in 2000 to 93% in 2007. Portuguese pupils have been one of the highest achieving groups in the school for the past five years. In English, 86% of pupils attained level 4+, in Maths 86% of pupils achieved level 4+ and 86% in Science. Overall 86% of Portuguese pupils in the school achieved level 4+, compared to the LA average of 68%. This is significantly above the national average of 81% and LA average of 79% in 2007.

Overall the improvement in the case study schools from 43% level 4+ in 2000 to 83% in 2007, a rate of 40%, is outstanding. The school data shows that from their generally low

starting points, pupils reach exceptionally high standards in English, Mathematics and Science by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

The review of previous research into underperforming groups of pupils revealed there has been little research into how the experience of successful schools may be disseminated to address underachievement in other similar schools. Attainment data from the study confirms Portuguese pupils in case study schools have shown a dramatic rise in achievement, this is despite a national trend of underperformance. The questions for research are:

- Why are the case study schools achieving well and bucking the national trend and
- What are the factors contributing to this success?

The first step in answering these questions is to identify the factors that contribute to their success. A number of key features were identified by researchers in the case study schools as the reasons for success. The following chapters explore these features.

## SECTION 4: CASE STUDIES OF SCHOOLS

### Introduction

The purpose of this section is to explore factors which contribute to the success of Portuguese pupils in British schools.

The previous section covered the attainment of Portuguese pupils in the context of their overall performance in London. However, in recent years the need for detailed case studies of successful schools in raising the achievement of Portuguese pupils has become apparent as a means of increasing our understanding of the ways in which schools can enhance pupils' academic achievement. A number of LAs and schools have good results for Portuguese pupils (Demie 2007). The key challenge is to find out what successful schools are doing and why these strategies are proving to be effective in raising the achievement of Portuguese pupils. For this reason, recently a number of studies have looked at examples of schools that provide an environment in which Black Caribbean pupils (Ofsted 2002:p. 2, McKenley et al 2003), Bangladeshi pupils (Ofsted 2004), African heritage pupils (Demie et al 2005) and Somali pupils (Demie et al 2007) flourish. *'All these reports agreed on the key areas: leadership and ethos, relationship in schools, expectation and commitment, parental engagement, monitoring and curriculum enrichment'* (McKenley 2003). The research in this section is similar but reflects on a Portuguese perspective using detailed case studies to illustrate how the complex interactions of context, organisation, policy and practice helps generate effective practice in raising the attainment of Portuguese pupils in a number of London schools with a strong emphasis on what works.

Three Lambeth schools were selected for detailed case studies. Each school was visited for two days. Lessons were observed and discussions were held with staff, pupils and parents/carers. In each school researchers evaluated the factors contributing to Portuguese pupils' achievement. They also considered areas which were key in previous Ofsted case studies (Ofsted 2002, 2004):

- Quality of school leadership and management.
- The school's 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 and the wider community.
- Parents' and pupils' views about the school and its support systems.

## STOCKWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL



© Stockwell Primary School.

### The Context

Stockwell Primary School is a larger than average primary school located close to the centre of Brixton. In 2007 there were 438 pupils on roll. 43% of pupils were eligible for free school meals. The school also had a high proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language. About 55% had English as a second language; 47% of pupils were not fluent in English. The inward mobility rate for the 2007 was 7%. It draws upon a catchment area experiencing substantial disadvantage. 43.4% of pupils were entitled to a free school meal in 2007 which was slightly above the Lambeth average.

Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Overall, their socioeconomic background is well below national averages. Almost all the pupils come from the local community, and live in council or housing association accommodation. The school population is ethnically very diverse. Of the 438 on roll in 2007 about 24% African, 20.8% Black Caribbean, 19.4% Portuguese, 6.2% White British, 4.6% Other White, 7.3% Other, Mixed race 12.5%, Vietnamese 1.4%, Chinese 1.1%, Indian 1.1%, Pakistani 0.9%, Other Asian 0.9%, Turkish 0.7% and Irish 0.2%.

About 32 languages are spoken in the school. The most common mother tongue languages in 2007 were: English (45%), Portuguese (22%), Somali (5%), Yoruba (3.9%), Spanish (4.6%), French speaking pupils from Zaire and Congo (3.2%), Twi (1.9%) and Ga (0.46%).

The percentage of pupils with additional learning needs is very high. Overall attainment on entry to the school is well below average. Despite very low attainment at entry, evidence from value-added and pupils' progress in the school suggests that pupils do make good progress between key stages and the school is in the top league in value-added nationally (see Figure 2). The key stage data also shows that the school has an impressive improvement rate in the last seven years. OFSTED Inspections confirm that:

*'Stockwell Primary school is an outstanding school. Expectations are high and there is a rigorous focus on learning, raising standards and improving the progress made by pupils' (OFSTED 2006, p.1).*

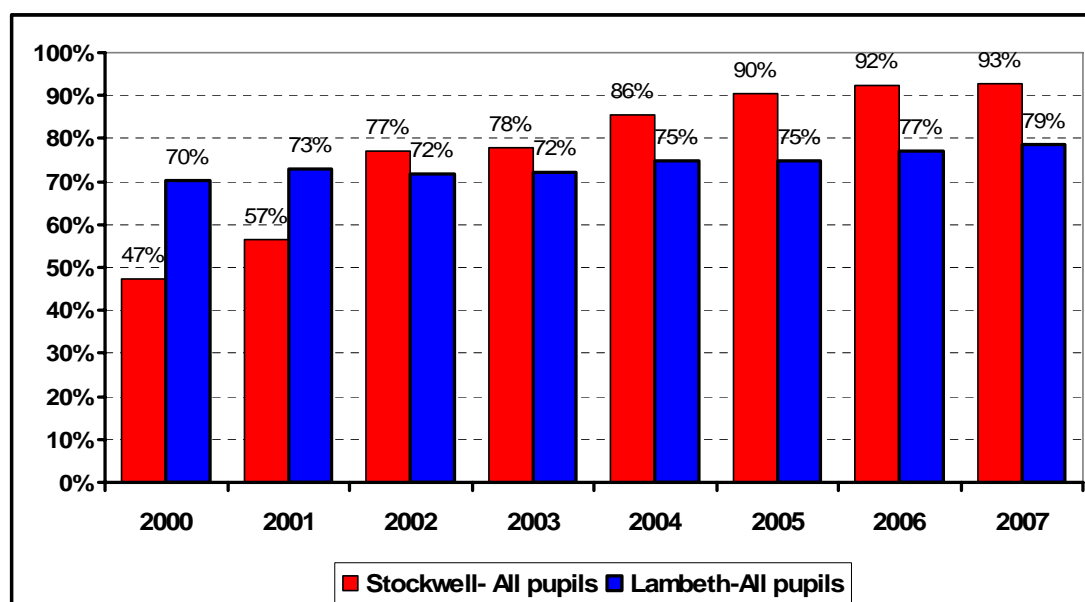
Central to the school's success in raising achievement and progressing pupils well are:

- A strong leadership team led by an outstanding headteacher
- Close links with parents and increasing community support
- Effective use of data
- Effective use of a diverse workforce
- An innovative curriculum which incorporates aspects of pupils' own culture and adds relevance and self esteem to pupils' view of themselves
- Good care, guidance and targeted support for Portuguese pupils

The evidence used to inform the judgements made here includes interviews with the headteacher, staff including head of EMAG, a Portuguese pupil and Portuguese parent focus group; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work and attainment data. The school was visited for 2 days to gather good practice evidence in raising the achievement of Portuguese pupils in June 2008. Details of the findings are discussed below.

## Achievement and Standards

**Figure 1. KS2 Attainment in Stockwell School for All Pupils, 2000-2007**



The school's leaders believe passionately that the pupils should achieve of their best during their time at Stockwell. The school's results highlight how successful they have been in ensuring that this happens. Despite challenging circumstances and low attainment at entry,

results for all pupils at KS2 have improved consistently over the past seven years under the transformational leadership of the headteacher.

**Table 1. Key Stage 2 Results 2000-2007**

	Portuguese Stockwell					Portuguese Lambeth			
	English	Maths	Science	Average	Cohort	English	Maths	Science	Average
2000	33%	17%	17%	22%	<b>6</b>	53%	50%	62%	55%
2001	38%	23%	62%	41%	<b>13</b>	52%	49%	72%	58%
2002	53%	40%	73%	56%	<b>15</b>	51%	53%	72%	58%
2003	100%	71%	100%	90%	<b>7</b>	58%	51%	66%	58%
2004	86%	79%	79%	81%	<b>14</b>	60%	60%	70%	63%
2005	43%	71%	86%	67%	<b>7</b>	59%	55%	76%	63%
2006	83%	83%	100%	89%	<b>12</b>	60%	59%	71%	63%
2007	86%	86%	86%	86%	<b>14</b>	60%	64%	80%	68%

	Stockwell- All pupils					Lambeth-All pupils			
	English	Maths	Science	Average		English	Maths	Science	Average
2000	56%	40%	46%	47%		68%	65%	78%	70%
2001	55%	45%	70%	57%		68%	66%	84%	73%
2002	71%	76%	84%	77%		68%	67%	81%	72%
2003	72%	79%	82%	78%		71%	66%	80%	72%
2004	87%	85%	85%	86%		76%	70%	80%	75%
2005	84%	91%	96%	90%		75%	68%	81%	75%
2006	89%	92%	96%	92%		78%	70%	83%	77%
2007	94%	89%	96%	93%		77%	72%	86%	79%

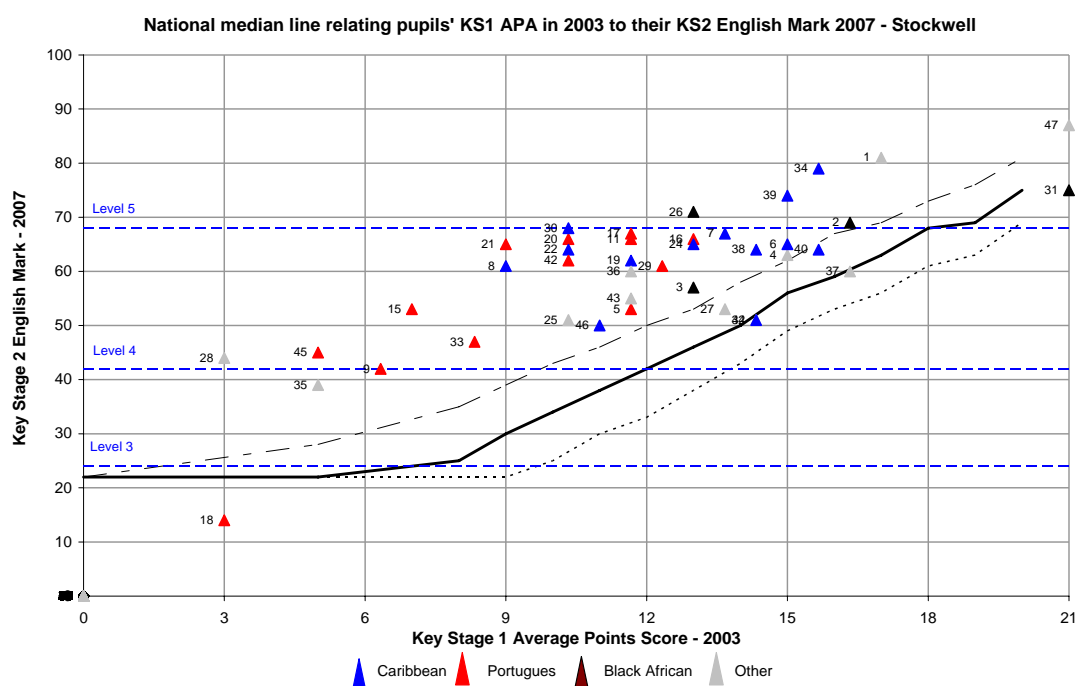
Overall performance of the school is very impressive and evidence from Figure 1 shows that the proportion of pupils across the school achieving level 4 and above rose from 47% in 2000 to 93% in 2007. This is significantly above the national average of 81% and Lambeth average of 79% in 2007.

Portuguese pupils have been one of the highest achieving groups in the school for the past five years. In English, 86% of pupils attained level 4+, in Maths 86% of pupils achieved level 4+ and 86% in Science. Overall 86% of Portuguese pupils in the school achieved level 4+, compared to the Lambeth average of 68%.

The improvement from 22% level 4+ in 2000 to 86% in 2007, 64 percentage points is outstanding. Portuguese pupils and parents' attitudes to education are good and school work is highly valued. New 2008 data confirms that 97% of Portuguese pupils achieved level 4 and above.

The value-added data of the school is as impressive as the raw data above and confirms all students and Portuguese pupils have made very good progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2. Progress between KS1 and KS2 is shown in Figure 2. This compares the relative progress made by all pupils and Portuguese pupils in the school with progress made nationally by all pupils in England. The median line graph shows whether Portuguese pupils and other pupils in the school are doing better or worse than other pupils nationally. The findings suggest that Portuguese Pupils and other Pupils in the school have made very good progress in terms of value-added. Overall 76% of the pupils in the school are in the upper quartile compared to 25% nationally, indicating that their progress is greater than would be expected given the average rate of progress.

**Figure 2. Stockwell Value Added Between KS1 2004 and KS2 English 2008**



Only 2% are in the lower quartile range making less progress, compared to 25% expected nationally. This is a school where Portuguese pupils in particular and all pupils make impressive progress.

The school has a good record in improving performance for all groups. Close monitoring and intervention throughout Foundation stage to Year 6 ensures all pupils including Portuguese pupils receive the support they need to provide the opportunity to attain the best results they possibly can.

