Black Children's Achievement Programme Evaluation

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Acknowledgements

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Key to abbreviations

BCA Programme - Black Children's Achievement Programme

CPD - Continuing professional development

FSM - Free school meals

EAL - English as an Additional Language

EMA - Ethnic minority achievement

LA - Local authority

PDMs - Professional development modules / meetings

RA - Regional Adviser

RAPs - Raising Achievement Plans

SEN - Special educational needs

TA - Teaching assistant

Executive summary

The Institute for Policy Studies in Education (IPSE) at London Metropolitan University was commissioned in 2007 by The Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) to conduct a small-scale two-year evaluation of the Primary Black Children's Achievement (BCA) Programme. The evaluation sought to identify effective practice (at school and local authority level) that could usefully be adopted by a wider range of schools and local authorities.

Overview of the BCA Programme

The BCA Programme was set up to target Black primary aged children across England and consisted of two phases. Phase 1 began in 2005 as the African-Caribbean Achievement test-bed pilot with five local authorities and 22 schools. The pilot local authorities were identified in late 2004 to begin working in January 2005.

Phase 1 focused on the achievement of African-Caribbean children because national attainment data for African-Caribbean heritage primary school children had pointed to an achievement gap between these children and the wider school population.

Following the commencement of Phase 1 it became apparent that a focus solely on the achievement of African-Caribbean children was not sustainable. This led to the successor programme, which encompassed all Black groups, being rolled out in Phase 2 as the Black Children's Achievement (BCA) Programme. This renaming was considered essential if the achievement needs of all Black (i.e. Black African, Black Caribbean, Mixed White and Black Caribbean, Mixed White and Black African, and Black Other) children were to be met.

Phase 2 formally launched in November 2006 with the addition of 15 further authorities. This resulted in over 100 schools taking part in the BCA Programme (including the 22 involved in Phase I). Phase 2 was intended to be a two year programme with funding provided to participating local authorities to divide between schools participating in the BCA Programme.

The BCA Programme offered participating schools flexibility in their implementation of the programme; that is in the type of activities / approaches introduced, and also in the number of children that schools worked with. In 2006 schools were advised by the BCA Programme Director to work with a group of between 10 and 20 children who were to be identified on the basis of school analysis of their attainment data. This would enable approaches which were tried out to be tracked efficiently.

Schools participating in the BCA Programme were supported in raising Black children's achievement by local authority consultants with an understanding of and expertise in developing Black children's achievement, who helped schools to audit their practice and compile RAPs, and delivered professional development in the areas of identified need, and other support deemed necessary. Alongside consultant support, National Strategies Regional Advisers had responsibility for providing an additional layer of support to the BCA schools as well as supporting local authorities and enhancing their understanding and practice.

Methodology

Semi-structured interviews and focus groups were used to collect data from seven case study schools and four local authorities over two years (2007-2008). In Year 1 school data collection concentrated on Black children in Years 2 and 5. In Year 2 of the evaluation, children who were interviewed in Years 2 and 5 were interviewed again in Years 3 and 6.

Across both years of the evaluation a total of **80** school staff, **194** children, **38** parent / carers and **14** local authority staff participated in the evaluation research.

A short **class questionnaire** was distributed to whole class groups in Years 2 and Year 5 (not just Black children) to ascertain children's attitudes to school work / learning and school culture / ethos, and their perceptions of their behaviour. The intention was to compare the whole class responses with those obtained from Black children who participated in the focus groups. The questionnaire was completed by **416** (218 Year 2 and 198 Year 5) children.

Classroom observations were also conducted. These aimed to develop an understanding of how schools/teachers recognised and valued diverse cultures / heritages and how children responded to lessons where this occurred. The observations focused on interactions between teachers and majority and minority ethnic children, and interactions between diverse groups of children.

Key findings

The case study schools and local authorities identified a number of areas within the BCA Programme that would enable them to make a difference to Black children's achievement. These include:

- The allocation of finances specifically targeting Black achievement;

- The flexibility to choose the area of focus most suited to individual school need;

- Better analysis / monitoring of ethnicity achievement data;

- Staff having the time and space to prioritise Black children' achievement through appropriate school reflection/professional development, targeting, monitoring and implementation of creative initiatives (including a culturally relevant curriculum);

- Developing a culture / ethos of achievement in school;

- Consultant and Regional adviser support which has helped to develop staff knowledge, confidence and practice in planning lessons and challenging understanding / expectations about Black children's achievement.