## Leadership and Management

*'Leadership and management are outstanding. Staff working at all levels have responded in an exemplary manner to the headteacher's extremely clear vision and excellent leadership. This is characterised by a strong determination that all pupils, regardless of their backgrounds, are capable of reaching the highest standards and it has led to a transformation of the school' (OFSTED 2006, p.3)*

The headteacher is passionate about inclusion. She has embedded a culture of excellence for all, high expectations for every pupil within the school regardless of background. This vision has filtered throughout the school to staff, pupils and their parents

*'We train together, we work together, we make decisions together, we make mistakes together- everybody shares the vision otherwise they move on. This vision is unflinching; it is not tweaked for anyone. Children's interests are at the heart of this. This belief underpins all our practice in school, its drives everything we do.'*

There is a strong ethos of accountability amongst the team. Staff are accountable for pupil progress. One senior manager described this:

*'I am accountable for these children's future. I cannot blame the child. If a child is not achieving or behaving, what is it that I am not doing as a teacher that is not making the difference for this child? If they are hungry, we take them to breakfast club, if they feel unsafe there is the extended day, if they cannot do their homework at home they do it at breakfast or homework club with support from bilingual teaching assistants. We remove their barriers, we extend their horizons, we expose them to experiences that they might not get elsewhere, music, rugby...we take them to IBM to show them what a corporate organisation is like, to show them what the world out there is like.'*

The school brings everything back to the learning of the individual child. There is a policy of bringing children's books to every meeting with individual parents to show parents how e.g. their child's behaviour affects their learning. The uniform, for example, focuses on how pupils are dressed for learning.

The language of high expectations is shared by staff, parents and pupils alike. Pupils stated, *'we want to learn more so our levels will go up.'* One parent said *'my parents wanted me to rise above them, I want this for my daughter. She needs to be ambitious.'*

## **Use of Data**

Use of data for school improvement is a strength of Stockwell Primary School. The use of data involves all interested parties: staff, governors and parents. One of the core elements of the school's success in raising achievement is its robust focus on tracking and monitoring individual pupil progress and achievement in the widest sense of the term. The school has a well developed pupil tracking system and it has detailed Foundation, KS1, KS2 data and non statutory option assessment data at all year groups followed by background data such as ethnic background, language spoken, level of fluency in English, SEN stage, date of admission, attendance rate, eligibility for free school meals, mobility rate, years in school, attendance rate, types of support and postcode data.

The school first started using 'Progress-over-time grids' five years ago to track pupils' performance in English and Mathematics. In 2000, the now Assistant Headteacher for Curriculum and Assessment was new to the school and she, like others, was concerned about the very low standards attained by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. As a new Year 6 teacher and team leader for Years 5 and 6 in 2000, she recalls how pupils' progress was tracked using the tracking system developed by the school:

*'When children achieved a writing target we coloured in the appropriate box, we used a different colour for each term, which showed us the areas that we needed to work on and the children we still needed to target in a particular topic. Sometimes it was the whole class and we realised that that concept hadn't been taught at all. If it was just one or two children who had missed out on a topic and didn't understand a concept, we would use our support staff to work with them. We insisted that the tracking was visual – we put it up on the wall so everyone could see it and reach it. It worked well in that first year because we targeted the areas the children didn't know in English and Maths. We then started to use the same system in all year groups from Year 1 to Year 6, it is still being used and has led on to the development of other forms of data collection and target setting but the Progress-over-time grids continue to be the primary assessment tool.'*

The school staff set targets for every pupil from the Foundation Stage to Year 6. The Assistant Headteacher for Curriculum and Assessment plays a key role in this process as it enables her to gain an overview of the standards across the school:

*‘Two weeks into the autumn term I meet with the two class teachers (from each year group) and their team leaders. We review the levels of achievement of the children and set targets for them in English, Maths and Science. At the end of term we test the children, in the past class teachers and I would mark the tests papers. We found that this could be subjective and it is also very time-consuming so this year we sent the English and Maths test papers away to be marked externally, I mark the Science paper, this gives consistency and therefore a true picture of pupils’ achievement. All pupils achieving below national expectations attend booster classes. If they have SEN or EAL they get additional support. The SMT uses the data to aid their analysis of teaching and learning across the school and to enable teachers to be analytical about the efficacy of their teaching.’*

The Assistant Headteacher for Curriculum and Assessment alongside members of the Senior Management Team plays a key role in supporting and challenging teachers to raise the performance of every pupil, she explains how: *‘I ask the teachers, what we can do to make sure this child gets a Level 4? No child slips through the net.’*

The school sees data as an important tool in raising achievement:

*‘Data is critical in raising achievement. Without data you would not have any focus. It helps to create a picture that you wouldn’t have otherwise, an overview of school, class and individual performance. We have moved on from compiling data, what makes it powerful is that we use it to prompt action to make sure that each child is doing well.’*

Data is used to look at whole school issues, whole class issues, group issues and to drill down to individual learning issues e.g. attendance of a particular pupil and the impact that this might have on their learning. The Senior Management Team supports and challenges teachers to raise the performance of every pupil. The school data profile, produced by Lambeth Research and Statistics<sup>1</sup> is shared with all the staff, including teaching assistants as is all data in school so that everybody involved in pupils’ learning has an overview of the issues. Support staff are included in training around e.g. levelling writing samples so that they too are aware of the steps that need to be in place to reach the next level.

At the beginning of the year the Senior Management Team meets with every class teacher to review where every child in the class is at in terms of their learning and to set targets for them in English, Maths and Science. Children who are not on track with their learning are highlighted and interventions e.g. booster classes for Year 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 are put in place straight away. Booster classes are held after school in all classes from Year 1 to Year 6 in English and Maths, all year round. They are led by dedicated class teachers and support staff, from 3.30 -4.30p.m. They start with borderline pupils and when they achieve the necessary standard, they take the next group and so on.

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<sup>1</sup> For Details of data provided by Local Authority data see

- Stockwell School, *School Profile: Making Figures speak for Themselves*, Lambeth Research and Statistics Unit, December 2007; p.1-18.
- Stockwell School, *KS1 contextual Analysis of Pupil Performance*, Lambeth Research and Statistics Unit, December 2007; p.1-4.
- Stockwell School, *KS2 contextual Analysis of Pupil Performance*, Lambeth Research and Statistics Unit, December 2007; p.1-4.
- Stockwell School, *Foundation Stage Profile contextual Analysis of Pupil Performance*, Lambeth Research and Statistics Unit, December 2007; p.1-4.
- Stockwell School, *KS1 to KS2 Value-added Analysis of Pupil Progress*, Lambeth Research and Statistics Unit, December 2007; p.1-4.

The Assessment co-ordinator will then track pupil progress throughout the year. If certain children are not making progress this is flagged and other interventions are put into place e.g. it might be the way the children are grouped or a resource issue e.g. dual language books.

Overall there are excellent systems for monitoring the work of the pupils, identifying those who need additional help or extra challenge and then providing them with appropriate additional support

### **Effective Use of Ethnic Minorities (EMA) Support**

The EMA co-ordinator is also an Assistant Head at the school. She is of Portuguese origin and came to London in 1996 and to Stockwell in 1997 as a Portuguese support teacher before the two schools amalgamated in 2000. Her promotion to the Senior Management Team enables Portuguese parents and pupils to see how their culture and language are valued at the school and she is able to raise their profile at a strategic level.

Primarily the EMA teacher drew up an action plan to empower pupils, parents and staff to raise the achievement of Portuguese pupils. This included actions to raise the self esteem of pupils and parents and actions to empower staff with a better understanding of the issues effecting Portuguese pupils. Her first priority was to raise the self esteem of the 40% of Portuguese pupils in the school.

*'I led an assembly where I spoke in Portuguese and only one child joined in. Portuguese children gradually began to believe that they could be proud of themselves and their language and that they had a role to play in the school.'*

The co-ordinator brings to school life an in depth understanding of the issues within the Portuguese community; the political climate in Portugal, the legacy of dictatorship, the changing nature of the community in Stockwell and how all these issues affect the pupils and parents at Stockwell. She has passed on her knowledge to the staff at the school and has challenged stereotypes about Portuguese parents not engaging. This has brought a better understanding and empathy towards the learning of Portuguese pupils amongst staff at Stockwell.

She runs INSET for school staff and monitors lessons, both to empower teachers and teaching assistants with strategies for teaching EAL children. She manages 3 Portuguese teaching assistants who work under her and the class teacher's direction. She trains them in specific strategies for bilingual teaching and is accountable for their ability to enhance the learning of EAL children.

She provides a high level of support to children and their parents, new to the school. She has responsibility for their induction, ensuring that pupils and parents are well aware of the school expectations. She buddies new pupils and provides detailed information about a new pupil to the relevant staff.

### **Effective Use of Targeted Support and an Inclusive Curriculum**

Stockwell has high expectations of its pupils and a culture of learning. Pupils are seen as individuals who can succeed. Staff are committed to removing any barriers that might make it harder for a pupil to learn. Support is targeted at pupils when relevant in the form of staff deployment, differentiated support in lessons through resources and specific teaching strategies, language support and class groupings.

Some Portuguese pupils arrive at Stockwell having never been to school before; if they have come from a rural region in Portugal they are used to freedom and space, they need support to sit and focus in lessons. The recruitment of Portuguese teaching assistants has greatly helped, not only because they have a good understanding of the issues that these pupils can face but because they provide invaluable language support in the classroom. Some pupils are encouraged to use their mother tongue in lessons in order to better help them access the curriculum. Pupils might be targeted for homework or breakfast clubs where there are Portuguese speaking teaching assistants to support them with their homework. Homework is monitored closely and followed up if it is incomplete. Support is put into place if there is a difficulty for the pupil. An example where targeted support has worked well for a child is highlighted below:

*Child A had already been to school in Lisbon when he arrived at Stockwell in Year 4, he was able to write in Portuguese with a good sense of punctuation and the elements of language. His Portuguese speaking class teacher was able to assess his basic skills in Portuguese and to see his potential to succeed despite his lack of English language. She was keen to build on his knowledge in Portuguese and help him to transfer this knowledge to the UK system e.g. having learnt the structure of stories in Portuguese, it was a case of transferring this to English. He was encouraged to explore simple stories / Portuguese fables that he could relate to straight away, to use role play as a means to explore through spoken Portuguese language what they are learning about in the curriculum. He was placed with a Portuguese speaking talk partner in order to explore ideas and concepts in depth and benefited from the visual curriculum which helped him to relate to concepts visually and acquire the English language. Child A was encouraged to write in Portuguese at first in order to reinforce his basic skills in his own language and then to use a dual language dictionary in order that he might not become reliant on his teacher to translate. In order to accelerate this learning process it was necessary to bring his parents into the process and to make them aware of this potential. The teacher met with them regularly in order to give them the knowledge about the UK curriculum and give them a detailed insight on how to support him at home. His French speaking TA prepared resources for him e.g. word lists. He was also taught by the same Portuguese speaking teacher at Portuguese After School Club. Within a term Child A could read simple texts in English and within two terms Level 2 texts.*

## **Diversity of Workforce**

The school has a diverse multi-ethnic workforce including some staff of Portuguese heritage represented across the school and within the leadership team. There are currently 92 members of staff and over 75% is of ethnic minority origin and many of the languages, cultures and faiths of the pupils are reflected in the workforce. Of these, 34% are Black Caribbean, 25% White British, 21% Black African, 4% Portuguese, 2% Mixed White and Black Caribbean, 2% White Irish, 2% South American, 2% Romanian, 1% Polish, 1% Hungarian, 1% Bangladeshi, 1% Indian, 1% Other Asian, 1% Other Black, 1% Cuban and 1% Lebanese Arab. The school prides itself in its diversity. The headteacher believes that by recruiting staff from the local community she sends a strong message to the community that it is valued. It has helped the school to become the central point of the wider community and has built trust.

Pupils feel that they can relate to the members of staff from their own cultural backgrounds. Staff members can empathise with pupils; they speak the same language and understand how the systems operate 'back home.'

There are two Portuguese speaking teachers in the school and three Portuguese teaching assistants. One Portuguese speaking teacher stated:

*'People here see it as an asset that I can speak another language. I feel valued. They think that about the pupils too.'*

Portuguese parents greatly appreciate the point of contact in the Portuguese staff. When they first arrive at the school they are introduced to a member of staff who speaks Portuguese. However over time this has become less important to them as they feel valued and confident enough to be heard by all staff.

The headteacher took the decision to recruit a number of teaching assistants who speak the community languages of the children; Portuguese, Twi, French, Ibo etc. she feels that whereas one teacher can only reach a certain amount of children teaching assistants can be used flexibly to focus on groups / individual children when necessary. They have the language expertise, cultural understanding and often a detailed understanding of the issues in the wider community which might impact on pupils' lives and learning. They work under the direction of the class teacher and EMA co-ordinator, undertake general TA training and specific training on strategies for bilingual teaching. They teach modern foreign language lessons to all pupils.

Teaching assistants are greatly valued in the school. They play a key role in communicating with parents. They attend school INSET and have a good understanding of the strategic direction of the school as well as whole school and relevant class issues thrown up by school data.

The opportunities are clear and Portuguese parents interviewed in the focus group appreciate the school's efforts. Portuguese parents are generally supportive of the school and try to present this approach to their children.