Some of the challenges to implementing the BCA Programme identified include:

- Lack of awareness or concern among staff about Black children's underachievement and the need to address it;

- Institutional factors/processes including negative teacher attitudes / expectations and stereotypical thinking about the ability of Black children serves to undermine teacher ability to raise Black children's attainment at an individual and group level. It also hinders their ability to view raising Black children's attainment either as essential or a key aspect of race equality;

- Difficulties in challenging negative attitudes and prejudice among school staff;

- The labour intensive nature of the BCA Programme (e.g. conducting the audits, analysing achievement data, completing paperwork, writing reports);

- School staffing capacity;

- Lack of commitment from school leadership and management;

- Where the BCA Programme is not viewed within schools as part of a whole school strategy of raising children's achievement, and wider school improvement.

Other case study findings were:

- The evaluation indicates that the BCA Programme was necessarily targeted at schools and Black children who would benefit most from the Programme's aims and objectives. However, without a school leadership commitment, staff understanding of the BCA Programme's goals and why Black children are the target group is likely to be less clear.

- Participation in the BCA Programme enabled some of the case study schools to develop effective strategies in, for example, raising Black children's self esteem, improving their reading and writing skills and delivering a culturally relevant curriculum which could be utilised with children from other ethnic groups.

- The case study data suggests that staff awareness about Black children's achievement was more likely to be elevated and changes made in practice where staff were closely linked to the BCA Programme and/or had some prior knowledge and understanding, whereas the staff who were new to the area were the ones where greater 'resistance' and/or fewer changes in practice were observed.

- The BCA Programme enabled schools (both new to and experienced in raising Black children's achievement) to develop their understanding and implement more effective strategies in addressing Black underachievement. Some of the case study schools experienced in raising Black children's achievement regarded the BCA Programme as 'building on' what they were doing well before they commenced their participation in the BCA Programme. Nonetheless, they suggest their involvement helped them to look more specifically at their school's ethnic diversity and achievement profile, and how to engage Black children in their learning and subsequently, raise their achievement.

- Despite having targeted children as part of the BCA Programme, some teachers remained convinced that the targeted Black children were receiving support because they were Black, rather than because they had specific attainment needs to be addressed, which suggests there is a need for a higher profiling of the BCA Programme in schools and new understandings developed.

- Some of the case study schools found targeting and concentrating support on Black children as a group to be problematic. Thus the tendency was to include children from diverse ethnicities in the activities they implemented.

- In some schools the strategy of targeting underachieving Black children was not well explained to schools and teachers, many of whom seemed to believe that equality can be achieved by treating everyone identically. There was a lack of awareness and understanding that different strategies might need to be applied to meet the needs of different groups of children, which points to the need for some continuing professional development and awareness-raising around issues relating to race equality, diversity, inclusion and raising achievement.

- The BCA consultant / school relationship is important if schools are to understand how to raise Black children's achievement, develop new insights and strategies, and to remain focused on the task.

- Professional development modules delivered by BCA consultants were found to be most effective where they were tailored to the school context, fed straight into planning that was used immediately and where the delivery offered the possibility of being reviewed with further staff input.

- The case study data suggests that some teaching staff hold negative views about Black children. Case study data also suggests that while schools might be representations of inclusive environments and most Black children have positive relationships with children and teachers from different ethnic groups, some Black children feel that they are treated differently by White teachers because of their skin colour, and where this differential treatment occurs this is likely to impact on Black children's experience of school and approach to learning, and raising their attainment. The evaluation therefore suggests there is a need for race equality training in schools and continuing professional development which helps school staff understand how issues pertaining to institutional racism, and some teacher attitudes, can negatively impact on Black children's attainment.

Conclusions

The evaluation found that in some schools (both multiethnic and predominantly White) the strategy of targeting underachieving Black children was not well explained to schools and teachers, many of whom seemed to believe that ensuring equality can be achieved by treating everyone identically. There was a lack of awareness and understanding in the case study schools that different strategies might need to be applied to meet the needs of different groups of children.

The case study schools identified the flexibility they were given in implementing the BCA Programme as a major strength. Nonetheless, the level of flexibility in the schools and the activities / practices implemented meant that it was hard to see which children were being consistently supported over the evaluation period.