### **Celebration of Cultural Heritage**

One teacher stated:

*'The school has now reached the stage where it is natural for everyone to be proud of their heritage; as a community we have embraced the different languages that we have. Everyone feels they can succeed and that they have something to contribute to the community.'*

The celebration of diversity is embedded into school life through e.g. assemblies and circle times, language of the week and use of the mother tongue in class, the teaching of modern foreign languages and the curriculum. Through the 'Virtues project' pupils embrace a different virtue every week e.g. empathy, courage, purposefulness. These are explored in circle times, assemblies and class discussions and have led to culture of acceptance and empathy across the school.

Pupils are also led to embrace each other's languages through 'language of the week', and learning another language in modern foreign language lessons in class. Portuguese pupils felt that this was useful as they were able to *'learn about the world and each other and speak in another language if you go on holiday.'*

The teaching of Portuguese as a modern foreign language to all pupils gives the Portuguese pupils an opportunity to shine and to support other pupils. The fact that Portuguese pupils are encouraged to speak in their mother tongue in lessons to explore ideas and concepts

with their talk partner or teacher, as are parents encouraged to write on target sheets and children's reading records in Portuguese, has reinforced the importance of the Portuguese language in school and removed barriers relating to progress for children and engagement for parents. Work on diversity is embedded into the curriculum - pupils explore writers from different cultures, games from other cultures and different methods of calculating from other countries.

Parents are invited to a range of assemblies which celebrate a range of cultures. Significant Portuguese celebration days, 25<sup>th</sup> April and 10<sup>th</sup> June, are celebrated in assemblies. The school uses Black History Month as an opportunity to explore different countries and celebrate diversity.

*'Every class studies a different country to give them a wealth of knowledge about the culture, the food, the language and people. Each class presents their country through an assembly- last year we learnt about 12 countries, this ingrains diversity in the children.'*

Annually there is an 'International Food Day'. Staff, pupils and parents dress up in their traditional dress and share food from around the world. Parents from all backgrounds:

*'Mingle and share recipes and children are encouraged to try different foods which opens them up to other cultures.'*

## **Parental Engagement**

The genuine partnership between Portuguese parents and school is summarised in a parental quote:

*'They look after us, we look after them.'*

When the first parent workshop had been organised it was very difficult to recruit Portuguese parents. One of the first activities was for parents to write down a paragraph about their experience of school. One father broke down at the memory of his school experience:

*'This experience became a starting point for discussions with parents that even if they didn't have a good experience we welcomed them. We organised fun activities and gave them a different experience of school and gradually they realised that school was different nowadays. We needed to move beyond their negative experiences and join together to do the best for their children. Once we were able to engage parents and convince them that they were able to articulate their expectations we moved on tremendously. This has taken all of us lots of energy and commitment but was necessary for our vision to realise the potential for every child.'*

Parent workshops are used to inform parents about the UK education system, the school's curriculum, how maths and literacy are taught, and to support them to support their children's learning. Parents are given the opportunity to look at SATs papers in order to get a sense of age related expectations. A DVD has been produced in Portuguese, to reinforce the message to parents about the importance of interacting with children in both languages and the support that can be given to them before they enter the Nursery.

Parents are supported with the process of secondary transition. The diversity of the school staff helps this process as staff can explain the difference in the UK system for secondary transfer.

Through a systematic programme of Family Learning with the Lambeth City Learning Centre, Parent Workshops, Home School link work through the Children's Centre, recruiting Portuguese speaking staff and celebrating Portuguese culture in the life of the school, trust has been built up amongst parents. They appreciate the newsletters, the feedback on their children and the support the school gives through the extended day, essential for working parents.

*'Parents are busy working 10-12 hour days cleaning, catering, and building. They don't have time for anything else and need the school to do the best for their children. Everyone at this school does the best for our children. Other schools need encouragement to do the same.'*

They also appreciate that the school is strict about punctuality and attendance and they are aware of how this effects their children's learning

*'We expect a lot from them and they expect a lot from us like bringing our children to school on time.'*

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## WYVIL PRIMARY SCHOOL



Children of Today and Leaders of Tomorrow. Wyvil Year 6 Class Graduation Ceremony, 17<sup>th</sup> July 2008. © Wyvil Primary School.

### The Context

Wyvil is a large primary school with over 500 pupils. It serves a very disadvantaged, inner-city community but it is a vibrant community with pupils from many different countries, including Portugal, Madeira, Nigeria, Iran, Kurdistan, Lithuania, Russia, Philippines, Eritrea, France, Germany, Italy, India, Armenia, UK and the Caribbean Islands. Almost 40% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, a proportion which is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is significantly above the national average and the numbers of pupils who join or leave the school at non routine times is very high.

The school population is ethnically and linguistically very diverse. About 94% of the pupils come from a range of minority ethnic groups. About 71% have English as an additional language and 63% of the pupils are not fluent in English. This includes a significant number of pupils who are at an early stage of learning English. Many ethnic groups are represented in the school. The majorities are Portuguese (41%), Black African (15%), Black Caribbean (13%), Mixed Race (7%), White British (6%), Bangladeshi (3%), and Pakistani (2%), Black Other (2%), White Other (2 %).

Twenty eight languages are spoken in the school. The most common mother tongue languages are: Portuguese (211 speakers), English (157 speakers), Spanish (32 speakers),

Yoruba (16 speakers), Bengali (16 speakers), Twi-Fante (11 speakers), Arabic (10 speakers), Somali (9 Speakers), Albanian (7 speakers) and Urdu (5 speakers)<sup>2</sup>.

## Achievement and Standards

KS2 results have shown significant improvement over the last few years and it is one of the fastest improving schools in Lambeth. Since 2000, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 at KS2 has consistently improved, from 49% to 74% in 2007. Portuguese pupils have shared in the success of the school. In 2007 73% of Portuguese pupils attained level 4+ compared with 79% Black Caribbean 77% African and 65 % White British. Improvement of Portuguese continues to improve from 17% in 2000 to 73% in 2007 (has improved by 56 percentage points).

**Table 1. Key Stage 2 Results 2000-2007**

<b>PORTUGUESE PUPILS</b>									
	<b>Wyvil</b>					<b>Lambeth</b>			
	<b>English</b>	<b>Maths</b>	<b>Science</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Cohort</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Maths</b>	<b>Science</b>	<b>Average</b>
2000	20%	10%	20%	17%	<b>10</b>	53%	50%	62%	55%
2001	44%	33%	44%	41%	<b>9</b>	52%	49%	72%	58%
2002	50%	50%	50%	50%	<b>6</b>	51%	53%	72%	58%
2003	71%	57%	43%	57%	<b>7</b>	58%	51%	66%	58%
2004	54%	62%	62%	59%	<b>13</b>	60%	60%	70%	63%
2005	82%	82%	91%	85%	<b>11</b>	59%	55%	76%	63%
2006	50%	50%	71%	57%	<b>14</b>	60%	59%	71%	63%
2007	56%	81%	81%	73%	<b>16</b>	60%	64%	80%	68%

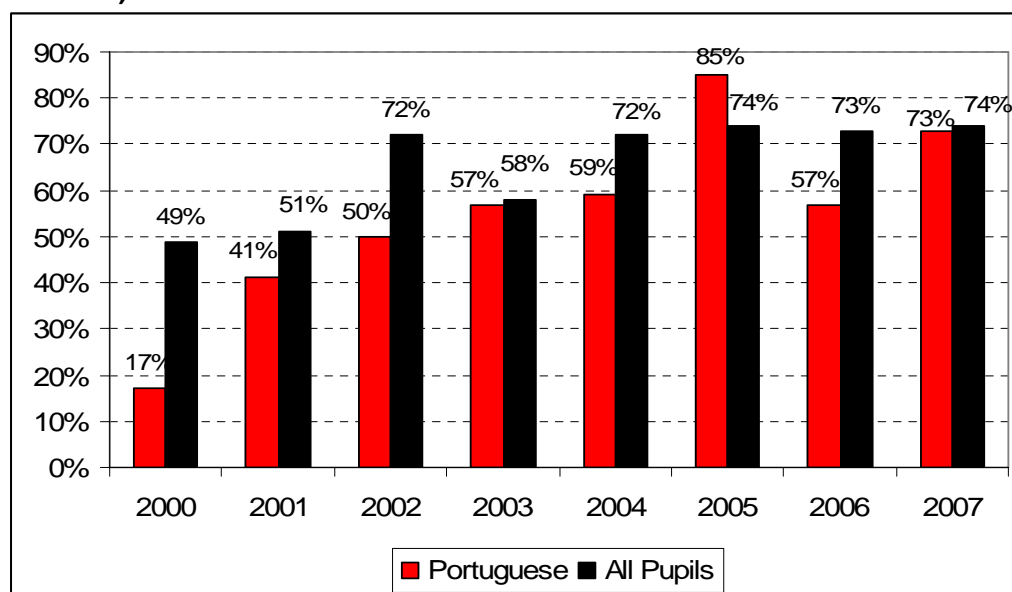
  

<b>ALL PUPILS</b>									
	<b>Wyvil</b>					<b>Lambeth</b>			
	<b>English</b>	<b>Maths</b>	<b>Science</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Cohort</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Maths</b>	<b>Science</b>	<b>Average</b>
2000	47%	45%	55%	49%		68%	65%	78%	70%
2001	50%	40%	64%	51%		68%	66%	84%	73%
2002	73%	71%	71%	72%		68%	67%	81%	72%
2003	61%	53%	59%	58%		71%	66%	80%	72%
2004	72%	70%	74%	72%		76%	70%	80%	75%
2005	77%	65%	81%	74%		75%	68%	81%	75%
2006	71%	65%	84%	73%		78%	70%	83%	77%
2007	52%	80%	89%	74%		77%	72%	86%	79%

New 2008 data shows that 81% of Wyvil Portuguese pupils achieved level 4 or above. This is despite the fact that Wyvil has taken many casual admissions of Portuguese pupils. In many cases these children are from Madeira, had limited school experience and spoke no English on arrival. In September 2008 the school admitted 16 pupils to years 1-6 of which 14 were Portuguese.

<sup>2</sup> Other languages spoken by four or less speakers include Tigrinya (4 speakers) and Italian, Kurdish, Lingala, Persian/Farsi, Swahili, Vietnamese, French, Igbo, Krio, Lithuanian, Punjabi, Russian, Tagalog, Armenian, German, Kinyarwanda, and Swedish.

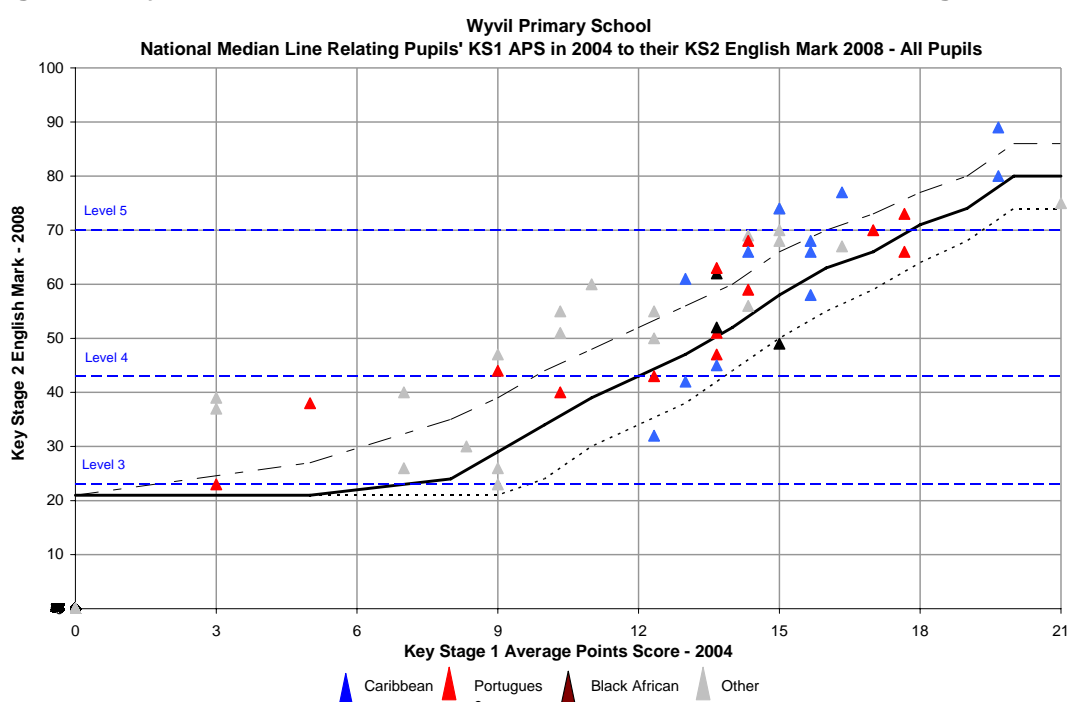
**Figure 1. KS2 performance of Portuguese and all pupils in Wyvil School (Average Level 4+)\***



\* Average for English, Maths and Science

The value-added by the school is also very impressive and pupils in the school progress much higher than similar pupils nationally in Maths, English and Science. For example, Figure 2 shows there is a higher proportion of pupils in the upper quartile (45%) compared to 25% nationally, indicating that their progress is greater than would be expected given the average rate of progress. The interquartile range performance is 51% compared to 50% nationally suggesting the pupils progressed as expected. Only 4% are in the lower quartile range making less progress, compared to 25% expected nationally. This is a school where Portuguese pupils make impressive progress between KS1 and KS2 (see Figure 2)

**Figure 2. Wyvil National Value added between KS1 2004 and KS2 English 2008**



Overall the school data shows that from their generally low starting points, pupils reach exceptionally high standards in English, Mathematics and Science by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Very effective intervention and support is given to pupils to ensure that they all have the same opportunities, whatever their backgrounds or abilities. As a result pupils with specific learning needs and those who are learning English as an additional language make similar progress to others. Teaching assistants make a very valuable contribution to pupils' learning

As part of the two day case study visit and research into good practice in raising the achievement of Portuguese pupils the team decided to focus on the many strengths of the school including outstanding leadership and management, valuing cultural diversity, the effective use of targeted EAL support, a diverse workforce and partnership with parents and the wider community the school serves. The evidence used to inform the judgements made includes interviews with the head teacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher, governors, staff and Portuguese pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils work and attainment data; observation and discussion at the Wyvil Year 6 leavers' Awards Ceremony which was attended by all year 6 graduates, large numbers of parents, community members, governors and pupils.

## **Leadership and Management**

Leadership by the headteacher is excellent and a strength of the school. At the heart of the school's success is the outstanding leadership and management of the headteacher who is extremely well supported by a very effective and strong team of senior leaders. They share a commitment to meeting the personal and academic needs and aspirations of every single pupil. One teacher said *'Through excellent leadership and management, the headteacher leads a strong, dedicated and hard working staff who in turn provide an extremely high standard of education, discipline and care for the children in this school.'* The headteacher's firm belief that everyone in the school community matters is a strong motivation for staff, pupils and parents. He is committed to creating a school ethos which stresses high achievement, equal opportunities and valuing cultural diversity. This can be seen clearly from the headteacher interview about what works which is summarised below:

*'Everybody can and must succeed. We don't accept failure'*

*'Whatever backgrounds the children come from, we want to ensure they succeed'. All pupils are given the opportunity'.*

*'We aim to ensure the cultural and linguistic heritages of pupils are welcomed and valued within the school curriculum.'*

*'We place high importance on our pupils' skills in Portuguese at Wyvil'*

*'We are very proud for developing Portuguese Asset language initiatives and this is highly appreciated by Portuguese pupils and parents and the community'.*

*'We aim to create an ethos that values and celebrates pupils' cultural heritage'*

*'We have a diversified workforce and value employing staff from the community we serve.'*

*'We have developed a strong relationship with Portuguese parents and the community',*

*'We have three Portuguese bilingual teachers, a School Administrative Officer who speaks Portuguese and three Portuguese governors. They all play a key role in representing and working with Portuguese community and parents'*

*'We run smaller classes to meet the needs of bilingual learners'.*

There is a high commitment to include Portuguese pupils in all activities and the care and concern for all pupils is of a high priority. Successful strategies to raise the achievement of Portuguese pupils have been put in place. Parents and pupils value this and see it as an important feature of the school.

All members of staff interviewed felt they were well supported by senior managers at the school and knew who to go to for support and help. Overall there is a clear emphasis on collective responsibility in the school which ensures that senior and middle leaders are fully accountable for their areas and pupil progress. There are regular meetings with staff to discuss particular pupils in order to put strategies in place to address any issues raised. Their impact is apparent in the good performance of Portuguese pupils and very high standards for all. The exemplary relationships within the staff team enable the school's performance to be monitored in a positive, supportive and constructive way. The school has an accurate view of its performance and is able to identify priorities for future development.

The Leadership team is well supported by governors. There are three Portuguese governors on the governing body. They are knowledgeable and supportive of the school's work and monitor and evaluate it very effectively. They hold the school to account for the standards it achieves for Portuguese pupils and other pupils in the school. They seek the views of parents effectively to inform their own decision making.

There is good teamwork at all levels which ensures a consistent approach and high expectations. Exemplary systems have been developed to check the effectiveness of the teaching and how well an innovative curriculum which is inclusive is being implemented to meet the needs of Portuguese and other pupils. The school has a very realistic view of its performance and is able to identify where it needs to improve. The school's track record of improvement shows that it is very well placed to improve the performance of Portuguese pupils in the future. The senior management team has excellent systems for interpreting pupils' performance data and using it to set school strategies.

The headteacher regards liaison with parents as vital in the school's drive to raise achievement. The fact that the school has at least three Portuguese Bilingual teachers, a School Administrative Officer (SAO) who speaks Portuguese, three Portuguese governors and a headteacher who is well respected in the community has done much to assist in establishing strong links with Portuguese parents and the community. Overall the school has forged successful links with Portuguese parents who have increased their support for the school and interest in their children's learning. Some parents, for example, assist with extra – curricular Portuguese classes in the school and others attend classes to improve their English and to understand how they can help their children with their learning at home. This is encouraging pupils to take their studies more seriously.

*'Parents feel welcome in the school. In our school, there is a strong focus on providing family learning opportunities through English classes. We strongly believe in the school and parents working together. This is a whole school aim and everybody working in the school is involved in making this reality', says a Parent Governor (and also Teaching Assistant) who is Portuguese heritage herself.'*

*'Portuguese class is helping the children and parents to improve their language skills. Some pupils struggle with the Portuguese language and need additional lessons'.  
(Teacher)*

## **Diversity of School Workforce**

Another key success for the school is the leadership's ability to create a community ethos by employing a diverse multi-ethnic workforce including some staff of Portuguese heritage which represents the community the school serves. There is no doubt that at Wyvil the diversity of the staff is a striking feature of the school. The school reported 94 staff. Of these about 77% school staff are of ethnic minority background including 36% Black Caribbean, 25% White British, 8% African, 9% Portuguese, 3% Russian, 2 % Mixed Race, and 2% Bangladeshi. Other staff origins include Brazil, Poland, Morocco, Colombia, Philippines, Mauritius and Peru. These highly skilled and motivated minority ethnic staff work in the school supporting pupils. They make a valuable contribution to removing barriers against achievement.

The decision to recruit 8 Portuguese staff has proven a significant asset to the school. The confidence this has given to the Portuguese community and parents and pupils is remarkable. In addition, there are staff who speak Greek, Polish, Urdu, French, German, Spanish, Russian, Arabic and Amharic. Bilingual staff are clearly able to communicate effectively with parents and pupils as they share those languages

Two teachers and the SAO of Portuguese heritage agreed to be interviewed and asked for their perspective on the achievement of Portuguese pupils at their school.

**Portuguese Staff A:** Has spent 25 Years in England and came in 1983 from Madeira. She is one the longest serving members of staff and was struck at the sense of community which pervades the school and to which she felt welcomed. There were only 17 Portuguese pupils when she arrived but now 211. She has worked as a secretary for 4 headteachers in the school and in the last three years with the appointment of the new Headteacher she felt well placed to make comparative judgements about the ethos. *She feels the headteacher is an inspirational community leader and ensures that the school has high aspirations for all its pupils regardless of their ability or background. 'I enjoy the diversity of the Portuguese school population in the school. I am the first person to be seen because of my role as school secretary. One of my main duties is helping Portuguese parents to fill in forms as some have difficulty with the English language. I support them during their meetings with the head, admission forms to the reception class and secondary transfer. Parents also come to me for help with many things not related to school. I help them and sometimes even act as a mentor. I also support the Portuguese classes. Parents saw having a Portuguese secretary as making a big difference for their children and they are confident that they get help with any of their questions. I think this school is the best school as we are doing a lot of work for Portuguese pupils. This support has increased over the years. This is highly appreciated by parents and community. I enjoy working in the school and supporting all of the pupils.'*

**Portuguese Staff B:** She has worked in the school for the last two years as a Teaching Assistant and parent governor and has felt supported by colleagues throughout her time. She feels *'the leadership supports the Portuguese community and all pupils. The school has provided after school classes in Portuguese twice a week for some years in recognition of the mother tongue skills of the intake. This has helped to improve the language of the pupils. To encourage parents to attend the English classes the headteacher organises child care while parents are in the lesson.'*

Portuguese teachers are often asked by parents for advice. There is a strong identification with Portuguese cultural norms and desire for achievement for pupils which is reinforced by the school and teachers. The wide and diverse ranges of staff in the school are happy to be seen as role models and those include non-teaching staff.

## Use of Data

As the school was chosen for their success in raising achievement of Portuguese Pupils, it was not difficult for the school to demonstrate how the use of data was effective. The use of data is a key part of the process of school improvement. To identify areas of improvement and targeted support, the school monitors a range of information about pupils: socio-economic background, gender, the level of pupil mobility, the ethnic groups represented in the school, the main languages spoken and the number of EAL learners by levels of fluency in English. The school is data rich and had good systems in place for assessing and mapping progress of all pupils at individual and group level. A wide range of data (Foundation Stage, KS1, KS2 and optional non statutory optional tests) was analysed by ethnicity and gender, enabling the school to identify support needs and organise the deployment of resources appropriately. In the words of the Assistant Headteacher who leads on inclusion:

*'Data is incredibly useful and used in the school for a number of purposes including to track pupil performance, to assess the individual needs of pupils, to identify individuals and groups of pupils who might be underachieving, to evaluate the quality and impact of the school interventions to support teaching and learning, to inform the deployment of staff, inform teachers planning, challenging expectations of staff and identify priorities for school improvement'*

The school also uses a range of other comprehensive benchmarking, contextual and value added reports provided by the Local Authority<sup>3</sup>, DCSF Raise Online, the Fisher Family Trust (FFT) to integrate the data they collect and to contextualise and understand their impact on pupil progress. All the data we looked at was very useful and takes into account a range of prior attainment factors as well as contextual factors including analysis by ethnicity, gender, level of fluency in English, attendance, and first language which the school uses to decide how well underachieving BME pupils and EAL pupils are doing and if there are any significant differences in teaching and across year groups.

The school bases its improvement and support strategy on thorough monitoring of and evaluation including the identification of what most needs to be done and decisions about actions to be taken. The school uses data to identify pupils who are at risk of underachieving. The school identifies the pupils who are at risk of underachieving as early as possible and this has led to a number of interventions or strategies where data analysis highlighted issues

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<sup>3</sup> For details of data provided by Local Authority data see

- Wyvil School, *School Profile: Making Figures speak for Themselves*, Lambeth Research and Statistics Unit, December 2007; p.1-18.
- Wyvil School, *KS1 contextual Analysis of Pupil Performance*, Lambeth Research and Statistics Unit, December 2007; p.1-4.
- Wyvil School, *KS2 contextual Analysis of Pupil Performance*, Lambeth Research and Statistics Unit, December 2007; p.1-4.
- Wyvil School, *Foundation Stage Profile contextual Analysis of Pupil Performance*, Lambeth Research and Statistics Unit, December 2007; p.1-4.
- Wyvil School, *KS1 to KS2 Value-added Analysis of Pupil Progress*, Lambeth Research and Statistics Unit, December 2007; p.1-4.

to be addressed. The most commonly reported interventions as a result of looking at the data is providing additional support, including one to one, personalised teaching and English language support. As a result EAL pupils in general and Portuguese pupils in particular make rapid progress and achieve outstanding results as they are monitored and supported closely. Portuguese pupils value highly the support of their classroom teachers and EAL teachers and they enjoy the education provided in the school.

Procedures for initial assessment, especially newly arrived pupils including Portuguese, were well developed. Where possible, the school uses pupils' first language as part of the assessment procedures and annotated writing samples in the pupils' home language. This procedure informs individual target setting that is supported by Bilingual Portuguese teaching assistants and teachers.

To conclude, it may be helpful to look at two case studies of a remarkable Portuguese boy and girl who were identified as having no English when they started in the school and who despite barriers in the English language were successful:

**Child A Case Study:** *Child A came to Wyvil from Portugal in September 2005 and joined Year 4. She had no English and was at Stage 1 level of fluency in English. But with support in Year 4 and differentiated work she made progress. By 2008 she had progressed to level 3 stage of fluency in English and was able to access fully the National Curriculum. Earlier this year she took the Asset Languages test in four strands of Portuguese: in Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing. She passed Listening, Speaking and Reading at Level 6 and Writing at Level 5. In her Year 6 SATs she obtained Level 4 for English and Maths and Level 5 for Science.*

**Child B Case study:** *Child B came to Wyvil with no English. When he started at the Wyvil Nursery he could only speak Portuguese. Now in Year 4 he is at English fluency level Stage 3. He is a competent and confident boy involved in all aspects of school life. In Year 3 Child B was targeted using the Success Maker software support based programme, and this input has continued in year 4 due to continued spelling needs. He has made outstanding progress this year'.*

From the outset Child A and B needed effective support in order to achieve good results in their primary education. With their limited language and literacy levels of English, they had considerable needs. However, through the school's targeted support, effective assessment systems and tracking of pupil performance, both pupils proved that English as an Additional language need not be a barrier. Wyvil school has an integrated approach to education, a caring pastoral system, a commitment to raising achievement and strong links with the Portuguese community. With appropriate support both in their first language and English Portuguese pupils can do well and succeed once their level of fluency in English is improved.

### **Use of Targeted Support and an Inclusive Curriculum**

There is comprehensive support for pupils with EAL needs. There are 80 children in the school who have targeted support using the Success Maker programme. Additional support in small groups is used to extend the most able e.g. getting pupils to Level 5 in English and mathematics.

Newly arrived pupils are assessed within 3 weeks to ascertain their competency in their own language. They are then tracked to monitor their progress and their levels of English and targets are adjusted accordingly.

The school has also developed an innovative approach to class organisation to meet the needs of Portuguese pupils. As a result Portuguese pupils have a lot of language exposure in English within the curriculum. Instructions are specific and tailored to the learning objectives with children being clear about what they need to do in order to 'be successful'. Key words are embedded in the lessons. If necessary these are reinforced using visual aids and repetition in the Portuguese language. Strategies are shared and pupils get the opportunity to work with both languages. There is an emphasis on speaking in sentences and feedback is oral. Teachers report that Portuguese pupils are highly motivated, with a positive attitude and enthusiasm for the tasks set, willing to share what they have learnt in lessons and talk a lot in both languages.