The case study data revealed that staff awareness about Black children's achievement was more likely to be elevated, and changes made in practice, where staff were closely linked to the BCA Programme, whereas those who were new to the area or saw it as less important were the ones where greater 'resistance' and/or fewer changes in practice were observed. The evaluation findings suggest that the case study schools with previous experience of successfully raising Black children's achievement (prior to their participation in the BCA Programme) were less likely to regard the BCA Programme as offering additional strategies for enhancing Black children's achievement. Despite this, there was evidence to suggest that even previously successful schools welcomed the opportunity to take part in the BCA Programme because as well as assessing areas for improvement, the BCA Programme enabled them to consider 'what is working well' (Headteacher) and how such practice can be consolidated.

Through their involvement in the BCA Programme, the case study schools monitoring of attainment and use of ethnicity data has improved. Besides this, the BCA Programme has allowed school leadership to be much more explicit about teachers incorporating Black children's heritage in their teaching and learning.

Although case study schools found the BCA Programme time consuming and requiring a lot of effort and staff commitment, they considered it to be essential in helping to cultivate a different perception of Black achievement through its long term approach.

It has also begun to foster an understanding amongst school staff that 'just because the child is from that culture that there's no reason they can't achieve' (TA).

The BCA Programme appears to have worked best in the case study schools where there was a good relationship between the school and the BCA consultant, and both parties were able to work together to the benefit of Black children.

The case study data suggests that some teaching staff hold negative views about Black children, and that negative perceptions about projects targeting Black children are not confined to White school staff. The views held by both White and Black staff in some schools served to undermine their ability to raise Black children's achievements. Case study data also suggests that while schools might be representations of inclusive environments and most Black children have positive relationships with children and teachers from different ethnic groups, some Black children feel that they are treated differently by White teachers because of their skin colour, and where this differential treatment occurs, this is likely to impact on Black children' experiences of school, their approaches to learning, and on efforts to raise their attainment. The negative experiences recounted by some children would seem to support the contention by one local authority that an inclusive school culture and ethos is 'difficult to measure' because demonstration of inclusion (e.g. displays) does not necessarily reflect classroom practice or staff / pupil relationships / experiences. Moreover, while some case study schools felt they had made progress on making the school curriculum more culturally relevant and inclusive, the children interviewed did not necessarily experience the curriculum in this way.
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Recommendations

- There is a need for a clearer understanding within schools and local authorities as to the main aims of the BCA Programme, and particularly about why it specifically targets Black children and what is 'different' about the BCA Programme. This is needed to avoid the implementation of the BCA Programme being undermined by school / staff perceptions that the BCA Programme does not do anything different from what schools did before. This would also help to prevent schools / teachers from seeing the BCA Programme as unnecessarily taking away teacher time and resources that they feel could be better spent on other ethnic groups perceived to be in need of greater support.

- In order for schools and teachers to take seriously the importance of raising Black children's achievement and promoting a social justice agenda in schools, there is a need for headteachers to be at the forefront of driving the aims and objectives of the BCA Programme forward. Alongside this, headteachers and teachers in post would need to access continuing professional development which covers issues of 'race' equality, diversity and inclusion. The courses would seek to break down barriers to raising Black children's achievement by exploring sensitive issues such as the meaning of 'Black', together with institutional racism and teacher attitudes / expectations (e.g. teacher perceptions, stereotyped assumptions / myths and expectations of children from different ethnic groups) that can affect Black children's achievement. Exploring Black children's achievement at a school, local and national level, would help school staff to comprehend their legal duties with regard to diversity, inclusion and equal opportunities and how it is possible to foster Black children's achievement.

- Although exploring teacher attitudes was not a key aspect of this evaluation it emerged as a salient issue. In developing more conducive staff attitudes to raising Black children's achievement, there needs to be better understanding amongst school staff (both Black and White) that enhancing Black children's achievement and ultimately closing the attainment gap across ethnic groups might require different strategies. The monitoring of staff attitudes by Ofsted as part of their monitoring of schools' compliance with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the race equality duty and also their compliance with the community cohesion duty may encourage teachers to develop more appropriate attitudes to facilitating the achievement of Black children.

- While the BCA Programme has been implemented in both multiethnic and predominantly White areas (e.g. in schools where Black children are in the minority), it is nevertheless salient to consider ways in which understanding can be developed within schools where there are only two or three Black children, and their commitment to meeting the needs of a small number of Black children can be maintained.