There is careful tracking based on teacher assessment and tests to ensure pupil progress. Each term pupils are levelled which informs their work for the term. Pupils are often taught in small groups according to ability. Lessons are personalised towards ensuring each pupil ensuring meets their potential.

An example of how progress can be accelerated is shown with one KS2 pupil who started at the school recently. The teacher met with his parent on the first day. Despite working long hours, the parent was willing to engage so that the pupil would not fall behind due to his lack of English language. The partnership between school and parent, together with the support of an older sibling and an aspirational environment at home was the key to success. The pupil was exposed to the English language as much as possible; he took home reading books, KS1 high frequency words and homework to meet his needs. The teaching assistant spent time with him, working with him in small groups and 1:1 reading. He attends Portuguese club after school and made good progress achieving Level 4 for English and Maths and Level 5 for Science.

The school has also developed a special 'reading programme' as part of the innovative curriculum. The curriculum in the school places a strong emphasis on the development of pupils' basic skills in a way that recognises their needs. An example is the Literacy programme which emphasises daily reading and writing. The school has developed an innovative approach that meets the needs of pupils whose parents may have little English and are limited in how much they can support their children's literacy development. The programme enables every child to have an opportunity to be heard read every day. Due to work commitments, many parents do not have time to read with their children. The school helps parents and pupils to improve their literacy skills. The headteacher states:

*'We have a well developed school and home partnership'*

The reading programme is conducted by a team of teaching assistants, some of whom are bilingual. Teaching Assistants are deployed flexibly and effectively to support pupils reading and they make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching and learning in the school and support for parents.

*'We spend a large amount of the school's budget (£70,000) on this reading programme to support pupils. We have 12 teaching assistants that support reading. We consulted parents on whether to continue the scheme when it was trialled, we got a good response and as a result decided to continue to focus on reading as a priority. We are open here in the way we work and we make sure that parents understand our schemes well. The school is very pleased with the outcomes on children's learning. It has had a very positive impact on the standards and achievement of Portuguese pupils.'* (Headteacher)

Wyvil School has well developed targeted support through the use of 'community language' classes. Portuguese speaking staff run Portuguese Mother Tongue classes after school. Mainly intended for Portuguese speaking pupils, the focus is on teaching Portuguese as mother tongue rather than as a modern foreign language. There are 92 pupils who attend the classes, grouped according to their language levels. In addition to a focus on literacy, pupils are encouraged to maintain close contact with their cultural heritage.

*'The Portuguese classes make a huge difference for the children and parents. It means they can communicate more in their own language- some speak only English with their friends. Their mother tongue is really important if they go back to their own country. In previous years there was nothing for them to do after school'*

Through the Portuguese classes 20 Year 6 pupils were assessed in 4 skills; speaking, listening, reading and writing using a nationally accredited assessment tool, Asset Languages. This enables pupils to gain a recognisable qualification for their competency in Portuguese which is a useful indicator for secondary schools.

In order to enrich the curriculum Wyvil is part of the International School linking project. As a result the school has a link with Torre School in Cas Cais, near Lisbon. Senior managers went to the school in order to set up the link, shadowing teachers looking at behaviour and Special Education Needs provision. It has been important for staff at Wyvil to see the context from which Portuguese pupils are coming. Portuguese pupils at Wyvil are also encouraged to write to pupils in Lisbon, exchange activities, playground games etc.

## **Parental Engagement and Links with Community**

The two Learning Mentors see their main role in the school as:

*'Removing the barriers to learning.....We see the child as a whole, meeting their needs throughout the school day. Emotion translates in any language, transcends any culture, it is easy to see whether they happy in school'*

They have devised an induction pack for newly arrived Portuguese speaking pupils at the school which they are in the process of piloting. They have designed a Picture Dictionary of important words in English that new EAL children will need.

*'We want to help them with English as soon as they arrive. They can feel isolated when they arrive'.*

Both mentors have attended the Family Learning sessions voluntarily. They see this as a way of getting to engage with parents that they don't speak to usually. *'Its helps to bridge the gap.'* Learning mentors also run groups across the school based on *'talk and listen'* with a range of activities based on speaking and listening- whispering, saying positive things about each other, listening to instructions, whispering etc.

Wyvil runs Family Learning / ESOL courses for a range of parents at the school, including Portuguese. These are funded by the Lambeth City Learning Centre and are 'Short Literacy' courses which act as a stepping stone to College for many parents.

## **Pupils Voice and Teachers Views on What Works in School**

As a concluding remark we asked the Assistant Headteacher why the pupils and parents see this school as a special school for Portuguese pupils' education. Their comments included:

- Welcoming school.
- Translation into Portuguese language is readily available and the school support parents and pupils.
- They get effective targeted support from us.
- We value diversity very highly.
- There are a high percentage of Portuguese pupils, they feel at home here.
- We run a Portuguese class which is highly appreciated and valued.
- We fit our support to the needs of the individual child.
- We think listening to the parents is important. It is a myth to say Portuguese parents cannot help their children because of the language barrier. We know they value their education highly and we have put support systems to help them to understand British education, to learn English and Portuguese through the Portuguese class initiative
- We have a Portuguese SAO in the school. She is here to help with practicalities; translation is always available from Portuguese speaking staff. *'Her role is crucial for Portuguese speaking parents at Wyvil and she plays a big part in attracting parents to the school. Parents feel confident with Maria there; it makes them feel at home. They have somebody to talk to, to help them translate, an 'agony aunt' even. She is involved in delivering the Portuguese classes after school as well as recruiting Portuguese parents to Family Learning and for Portuguese classes.'*

When discussing their school the pupils felt the teachers really listened to them. One said *'our teacher listens with care'*. They also spoke with enthusiasm about the work they have done in Portuguese class. One stated *'some of us are born here and we have difficulty in our mother tongue Portuguese language and the class helped us to learn Portuguese and to improve our language skills. We can confidently speak in Portuguese now to our mother and father'*. They spoke again with enthusiasm about the things they liked about the school. Reasons why they see the school as a special school for Portuguese pupils were:

*'Nearly half of the pupils are Portuguese'.*

*'There is a lot of celebration and events to value Portuguese and other pupils' cultural heritage'.*

*'We have the opportunity to attend Portuguese classes'.*

*'We have a number of Portuguese teachers and staff to support us'.*

*'We are the only school in the country which has a Portuguese SAO who helps us and our parents'.*

*'I like Mr Toye our headteacher. He helps us with football'.*

The children were clearly very happy with their experience in Wyvil. They felt valued and treated equally. The Portuguese pupils rated the care, guidance and support the school provided as outstanding during our focus group discussion. *'You get individual support with the teachers and teaching assistants in this school'*.

## SECTION 5: CASE STUDY IN THE LOCAL AUTHORITY- GOOD PRACTICE

The above chapter discusses good practice taking place in Lambeth schools. There is also good practice used by the LA which supports schools to raise the achievement of Portuguese pupils. The LA has carried out a number of good practice projects to support its schools. The LA provides directly, or through commissioning, a range of services to Portuguese pupils. Lambeth is aware that the national policy is to neglect local needs with the focus on national priorities. Therefore the most effective strategy to counteract these tendencies seems to be for LA services to work as closely as possible in partnership with mainstream schools, with the aim of developing expertise in those schools as part of school self-improvement.

There is strong evidence that the LA has been addressing the underachievement issue through provision of data and challenging schools, using Education Action Zone and Ethnic Minorities Achievement (EMAG) linked programmes.

### **LA Support in Providing Strategic Leadership and Management**

A key role of the LA since the 1990s has been to provide to all its schools a level of strategic leadership and management over and above that which schools can provide for themselves. The LA has developed a moral authority that has enabled it to articulate a strategic vision based on principles of equality and social inclusion. This moral authority has been vital when it has intervened on behalf of Portuguese and other ethnic minority pupils in the face of prejudice. Furthermore, the LA has acted as a broker between schools on the one hand and Portuguese pupils, parents and communities on the other. This has taken a number of forms, from encouraging the involvement of parents in supporting their children's learning, through to enabling parents and communities to participate in school governance. As part of this strategy, the LA has held a number of parents' conferences and training sessions and is encouraging the recruitment of Portuguese governors, which is effective in a number of schools. The LA has ensured as much as possible, with limited resources, to act as an advocate for vulnerable pupils and their parents, making sure that their voices are heard in shaping the LA's education system. The LA has developed closer working relations with the Portuguese community and organisations, who are now engaged with the Local Authority on issues affecting Portuguese pupils and students. There is now greater collaboration with a number of services who, as a result of the work of the LA Portuguese advisory teacher, are becoming aware of the issues. The LA also encourages its schools to run homework clubs within the Portuguese community to enable it to play an instrumental role in promoting education amongst parents and community members and taking ownership for improving children's education and future. It is difficult to measure this, but our observations suggest that equality of opportunity is well addressed in the majority of Lambeth schools.

### **LA Support in Using Data to Raise Achievement and Improving the Awareness of Teaching Staff and Governors**

Underpinning the LA's strategic approach is the recognition of the need to use data and evidence effectively to identify underachieving groups and support schools in their self-improvement and raising standards. A key feature of the LA's support in the effective use of data is the provision of different kinds of data at different stages of analysis (see for details Demie 2003). Each school is supported in a number of ways with its own customised raw data, contextual and value-added reports, including extensive training on the effective use of the performance data for all headteachers, teachers and governors. There are a number of ways in which this has been carried out.

The LA has provided KS1, KS2, KS3 and KS4 performance data analysed by school, cohort, subject area and individual pupils, including analysis by ethnic background, gender, free school meals, levels of fluency in English and mobility rate, to identify underachieving groups, to all staff and governors in schools every year since 1997. This is further supported by value-added data to track individual pupil performance, including ethnically based performance forecasts to identify underachieving groups (Demie 2004). This individual pupil level data at ages 7, 11, 14 and 16, along with national and LA comparative data provides teachers with the necessary tools to identify pupil underachievement, set targets, monitor progress and evaluate performance. An examination of key stage and GCSE results by ethnicity, in most schools, throws up discrepancies of achievement. These reports have been used widely in schools to identify factors influencing performance and key areas of action to ensure improvement. They have helped teachers, governors, and parents to improve their knowledge and awareness of the culturally diverse nature of the ethnic minority communities served by the schools in the LEA. They are now widely used by schools to set targets and have helped to improve intervention strategies to support and enhance learning (Demie 2004).

As part of the LA's school improvement strategy, the LA also supports schools through organising conferences and school focused training courses, on the use of performance data for school self-evaluation and target setting. The school focused sessions include a presentation to headteachers, the senior management team and the governing body. The training programme covers how best to understand and interpret school profiles, contextual and value-added data, and key issues raised from the data. This is followed by a workshop where headteachers, teachers and governors are asked to look carefully at key issues for school improvement and draw action plans to that end. Training is also tailored to individual schools and in most cases governors and senior teachers in each school were asked to form specific working parties to look at the key issues for their schools.

Since 1998, over 1000 governors, headteachers and teachers have attended the training programme which has made them aware of the issue of underachievement of Portuguese and other groups in their school and the LA. This training has led to a greater focus on issues that impact on school improvement and target setting. Governors and teachers were asked how they rated the support in the effective use of data, including LA value-added, contextual and school profile data and the training programmes.

*'Almost all the respondents felt that the service and the information provided by the LA were either very useful or useful. General comments were positive and schools felt that all the information was useful for their school improvement and self-evaluation and helped them to draw action plans and identify underachieving groups'.* (Demie, 2004).

As a result, many teaching staff and governors in the LA are now well aware that Portuguese underachievement is an issue in schools and there is a greater awareness of the Portuguese culture and its difference from that of the white British population.

### **LA Support Using Portuguese Advisory Teachers**

One of the strategies of the LA to support Portuguese pupils is to use Portuguese speaking teachers in an effort to raise achievement. As part of this strategy a number of Portuguese teachers were employed and have worked in Lambeth schools since 1997. In the first phase the Portuguese Ministry of Education sent about 35 teachers to work in Lambeth schools and 5 teachers to Jersey to support Portuguese children learning the Portuguese language. The Portuguese Government has been supporting the education of immigrant children in Britain by providing after-school lessons in their home language and culture in the last 25 years (see

Abreu et al 2001). A focus of the Portuguese Government is to support the Portuguese community in Lambeth through offering courses in the Portuguese language. As part of this initiative it was reported for example in 1999 that about 2000 Portuguese pupils were enrolled in after school classes in Lambeth (Abreu et al 2001). In addition, in some areas they have also contributed to services aimed at integrating Portuguese pupils in English schools.

Lambeth has an Adviser for Portuguese Achievement who came to the UK in 2002. She was brought up in Tomar, Central Portugal and taught for sixteen years in rural and urban Portugal in the private and public sector, specialising in modern foreign languages and International Links. When she was a Headteacher in Portugal, she empowered teachers to develop their skills in including language in their classroom teaching. After completing a degree in teaching Portuguese and English as a modern foreign language she applied to teach abroad. She came to London and taught Portuguese as a community and foreign language in Lambeth for 4 years, completed an MA in Education, multiculturalism and Ethnicity at King's College University and worked as an assistant at the Portuguese Education Ministry where she developed strong links with Lambeth LA taking up the post of Advisory teacher for Portuguese Pupil Achievement in the Local Authority in 2006.