- Finally, if the BCA Programme is to become more embedded in schools and the practice of local authorities there is a need for ongoing governmental support. This will necessitate that financial and consultant resources would need to be provided per school not per LA (if an LA has lots of schools that need the programme, then they all need to be properly resourced). Although schools with the greatest attainment needs were previously identified further steps need to be taken to ensure that the schools where the attainment gap is greatest are identified and targeted with appropriate support. Ways of introducing the BCA Programme in schools where Black achievement is not viewed as a key priority will need to be identified. In relation to school strategies, the BCA Programme should continue to discourage schools from withdrawing Black children from the classroom, and creating all-Black groups. Ensuring that school staff understand the rationale for the BCA Programme is absolutely central to such understanding developing and the ultimate success of the BCA Programme.

Introduction

The Institute for Policy Studies in Education (IPSE) at London Metropolitan University was commissioned in 2007 by The Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) to conduct a small-scale two-year evaluation of the Primary Black Children's Achievement (BCA) Programme. The evaluation sought to identify effective practice (at school and local authority level) that could usefully be adopted by a wider range of schools and local authorities.

In March 2007 there were 108[1] schools participating in the BCA Programme across 20 local authorities. The report provides an in-depth insight into how the BCA Programme was experienced by seven case study schools and four local authorities that participated in the evaluation research; paying particular attention to perceived changes in policy and school, and staff understanding and practice in the case study schools, and perceived impact at local authority level. The culture and ethos of the BCA Programme schools with regard to raising Black children's achievement is explored together with Black children's awareness of their heritage and identity, and their engagement with learning. Attention is drawn to aspects of the BCA Programme that were considered challenging in delivering the BCA Programme, and those which were viewed as sustainable by case study schools and local authorities. The chapters that follow address these key aspects and provide an indication of how the BCA Programme was evaluated by the various participants and stakeholders, and any lessons that have been derived as a consequence.

Importantly, any conclusions drawn from this report pertaining to impact and effective practice would be limited by the number of the BCA Programme schools and local authorities included in the evaluation, and the time period (2006-2008) which the evaluation research covered.

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[1] This number was derived from school lists held by National Strategies and information provided by the case study local authorities. It should be noted that in two of the case study LAs the number of schools they identified as participating in the BCA Programme differed to the list held by National Strategies which may account for differences in the number perceived to be participating at any one time.

Chapter 1 - Overview of the Black Children's Achievement Programme

This chapter provides an overview of the key aims and objectives of the BCA Programme and when it was established.

The BCA Programme was set up to target Black primary aged children across England and consisted of two phases. Phase 1 began in 2005 as the African-Caribbean Achievement test-bed pilot with five local authorities and 22 schools.

The pilot local authorities were identified in November/December 2004 to begin working in January 2005, from a standing start without a specialist Regional Adviser (RA) appointment being made.

Phase 1 focused on the achievement of African-Caribbean children because national attainment data for African-Caribbean heritage primary school children had pointed to an achievement gap between African-Caribbean children and the wider school population. In 2004 and 2005 the results for African-Caribbean children were below the national average on all 13 scales of the Foundation Stage Profile, and at every subject at Key Stages 1 and 2. Even after background characteristics such as prior attainment, deprivation (as proxied by free school meals (FSM); see chapter 2 for further discussion), and special educational needs (SEN) status were taken into account, African-Caribbean children made less progress across primary schools compared with other children with the same prior attainment and background characteristics. There was an identified need for a programme of work to raise the achievement of African-Caribbean children in primary schools through the existing National Strategies.

Phase 1 was informed by three key perspectives:

1   There is no inherent reason why African-Caribbean children should not achieve as well as the majority of others.

2   Improvements to African-Caribbean children's achievement will occur through the combined efforts of school, child and home.

3   High quality teaching and assessment plus necessary specialist interventions, thoroughly supported by school leaders, are key factors in improving the achievement of African-Caribbean children, as a group and as individuals.

Following the commencement of Phase 1 it became clear that a focus solely on the achievement of African-Caribbean children was not sustainable. In Spring 2006 the then Department for Education and Skills (DfES) made a proposal which was agreed by National Strategies that the successor programme to be rolled out in Phase 2 should include all Black groups. Consequently, the full programme was renamed the Black Children's Achievement (BCA) Programme. This renaming was essential in recognising the 'broader reach of the work' (National Strategies Director) and if the achievement needs of all Black (i.e. Black African, Black Caribbean, Mixed White and Black Caribbean, Mixed White and Black African, and Black Other) children were to be met.