Her work is underpinned by a desire to

*'change any negative into a positive. Whoever is in the minority can be changed if you give them the means and opportunities and the initial support to prepare them for a new system. If you engage with the community you understand better what they have to deal with on a day to day basis at an ordinary level, you can better help them.'*

*'By teaching children two languages/ two cultures you give them job opportunities across the world. Any child who in 10 years time says I have made a difference to their life, it is worth it for me.'*

Her role is focused on raising the achievement of Portuguese pupils, through grants, guidance and training in Lambeth schools.

*'My key priorities include encouraging schools to employ Portuguese- speaking staff, developing support classes for parents and establishing a Portuguese Education Network to bring together teachers from Lambeth schools which have large numbers of Portuguese pupils.'*

The Portuguese Education Network brings together those involved in the education of Portuguese pupils, to share information around different projects, to explore services to schools e.g. Portuguese arts organisations, to explore research and to consult on the needs of the pupils within the community.

*'The Primary Strategy Programme for Modern Foreign Languages (MFL), which allows any language to be taught at primary, gives the opportunity to improve, develop and raise the status off Portuguese as a foreign language, as well as a home language'*

Since 1999 through a range of initiatives the profile of the Portuguese language, both as a mother tongue and modern foreign language, has been raised in Lambeth. Since 1999 Portuguese has been taught within the curriculum in some schools in Lambeth. This has raised the self esteem of Portuguese pupils as they became the experts in these lessons. These have proved popular lessons that included problem solving skills as a way into learning a new language. Recently Portuguese colleagues in schools have created resource packs to teach Portuguese as a modern foreign language in the classroom for KS2 curriculum and GCSE.

First Language development has been encouraged through the employment of Portuguese speaking teaching assistants and teaching staff in Lambeth since 1999. Bilingual teaching assistants are trained, by staff from the Centre for British Teachers (CfBT) Education Action Zone in the community languages using digital resources and living books and Portuguese language courses for teachers and teaching assistants are run in the borough.

The Advisory teacher has initiated the introduction of Asset languages, a new qualification for language skills, which has enabled Year 6 Portuguese speaking pupils at one Lambeth primary school to have been awarded the equivalent of a GCSE pass in Portuguese. Useful links have also been made with The National Centre for Languages and the Associate for Language Learning to develop training and raise awareness of the Portuguese language.

Since 1999, after school Portuguese clubs have been running at Lambeth schools attended by Portuguese pupils, combining a focus on Portuguese as mother tongue and culture.

A Portuguese language club runs for an hour after school once a week. Its main purpose is to improve the literacy skills of Portuguese speaking pupils at Lambeth Academy and to introduce them to Portuguese writers and works of literature that they might not experience here but would have done if attending school in Portugal. There are some non speaking Portuguese pupils who attend and Portuguese speaking pupils teach them the rudiments of the Portuguese language.

*'It is also an opportunity for Portuguese pupils to learn about the culture in Portugal as it is now, rather than what they know of how it was when their parents left. Also, their history- the Portuguese Jewish community and the concentration camps, the Inquisition in Portugal, life under the Dictatorship- it all helps to shape their identity'.*

The Advisory teacher develops school practice by running training in Local Authority schools to raise awareness of the Portuguese education system and the cultural and social background to the various Portuguese speaking communities including those from Africa and Brazil. She has also trained teachers in activities that support Portuguese pupils to transfer their knowledge of one language to the other within the curriculum; helped schools to acquire appropriate teaching resources, promote and support Portuguese teaching assistants, develop induction and welcome procedures and support mother tongue assessments. In partnership with various Portuguese Arts organisations she facilitates workshops in schools that celebrate the culture of Portuguese speaking countries as well as events e.g. Carnival celebrations and Independence celebrations. Invaluable in this work is the strong partnership with Canning House, the home of Hispanic and Luso Brazilian Council which aims to stimulate understanding between the UK, Spain, Portugal and Latin America and in Lambeth, which has raised the profile of Portuguese culture and language across the borough and also with the Brazilian Embassy who organise workshops based on their cultural programme e.g. exhibitions, films etc.

Another focus of her work is to engage Portuguese parents in supporting their children's achievement. She supports schools to run meetings for Portuguese parents to explore ways of engaging with their children through a range of activities and also to support their own development by encouraging them to improve their own literacy skills in Portuguese, undertake ESOL classes and Family Learning.

Much of the work to support parents she does is in partnership with colleagues in the LA, an example being the workshops she has created for Portuguese parents exploring elements of the primary mathematics curriculum with the Maths consultant and liaising with the Restorative Justice co-ordinator over behaviour and attendance issues with pupils, and their parents, from the Portuguese community.

In order to fund much of the work she does to support Portuguese achievement in school she works in partnership with Portuguese banks, shops and restaurants, encouraging them to invest money back into the community. An example is the Portuguese section in Clapham Library which will be sponsored by a Portuguese bank.

Embassies of Portuguese speaking countries, banks and Portuguese Arts organisations have attended various Portuguese events in Lambeth such as the Portuguese conference, in 2007 which focused on sharing good practice in raising the achievement of Portuguese speaking pupils. Such work through these connections has been forwarded to the Community of Portuguese Language Countries based in Lisbon. This event has been a catalyst in planning new projects and attracting funding to Lambeth.

*'The conference was very interesting. I really enjoyed the fact that some schools are making real progress. I found the existence of an Education network quite positive. Only through events like this is it possible to share information and discuss future productive approaches for these issues.'* Gulbenkian Foundation.

*'From 1 to 10 your grade is 10! Heartfelt thanks'*. Angolan Embassy.

### **Support for the Portuguese Community: Family Learning**

Lambeth City Learning Centre (CLC), managed by CfBT Education Trust, supports all schools in the Local Authority in arts, culture, technology and Family Learning activities. They offer workshops and projects, train staff, broker partnerships with specialists and offer guidance in each of the three areas.

Family Learning describes a range of activities and programmes where parents, grandparents, children and carers are involved in learning together and is seen as an essential in raising pupil achievement. Family learning was initially set up in Wyvil and Stockwell Infant and Junior schools solely for Portuguese families. The focus of these sessions was a celebration of the community language, aiming to improve skills in both languages and modelling for parents how to work with their children. Presently the CLC runs Family Learning sessions for mixed groups of parents including Portuguese. These include sessions on Health and Parenting, Language and Play, Family Literacy and Numeracy and Laptop Library which aims to bridge the digital divide enabling families to access technology support and reinforce learning at home with their child. Evidence of the impact that Family Learning can have is shown below;

**Family Learning: Case study-** The first time I heard about Family Learning was through Margaret and Stella EMAG teachers from Lark Hall Primary. They spoke to me in the playground one morning when I was dropping my son in school. It was a computer course. It was a very good experience. I learned about computers but I think the best part was the atmosphere. I had the opportunity to make new friends (very important as I was new in the country and didn't know anyone) and still have fun with my son who was 5 then .We made a very nice t -shirt for father's day with a picture of him and dad and to this day Sergio now 11 is still proud of that t shirt. Overall I think it was a very good and important experience because it made me more confident with my English and also it made me think about the possibility of learning again, so I enrolled in Lambeth College and spent 2 years studying IT, Adult Literacy and Numeracy and hairdressing. I am now a qualified hairdresser on weekends and a clerical officer on week days. As you can see something that may seem nothing to some may just be the future for others. Thank you very much Margaret, Stella, Valerie and Family learning.

Sonia, Larkhall Primary School

Lambeth CLC supports schools in developing their arts provision enabling young people to access a diverse range of experiences, offering workshops and projects. Portuguese pupils were recently involved in a project entitled Animating Literacy, commissioned by Creative Partnerships London South and CfBT Action Zone. The project was a programme to promote creative approaches to learning through collaborative projects undertaken with arts partners. Arts partners had a relationship with children based on showing and demonstrating, working alongside pupils rather than monitoring their work, generating a workshop atmosphere in the classroom. In the evaluation of this project 'Creativity and Literacy: Many Routes to Learning' Myra Barrs and Kimberly Safford stated,

*'The impact of ethnic minority and bilingual arts partners in schools where ethnic minority children are majorities cannot be underestimated. In School E, Portuguese artist ML was able to speak with Year 5 and 6 children in their first language; they used Portuguese for learning, making and crafting. Where ethnic minority and bilingual arts partners work in schools, they offer more than celebrations of diversity. They offer children powerful models of the purposes for education and literacy.'*

In this Creative arts project the bilingual arts partners created a purposeful context where pupils were able to use their first language for learning. A Portuguese artist noted that

*'Many of them (Portuguese pupils in the class) speak 'country' or non standard dialects of Portuguese. Non standard dialects are an aspect of children's language for which there is virtually no official curriculum space.'*

The CLC helps young people to learn using IT in real contexts. Young people are supported to come up with new ideas, working in partnership with experts using technology. The centre has been working with the Olive Centre in Lambeth to support a group of students in Years 10 and 11 to develop expressive language skills and vocabulary. These students do not have a mainstream school place, either because they are newly arrived to the UK or because they might have been excluded from school. This diverse group included students from Madeira.

The purpose of the work was to develop language skills through digital media, giving newly arrived students IT skills that they would not have had the chance to develop in their home country as well as an accreditation which is equivalent to a GCSE pass. Students were encouraged to use Photoshop, Animation and Photography in order to create and present an animation on the theme of 'Superheroes', with the student as the Superhero saving London whilst also exploring elements of their cultural identity. A student from Madeira worked on the theme of 'saving Mandela and the Queen' creating an animation where 'people can have a bit of fun.' The EAL teacher at the Olive Centre stated, these students,

*'might be reluctant to use language in the spoken sense- this is a relaxed environment which encourages those new to the English language to express themselves...its giving them the skills and alternative language with which to express themselves.'*

Students were also encouraged to collaborate through different media which enhances their language development. Such an initiative has not only enhanced the language development but also the self esteem of this vulnerable group of students.

## **International Links to Improve Awareness and Enrich the Curriculum**

Melissa de Velliers, in her article, 'Our Global Community' claims that International activities help schools around the UK put community cohesion policies into place.

*'Schools have a vital role to play in the UK's march towards common cultural ground. They can help pupils to understand others and value diversity, and remove barriers to equal opportunities. They can also help young people and their families interact with those from different backgrounds, and foster links with other communities and countries. Working with an International Partner school is a useful way of exploring issues around identity. After all, children first need to investigate their own culture in order to explain it to an audience of international peers. They can then discover similarities and differences with their partner school's culture- and perhaps delve into deeper issues such as racism, migration and cultural stereotyping.'*

The Advisory Teacher for Portuguese Achievement, together with the British Council, has set up links between Lambeth primary schools and three schools in Cascais in Portugal. The main reasons for the links are to understand issues which affect the achievement of Portuguese pupils, explore the social reality of Portugal; raise expectations in parent groups through valuing Portuguese culture and expectation and to share good practice and to develop future collaboration, in particular for Gifted and Talented pupils in Languages and for EAL Portuguese pupils. The first school Linking Visit to Portugal was in May 2007 when leaders from the 5 primary schools visited Cascais.

*The English delegates considered this activity and visit to Portugal a fantastic opportunity to reflect, compare education in both cultures and it offered the possibility to develop a supportive learning environment for EAL pupils in our schools.*

*'Wyvil is also part of the International School Link project. As a result the school has a link with Torre School in Cas Cais, near Lisbon. Senior managers went to the school in order to set up the link, shadow teachers looked at behaviour and Special Education Needs provision. It has been important for staff at Wyvil to see the context from which Portuguese pupils are coming. Portuguese pupils at Wyvil are also encouraged to write to pupils in Lisbon, exchange activities, playground games etc'.*

### **International links: Case study**

Lambeth Academy has links with schools in a number of countries around the world including Portugal, Sierra Leone, Germany, India, Cameroon, China and Russia. The link with Escola Dom Manuel 1 in Tavira, Portugal is strong. Dom Manuel 1 is a mixed school of 800 pupils aged 11- 16 with a sizeable minority of pupils whose first language is not Portuguese, including those from Ukraine, England, Bulgaria, Russia, France, Holland, Germany, Brazil, South Africa and Romania, as a result of families relocating to the Algarve.

In February 2008, 12 students from Lambeth Academy took part in the School Partnership visit to Dom Manuel School. The aims of the project were to

- Raise the profile of Portuguese at Lambeth Academy
- To provide the Portuguese student community with opportunities to deepen their cultural roots
- To give non Portuguese speaking pupils an opportunity to experience a different European culture and to learn the Portuguese language
- To give pupils involved in the project a comparative and contrasting experience of education

The visit was based around the theme of global citizenship, with a focus, 'What young people can do to help save the world'. Pupils explored the themes of human rights, the natural environment and cultural identity, linked to the KS3 curriculum, through

PowerPoint presentation about chosen themes, video conferencing to discuss views of Portuguese / UK pupils and workbooks about the cultural exchange.

One of the benefits of the School Partnership visit was the opportunity for Portuguese speaking pupils preparing for Portuguese GCSE as a community language, to improve speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in an educational context and to give other pupils an introduction to the language and practice basic questions in Portuguese. Pupils maintained email contact through the Portuguese language club to practice language skills. Links were made to the KS3 curriculum. Themes explored were work around Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet with UK pupils as pupil-teachers for a Dom Manuel 1 class on the prologue of Romeo and Juliet, an exploration of the Portuguese maritime empire and how it compared to the British Empire and the current cultural identities of the two former colonies and pupils to engage in sports together and explore healthy diet foods from each others localities.

There is a planned visit for a teacher from Dom Manuel to visit Lambeth Academy to shadow teachers and suggest improvements in the way that Portuguese speaking pupils are taught.