As a pilot, Phase 1 was meant to develop the work into a programme which would support specialist local authority CPD, develop materials to assist the programme while also securing improvements in Black children's achievement. This work continued in Phase 2 which was formally launched in November 2006 with the addition of 15 further authorities. This resulted in over 100 schools taking part in the BCA Programme (including the 22 involved in Phase I).

Phase 2 was intended to be a two year programme. The profile of Phase 1 and 2 local authorities and schools are examined in chapter 4.

The BCA Programme was innovative in its approach as it allowed participating schools flexibility in their implementation of the programme; that is in the type of activities / approaches introduced, and also in the number of children that schools worked with. In 2006 schools were advised by the BCA Programme Director to work with a group of between 10 and 20 children who were to be identified on the basis of school analysis of their attainment data. This would enable approaches which were tried out to be tracked efficiently.

Although the BCA Programme was not prescriptive, there was a stipulation that participating schools would need to have the capacity (including staff resources) to effect change in school understanding and practice, and attainment. Furthermore, there was an expectation that the BCA Programme would be delivered in schools from the headteacher down. That is, the headteacher would have a key role / responsibility in driving the BCA Programme forward, and ensuring its implementation within school. There was also an expectation that the attainment levels of Black children in the participating schools would show an increase locally (at a school level) and nationally (in national assessment tests). Through the BCA Programme, increased Black children's attainment was expected to emerge through schools analysing/monitoring children's achievement data, identifying attainment needs and weaknesses in school approaches (through an audit[2] conducted by schools) and developing/revising raising achievement plans (RAPs)[3]. Fostering a school ethos within which Black children's identity is valued, their self-esteem enhanced and racism and bullying is challenged within the wider school were also expected key features of the BCA Programme.

At the end of each term participating schools were expected to submit progress reports to their local authority, who in turn would compile a local authority report for National Strategies.

Consultant / National Strategies support

There was an expectation that schools participating in the BCA Programme would be supported in raising Black children's achievement by local authority consultants with an understanding of and expertise in developing Black children's achievement, who would help schools to audit their practice and compile RAPs, and deliver professional development in the areas of identified need, and other support deemed necessary (e.g. bringing in culturally relevant resources, attend parent meetings etc). In short the BCA consultants were tasked to aid school improvement by assisting schools to identify strengths and weaknesses and how their practice could be enhanced to better support the attainment of Black children.

National Strategies Regional Advisers had responsibility for providing an additional layer of support to the BCA schools as well as supporting local authorities and enhancing their understanding and practice. This was accomplished through a programme of support which was made available to local authorities by National Strategies through face to face visits, a series of one day workshops / developmental meetings (held in Leeds and London), newsletters, telephone and e-mail contact.

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[2] Schools were expected to conduct an audit of their attainment, staff practice, teaching and learning and policies. There was an expectation that staff, pupils, parents and governors would contribute to the audit.
[3] The raising achievement plans were initially based on identified need from the school audit and were expected to be revised at the end of the first year, and a new plan developed.

Funding

To enable the designated 20[4] local authorities deliver the BCA Programme, each local authority received £20,000 (from the DCSF Standards fund) which was to be divided between schools taking part in the BCA Programme. In some instances, however, the distributed funds were costed and linked to individual school RAPs so the amounts some schools received varied. In addition to the sum of £20,000 local authorities were given £4,000 towards their central administrative costs.

Given the level of supporting funding available, local authorities were advised by National Strategies to work with a maximum of five schools. It was however, apparent that some local authorities worked with a larger number (see chapter 4).

Expected outcomes

The expected outcomes for the BCA Programme were:

1   At pupil level:

- greater progress, higher achievement and attainment
- positive awareness of their own heritage and identity
- engagement as partners in their own learning.

2   At school level:

Securing an appropriate whole school context:

A culture and ethos within which the following features are demonstrable:

- everyone feels safe and valued
- whole school commitment to tackling underachievement and achieving high standards for all
- whole school recognition and celebration of cultural and ethnic diversity
- proactive partnership with parents, carers and the wider community.

Leadership and management which demonstrates:

- a strong and determined lead on race equality
- evaluation led improvement
- analysis of data and rigorous pupil tracking by ethnicity and gender
- ambitious targets for attainment and achievement
- effective deployment of resources to support the progress of all children
- attention to the development of a professional learning community which recognises the benefits of collaboration and is focused on school priorities for improvement.