## Lambeth Academy International Links display Map

© Lambeth Academy

## Celebrating Achievement of Portuguese Pupils in the LA



© Lilian Baylis Technology School. Singing Events in Celebration of Achievement of Portuguese Speaking Pupils.

The academic achievements of Lambeth's Portuguese-speaking pupils have been celebrated in a special ceremony at Local Authority level every year. In July 2008 64 students from more than 30 schools attended the event at Lambeth Academy in Clapham, which included Brazilian music, singing, capoeira dancing and award presentations. Portuguese are the fastest improving group in Lambeth at key stages one and three. The accomplishment marks great strides in schools where previously, language barriers and social and educational background meant that Portuguese children were seen as low achievers. Deputy member for Children and Young Peoples services, Councillor Florence Nosegbe who spoke at the event, said:

*'It's really important that we continue to celebrate these successes. Young people don't always realise that learning more than one language is a great asset that will open so many avenues for their future careers, both here and abroad. While many come to the UK not knowing English at first, with hard work they often go on to excel at school.'*

The LA has also organised a singing event in Portuguese on 30 June 2008 from Clapham Common to the South Bank. Young people from Lambeth schools were stationed around the borough to sing in celebration of the Portuguese heritage. The event was the culmination of music workshops and came after the national day of Portugal earlier in the month when around 30,000 people gathered for a festival in Kennington Park. It was an example of Lambeth's Portuguese-speaking pupils expressing pride in their culture, language and roots and celebrating the enormous contribution of the borough's Portuguese community.

Since 1999 there has been much work to raise the achievement of Portuguese pupils in Lambeth schools through the work of the CfBT/ Lambeth Education Action Zone and more recently the Advisory Teacher for Portuguese Achievement and the partnerships she has built up. The work to, *improve, develop and raise the status of Portuguese as a foreign language, as well as a home language* which has led to a range of initiatives such as the teaching of Portuguese as a modern foreign language within the curriculum, encouraging Portuguese pupils to use their mother tongue in the classroom, Portuguese lessons for teachers and teaching assistants across Lambeth, the deployment of Portuguese teaching assistants and teachers across the schools.

The celebration of Portuguese Arts and Culture, supported by various organisations and partnerships, across the borough has raised the profile of Portuguese culture and encouraged the engagement of Portuguese parents in their children's learning, as have the various Parent classes, Family Learning and curriculum workshops on offer to Portuguese parents. The various school INSET and the International Links forged between Lambeth and Portuguese schools have given school staff a new insight into the Portuguese education system and social background of Portuguese speaking pupils which has led to a greater understanding of what support Portuguese pupils in Lambeth might need to achieve at school.



© Wyvil Primary School. The Wyvil Choir singing at the Celebration of Achievement of Portuguese Speaking Pupils.

## SECTION 6: GOOD PRACTICE FOR RAISING ACHIEVEMENT OF PORTUGUESE PUPILS: SUMMARY

### Introduction

Previous studies attribute the roots of Portuguese pupil underachievement (Demie et al 2008) to a number of factors including lack of understanding of the British education system, difficulties in speaking English, poor school attendance, poverty, interrupted prior education, negative teacher perceptions, poor school to home liaison and lack of exposure to written language. Research in Lambeth also suggests that Portuguese children are underachieving in schools and that they form one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in London (Demie et al 2007). Lambeth has the largest Portuguese population in Britain; many new arrivals are from the relatively poor island of Madeira or from more rural parts of the mainland, having received little or no education in their own country. About 77% of Portuguese pupils in Lambeth schools are not fluent in English. Lambeth has a strong tradition in identifying Portuguese as an ethnic group and has collected detailed pupil level data related to sex, ethnicity, free school meals, mobility rate and levels of fluency in English over the last 10 years and matched to attainment data for contextual analysis.

Although the main findings from empirical research suggest that Portuguese pupils are underachieving, in certain schools they do well and in the last seven years have made progress. The purpose of this report is to highlight strategies adopted by the Local Authority and case study schools to overcome some of the barriers to achievement. Not only are these findings useful for policy makers and school improvement practitioners but they also highlight the need to disseminate the key messages to other schools in order to support the raising achievement of Portuguese pupils.

### Key Characteristics of Schools in the Study

The schools are in the London Borough of Lambeth. The schools include a range of ethnic groups, community languages spoken, free school meals and pupils with EAL including a high proportion of Portuguese pupils. A structured questionnaire was used to interview headteachers, teachers, parents and pupils to gather evidence on how well Portuguese heritage pupils are achieving, specific strategies in place to support their achievement, any specific barriers to learning, and pupils' views about their schools and their support systems.

The key criteria for selection of schools:

- Good evidence in progressing pupils based on previous value added data
- Leadership and management teams which have a good understanding of EMA issues.
- Good targeted support for Portuguese pupils
- Good links with parents and the community

Previous research has shown that schools which achieve successful outcomes for their minority ethnic pupils have strong leadership (Blair et al 1998: Ofsted 1999 2002). Similarly the Lambeth research shows that the headteachers in the case study schools have a clear vision and lead an effective strategy that is applied across the whole school. The headteachers are passionate about inclusion and have a strong and successful commitment to working with Portuguese parents and the community and have high expectations for every pupil within the school regardless of background.

## Key Factors in Raising the Achievement of Portuguese Pupils

In the case study schools Portuguese pupils and parents' attitudes to education are good and school work is highly valued. Pupils are motivated to succeed and are well supported by teachers and parents to achieve.

In one case study school, despite challenging circumstances and low attainment on entry, results for all pupils at KS2 have improved consistently over the past seven years under the transformational leadership of the headteacher. Overall performance of the school is very impressive and the proportion of pupils across the school achieving level 4 and above rose from 47% in 2000 to 93% in 2007. Portuguese pupils have been one of the highest achieving groups in the school for the past five years. In English Maths and Science 86% of pupils achieved level 4+. This was an average of 86% compared to the Lambeth Portuguese overall of 68%. This is significantly above the national average of 81% and LA average of 79% in 2007.

*A number of key features are responsible for the high achievement levels of Portuguese pupils in the case study schools, namely, outstanding school leadership and a diverse workforce, targeted support for Portuguese pupils, celebration of Portuguese language and culture and parental engagement.*

**Strong Leadership:** What distinguishes the case study schools is the *'outstanding leadership by the headteacher and senior management team'*.

Headteachers are committed to creating a school ethos that stresses high achievement, equal opportunities and values cultural diversity. Each headteacher has embedded a vision and culture of excellence for all. Everyone in the school community matters. This vision has filtered throughout the school to staff, pupils and their parents.

The language of high expectations is shared by staff, parents and children alike. This was evidenced by comments from pupils and parents alike;

*'We want to learn more so our levels will go up.'*

*'My parents wanted me to rise above them, I want this for my daughter. She needs to be ambitious.'*

There is a strong ethos of accountability amongst staff teams. Each individual member of staff is accountable for pupil progress with regular meetings to put in place strategies to meet individual needs. Any barrier to learning can be overcome. There are breakfast clubs and extended days, homework clubs with support from bilingual teaching Assistants. The schools extend children's horizons, exposing them to experiences that they might not get elsewhere, music, rugby, trips to e.g. *'IBM to show them what a corporate organisation is like, to show them what the world out there is like.'*

Governing bodies are also accountable for pupil progress. Portuguese governors are knowledgeable and monitor and evaluate schools' work effectively.

**Use of Data:** In the case study schools the *'use of data for school improvement'* is a strength. The use of data involves all interested parties: staff, governors and parents. One of the core elements of school success in raising achievement is a robust focus on tracking and monitoring individual pupil progress and achievement in the widest sense of the term. The schools have well developed pupil tracking systems and have detailed Foundation Stage and key stage data and non statutory option assessment data at all year groups followed by background data such as ethnic background, language spoken, level of fluency in English,

SEN stage, date of admission, attendance rate, eligibility for free school meals, mobility rate, years in school, attendance rate, types of support, and postcode data.

Senior managers play a key role in supporting and challenging teachers to raise the performance of every pupil. One senior manager explained:

*'Data is critical in raising achievement. ... we use it to prompt action to make sure that each child is doing well.'*

Data is used to look at whole school, whole class and group issues and to drill down to individual learning issues e.g. attendance of a particular child and the impact that this might have on their learning. Children who are not on track with their learning are highlighted and interventions e.g. booster classes, pupil groupings, resources e.g. dual language books, additional support including one to one, tailoring teaching levels and English language support are put into place as a result EAL pupils in general and Portuguese pupils in particular make rapid progress and achieve outstanding results as they are monitored and supported closely. Portuguese pupils value highly the support of their classroom teachers and EAL teachers and they enjoy the education provided in their schools.

Overall there are excellent systems for monitoring the work of Portuguese pupils, identifying those who need additional help or extra challenge and then providing them with appropriate additional support. More importantly, in these schools they realise the potential of every pupil. Real children and real progress matters to them and they translate numbers into action. They use data effectively for school self-evaluation and tracking pupil performance.

**Use of a Diverse Workforce:** Headteachers make deliberate efforts to 'recruit a multi ethnic workforce' often from the immediate community, representing the community languages and backgrounds of the pupils in the schools. In each school this includes staff of Portuguese heritage. Thus the school becomes a central part of the community. Children feel that they can relate to members of staff from their own cultural backgrounds. Staff can empathise with pupils, they speak the same language and understand how the systems operate 'back home.'

In both primary schools over 75% of the school workforce is of ethnic minority origin and many of the languages, cultures and faiths of the pupils are reflected in the workforce. Staff originate from Portugal, Brazil, Ghana, India, Cuba, Caribbean, Uganda, Somalia, Spain, Poland, Lebanon, Mauritius, Colombia, Morocco, and Peru.

In both schools there are a number of Portuguese speaking staff who are key members of staff e.g. assistant headteacher, learning mentor, class teachers and teaching assistants. In one primary school the SAO is of Maderian heritage, she is the first point of contact for Portuguese parents and a reason that many Portuguese heritage families feel that they can trust the school on their arrival to the country. In another the Assistant Head is of Portuguese origin and has seen her main role as to raise the self esteem of the 40% Portuguese pupils and parents and to empower staff with a better understanding of the issues affecting Portuguese pupils. She brings to school life an in depth understanding of the issues within the Portuguese community; the political climate 'back home', the legacy of dictatorship, the changing nature of the community in Stockwell and how all these issues effect the pupils and parents. She has passed on her knowledge to the staff at the school and has also challenged stereotypes about Portuguese parents not engaging. This has brought a better understanding and empathy towards the learning of Portuguese pupils amongst staff.

#### **Case study: Portuguese staff**

The Portuguese Learning Mentor came to Lambeth Academy in 2007. A qualified actor who speaks 6 languages, he has been in the UK for 9 years. He is able to bring to the school a thoughtful perspective on the Portuguese community in London; the

legacy of dictatorship, the sub culture that exists 'we are not good enough' which translates down to the children. He has different levels of connection to the Portuguese community; he is used as a mentor for pupils, a bridge between parents and the school, a translator as well as supporting with the Portuguese club, elements of the curriculum and the link school in Tavira, Portugal. Portuguese pupils in school see him as an 'older brother' a 'motivator' and it helps them 'to feel safe in school, our parents too'. The positive influence he brings to the students is brought out by the students themselves:

*'We like to hear a person that speaks our language and knows our culture. Miguel is our translator, he helps us to understand lessons, gives us advice. If you're good he calls your mum! I want to be an actor like Miguel when I leave school!'*

The role of bilingual teaching assistants (TAs) is an important feature of each school. They are able to be deployed where necessary for focused support with individual children. Working under the direction of class teachers and the EMA co-ordinator, they undertake general TA training and specific training on strategies for bilingual teaching. Many teach modern foreign language lessons to all children and support at the Portuguese clubs after school. They are involved in the strategic direction of the schools and whole school and relevant class issues thrown up by data so they might have an understanding of their role in supporting the achievement of each pupil.

Teaching assistants are greatly valued in the schools. They have the language expertise, cultural understanding and often a detailed understanding of the issues in the wider community which might impact on pupils' lives and learning. This enables them to play a key role in communicating with parents.

The decision to recruit Portuguese staff has proven a significant asset to the school. The confidence this has given to the Portuguese community, parents and pupils is remarkable. What is also particularly special about these case study schools is that many of the staff come from the communities represented in the school and they speak many of the languages of the children.

**An Inclusive Curriculum and Targeted Support Through Use of Community Language Classes:** There is a range of 'targeted support for Portuguese pupils' in the case study schools. All of the schools run Portuguese mother tongue clubs after school, the main purpose of which is to improve the literacy skills of Portuguese speaking pupils and to maintain the link with their Portuguese cultural heritage. In Lambeth Academy:

*'It is also an opportunity for Portuguese pupils to learn about the culture in Portugal as it is now, rather than what they know of how it was when their parents left. Also their history- the Portuguese Jewish community and the concentration camps, the Inquisition in Portugal, life under the Dictatorship- it all helps to shape their identity'.*

In one primary school, through the Portuguese club, Portuguese pupils were assessed in 4 skills; speaking, listening, reading and writing using a nationally accredited assessment tool, Asset Language. This enables pupils to gain a recognisable qualification for their competency in Portuguese which is a useful indicator for secondary school.

Two of the schools have strong links with schools in Portugal. Lambeth Academy has links with Escola Dom Manuel 1 in Tavira. In February 2008, 12 students from Lambeth Academy took part in the School Partnership visit to Dom Manuel School. The aims of the project were to:

- Raise the profile of Portuguese language and culture

- To provide the Portuguese student community with opportunities to deepen their cultural roots
- To give non Portuguese speaking pupils an opportunity to experience a different European culture and learn the Portuguese language
- To give pupils involved in the project a comparative and contrasting experience of education

The visit was based around the theme of global citizenship, with a focus 'What young people can do to help save the world'. One of the benefits of the School Partnership visit was the opportunity for Portuguese speaking pupils preparing for Portuguese GCSE as a community language, to improve speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in an educational context. It also gave other pupils an introduction to the language and an opportunity to practice basic questions in Portuguese. Pupils maintained email contact through the Portuguese language club to practice language skills.

The case study schools have well developed targeted support through the use of community language classes. The schools encourage particular Portuguese children to use their mother tongue in lessons. Teachers build on pupils' prior knowledge in their own language in lessons. Pupils are encouraged to speak in their mother tongue in lessons to explore ideas and concepts with their talk partner or teacher. This has reinforced the importance of the Portuguese language in school, removed barriers to progress for children and enhanced engagement for parents. Portuguese speaking staff run Portuguese mother tongue classes after school.

Children might be targeted for homework or breakfast clubs where there are Portuguese speaking teaching assistants to support them with their homework. Homework is monitored closely and followed up if it is incomplete. Support is put into place if there is a difficulty for the child.

In one of the schools they have developed special reading programme as part of innovative curriculum. *The curriculum places a strong emphasis on the development of pupils' basic skills* in a way that recognises the needs of the pupils. An example is the Literacy programme which emphasises daily reading and writing. The school has developed an innovative approach that meets the needs of pupils where parents have little English and are unable to support their children. Every child has an entitlement to daily reading. Many parents do not have time to read with their children as they work long hours in the domestic industry. The extra reading support that children have received at school has enabled them to make good progress. The reading programme is conducted by a team of bilingual teaching assistants. Teaching assistants are deployed flexibly and effectively to support pupils' reading and they make a significant contribution which has had a very positive impact on the standards and achievement of Portuguese pupils.'

Learning mentors also *run groups across the school* based on 'talk and listen' with a range of activities based on speaking and listening- whispering, saying positive things about each other, listening to instructions etc. 'removing the language barriers to learning'.

**Celebration of Cultural Diversity:** The case study schools *value the cultural heritage of each child and celebrate it as part of school life*. A teacher at one primary school said:

*'The school has now reached the stage where it is natural for everyone to be proud of their heritage; as a community we have embraced the different languages that we have. Everyone feels they can succeed and that they have something to contribute to the community.'*

The celebration of diversity is embedded into school life through assemblies and circle times, 'language of the week' where pupils use each others languages to say e.g. good morning, use of the mother tongue in class, the teaching of modern foreign languages and the curriculum. This has led to a culture of acceptance and empathy across the schools.

Work on diversity is also embedded into the curriculum with pupils exploring writers from different cultures, games from other cultures, different methods of calculating from other countries.

Parents are invited to a range of assemblies which celebrate a range of cultures. Significant Portuguese celebration days, 25<sup>th</sup> April and 10<sup>th</sup> June, are celebrated in assemblies. One school uses Black History Month as an opportunity to explore different countries and celebrate diversity and there is an annual 'International Food Day' where staff, pupils and parents dress up in their traditional dress and share food from around the world. Parents from all backgrounds:

*'Mingle and share recipes and children are encouraged to try different foods which opens them up to other cultures.'*

**Engaging Parents and the Portuguese Community:** Headteachers regard liaison with parents as vital in their schools' drive to raise achievement. The schools have worked hard to forge successful links with Portuguese parents who have increased their support for the schools and their interest in their children's learning.

*'Once we were able to engage parents and convince them that they were able to articulate their expectations we moved on tremendously. This has taken all of us lots of energy and commitment but was necessary for our vision to realise the potential for every child.'*

The genuine partnership between parents and the schools is summarised in a parental quote:

*'They look after us, we look after them.'*  
*'We are one community with the same ideals and values.'*

Through a systematic programme of Family Learning with the Action Zone, Parent Workshops, Home School link work through the Children's Centre, recruiting Portuguese speaking staff and celebrating Portuguese culture in the life of the schools, trust has been built up amongst parents. They appreciate the newsletters, the feedback on their children and the support the school gives through the extended day, essential for working parents.

*'Parents are busy working, working, working, 10-12 hour days cleaning, catering, and building. They don't have time for anything else and need the school to do the best for their children. Everyone at this school does the best for our children. Other schools need encouragement to do the same.'*

Since 1999 the work of the case study schools to raise the achievement of Portuguese pupils has been underpinned by the 'support of the Local Authority', namely the CfBT/ Lambeth Education Action Zone and more recently the Advisory Teacher for Portuguese pupil achievement and a variety of partnerships that have been built up within the Portuguese speaking community e.g. Embassies, Arts Organisations, Canning House, Banks.

A range of initiatives around celebrating Portuguese culture and language has helped to raise the profile and esteem of Portuguese pupils, the engagement of their parents and the community and has had a positive impact on pupil achievement.

**Pupils Voice and Teachers Views on What Works in School:** To conclude we asked the teachers in one school why the pupils and parents see this school as a special school for Portuguese pupils' education. They pointed out during the interview and focus group discussion that:

- The school was welcoming
- Parents and the community are actively involved in the life of the school and parents are aware of strategies to support their children's education
- An ethos of mutual respect of different cultures and languages reflected in the schools' curriculum, resources, communications, procedures and practices
- Translation into Portuguese language is readily available
- Pupils get effective targeted support
- Pupils value diversity very highly
- Assemblies reflect cultural diversity of the schools
- Displays in the school celebrate pupils' achievement and acknowledge the diversity of its pupils
- The school runs a Portuguese class which is highly appreciated and valued
- The school tailors support to the needs of the individual child
- The school has a diversified work force to target our support
- School self-evaluation procedures are strong inviting feedback from staff, pupils and parents on school policies and practice.

We asked the same questions to pupils at the focus group. The pupils felt the teachers really listened to them. One said *'our teacher listens with care'*. They also spoke with enthusiasm about the work they have done in Portuguese class. One argued *'some of us are born here we have difficulty in our mother tongue Portuguese language and the class helped us to learn Portuguese and to improve our language skills. We can confidently speak in Portuguese now to our mother and father'*. They spoke again with enthusiasm about the things they liked about the school. Reasons why they see the school as a special school for Portuguese pupils were:

'Nearly half of the pupils are Portuguese'

'There is a lot of celebration and events to value Portuguese and other pupils cultural heritage'

'We have the opportunity to attend Portuguese classes

'We have a number of Portuguese teachers and staff to support us'

'We can use Portuguese language when we want'

The children were clearly very happy with their experience. They felt valued and treated equally. The Portuguese pupils rated the care, guidance and support the school provided as outstanding during the focus group discussion. *'You get individual support with the teachers and teaching assistants in this school.'*

## SECTION 7: CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

### Conclusions

In this study we examined good practice in raising the achievement of Portuguese pupils in schools. A number of conclusions can be drawn from the case study school evidence. The findings suggest that:

- KS2 data confirms Portuguese pupils are underachieving compared to all main ethnic groups at LA level. At Key Stage 2 in the LA, 69% of Portuguese children were gaining level 4 or above compared to 83% of White British pupils, 73% of African pupils, 74% of Black Caribbean pupils and 85% of Indian pupils.
- However, in the case study schools Portuguese pupils have made huge improvements in the past seven years. Portuguese pupils in all case study schools improved from 43% level 4+ to 83% between 2000 and 2007. This is an improvement of 40 percentage points compared to 13% in all LA schools.
- In one case study school KS2 results have shown significant improvement and since 2000, the percentage of Portuguese pupils achieving Level 4 at KS2 has consistently improved, from 17% to 73% in 2007 (an improvement of 56 percentage points). Recent 2008 data shows the school achieved 81% level 4 and above.
- In another case study school, despite challenging circumstances and low attainment at entry, results for all pupils at KS2 have improved consistently over the past seven years under the transformational leadership of the headteacher. Overall performance of the school is very impressive and the proportion of pupils across the school achieving Level 4 and above rose from 47% in 2000 to 93% in 2007. This is significantly above the national average of 81% and LA average of 79% in 2007. Recent 2008 data shows the school achieved 97% level 4 and above.
- Researchers found reasons behind the improvement included strong and inspirational leadership, high expectation for all pupils and teachers, effective use of data, effective use of a diversified workforce, effective teaching and learning, an inclusive curriculum which meets the needs of Portuguese pupils, a strong link with the community, a clear commitment to parents' involvement, and good and well coordinated targeted support to Portuguese pupils through extensive use of teaching assistants, EMAG, learning mentors and the Portuguese class.
- Teachers have very high expectations of all Portuguese pupils in the case study schools.

### Policy Implications

The Portuguese community faces many challenges which are reflected in the national trend of educational underperformance by Portuguese children. Our research, however, shows that a concerted and strategic approach can lead to a dramatic rise in achievement. Engagement of children and their parents is the key. Schools which build close links with the community, give extra support with English language learning, and ensure a curriculum which reflects and values the Portuguese culture have proved highly successful. These case studies prove that, given this approach, Portuguese children can reach a very high level of educational attainment.

The findings of this case study LA also confirm that in good Local Authorities Portuguese pupils do well, and offer useful pointers for developing effective approaches to tackling underachievement in general. These findings offer much encouragement to policy makers and school improvement practitioners by providing positive messages of what can be done. They demonstrate the potential for raising standards and the continued need to analyse and disseminate effective actions to address the underachievement of particular minority ethnic groups.

However, it is important to note that our study is not complete and it is useful to pose questions for further research. The negative approach of underachievement research has distracted policy makers from addressing real hindrances. An increase in research of this type which focuses on what works, serves as a beacon for underachieving pupils and contributes to overcoming underachievement.

There are some clear areas where further research is needed if we want to obtain a fuller picture, particularly why government policy has not addressed the needs of Portuguese pupils. We now know, as argued above, in good schools Portuguese do well. If the DCSF is serious about issues of equality and diversity it must take the lead in addressing the issue of underachievement of Portuguese pupils in British schools. There is a lot of work to be done with teachers and management in understanding the roots of Portuguese culture and Portuguese pupils as learners, how and why some underachieve and what teachers can do about it. This is a major area where we have little research evidence and there is a need for further research to improve our understanding of the ways in which schools can enhance pupils' academic achievement.

## **Recommendations**

This study confirms, without a doubt that the education provided in the local authority schools is the reason for bucking national trends.

We now have evidence to show that the performance of Portuguese pupils consistently lags behind that of their peers. This should not be allowed to continue. Our research in the case study schools shows that effective schools that have been dealing with these issues over a number of years, hold the key to the way forward. Schools will want to learn what has been proven to work and the factors that make a difference. Their good practice needs to be disseminated.

The recommendations for schools with ethnically diverse populations, Local Authorities (LAs) and Department of Children and Families (DCSF) emerging for this study are:

### **1. Schools:**

To raise achievement of Portuguese pupils schools should:

- Use data effectively for monitoring and tracking the achievement of Portuguese pupils.
- Gather and debate the views of staff, pupils and the community about barriers to achievement and encourage the active involvement of parents.
- Enrich the school curriculum using community languages.
- Ensure that you have a strong diversified workforce that reflects the community you serve.
- Celebrate cultural diversity through assemblies, using mother tongue language within the curriculum, Black History Month and International days etc.

## 2. Department of Children and Families (DCSF):

There should be statutory, DCSF led national collection of Portuguese data from schools through the school census. It is important that the DCSF recognises that the underachievement levels of many Portuguese pupils in English schools has been masked by government statistics that fail to distinguish between 'Other White' or 'European' ethnic groups.

## 3. Local Authorities (LAs):

- Work together with the case study schools to share good practice with other schools.
- Use data effectively to identify underachieving groups and to improve teacher and management awareness about underachievement issues.
- Support schools with high numbers of Portuguese pupils to develop a more relevant and culturally sensitive curriculum for Portuguese pupils.

## 4. The Research Community

The emphasis in national research on the underachievement of pupils overshadows those who do achieve. Policy makers and schools need more evidence 'on what works'. However, there is little research into good practice in schools. This research approach is now well recognised and is spelt out clearly by the Government:

*'We know that levels of attainment can be substantially raised for ethnic minority groups because there are schools that achieve outstanding results for these pupils. Their good practice needs to be disseminated'. (Stephen Twigg MP Secretary of State for schools, DfES 2003 Aiming High)*

It is time to look more closely at why in a number of British schools Portuguese or black pupils do well against the odds. An increase in research of this type, which challenges preconceived notions of Portuguese or black underachievement will encourage and inspire the community and assist educationalists and policy makers to strive for greater success (Rhamie 2007).

### **Note:**

<sup>1</sup> This section was drawn primarily from research by Feyisa Demie, Christabel Mclean and Kirstin Lewis entitled: Raising Achievement of Somali Pupils: School responses and challenges. Lambeth Research and Statistics Unit, July 2007.

<sup>2</sup> The 2001 census estimated the number of Portuguese as approximately 36,402 but it is now believed to be closer to 300,000 people (see Olga Barradas 2005). By 1991 two thirds of Portuguese speaking community lived in greater London. The majority of them are found in Lambeth, Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea, Hammersmith and Fulham. Lambeth has the largest Portuguese population outside Portugal near Vauxhall and Stockwell area. Outside London there is large Portuguese settlement in the Channel Islands of Jersey and Guernsey, East Anglia, Breckland district, Norfolk, Thetford and Northern Ireland

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