An approach to learning and teaching which demonstrates:

- a curriculum which is broad, rich and relevant
- high reliability in quality of teaching in the core subjects including a range of interactive teaching styles
- effective use of assessment for learning
- effective partnerships within and beyond the classroom.

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[4] In addition to the 20 funded local authorities a number of 'Associate' local authorities participated in the BCA Programme but these were not funded to do so. This evaluation is concerned only with the funded local authorities.

3   At local authority level:

        - partnership in school improvement across Ethnic Minority Achievement, Primary
        National Strategy and School Improvement Teams with a recognition of the benefits of
        collaboration
        - models of effective focus for the work of EMA and PNS consultants
        - increased capacity for schools to develop and sustain improvement in the attainment
        of children of Black African, Black Caribbean, Mixed White and Black Caribbean,
        Mixed White and Black African, and Black Other heritage at the end of Key Stage 2.

4   At National level:

        - raised aspirations and standards of achievement for children of Black African, Black
        Caribbean, Mixed Black Caribbean and White and Mixed Black African and White
        heritage
        - innovative 'blueprints' for working within and across local authorities with a
        recognition of the benefits of collaboration.

The case study data (outlined from chapter 5 onwards) provides an insight into the ways in
which local authorities and schools sought to achieve the expected outcomes.

Chapter 2 - Literature review

Method

In developing the literature review discussed below, the academic educational databases (e.g. the Education Resources Information Center and the British Education Index) were searched to identify relevant literature covering the period from the 1980s to the present. Relevant literature identified by this search included academic articles, books and research reports (including government). We also used our knowledge of the field to supplement the literature searched with key texts (e.g. Coard, 1971; Swann, 1985). In identifying relevant sources in the electronic databases mentioned above the following keywords were searched: achievement, underachievement, Black achievement, achievement by free school meals, ethnicity, gender, social class, teacher expectations, English as an additional language, school, curriculum, setting / streaming, institutional racism, school exclusion, pupil mobility, parental involvement and initiatives which contribute to raising attainment.

The literature search provided a database of 130 publications on which this review and analysis is based. After an initial mapping of the key issues the sources were coded and analysed.

Introduction

This literature review is concerned with developing an understanding of Black children's attainment in compulsory education and some of the factors that have impacted on their attainment in different ways and at varying levels.

The educational attainment of Black (notably Black Caribbean) children in compulsory education in England has been a major concern over the past four decades. During this period many academic studies and government reports have been produced about the lower attainment of Black children and the impact that such attainment or lack of has on their future prospects (e.g. Coard, 1971; Bagley, 1979; Rampton, 1981; Troyna, 1984; Swann, 1985; Wright, 1992; Gillborn and Gipps, 1996; Macpherson, 1999; Gillborn and Mirza, 2000; Majors, 2001; Ofsted, 2002a, b; Tomlinson, 2003; LDA, 2004; Christian, 2005; Richardson, 2005; DfES, 2006a, b; Cabinet Office, 2007; Gillborn, 2008; DCSF, 2008b). These documents reflect widespread concerns within the government, academia and, in particular, the Black community (Mamon, 2004; Abbott, 2005) that a disproportionate number of Black children tend to underperform in public examinations in comparison to their White peers. Indeed an edited collection by Richardson (2005) discusses at length '*How Our Schools Fail Black Children*'. The lower attainment of Black boys (especially Black Caribbean) has been such a concern that arguments have been put forward for the introduction of a national role model programme for Black boys (REACH, 2007) along with mentoring support. This contention is supported by findings such as those by Demie (2005) whose research showed that the performance of Black children improved with the extensive use of teacher role models and learning mentors in schools. Despite these findings, matching teacher role models by ethnicity and gender is problematic as, according to Maylor (2009), it is based on flawed assumptions about Black teachers and Black children. Various other initiatives have been introduced in schools to improve Black attainment and success (see e.g. Aiming High - see DfES, 2004b; Tikly et al., 2005). Personalised learning is also considered key to raising attainment as it provides opportunities for teachers to be flexible in their teaching, and enables the educational provision children (from all backgrounds) receive to be tailored to their specific learning needs (DfES 2005). Notwithstanding, the longstanding nature of Black children's underachievement has reinforced continued calls for the underlying factors that seem to hinder Black children's performance to be addressed (Pilkington, 1999; Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Crozier, 2005; Majors, 2001; DfES, 2006a, b; Gillborn, 2008). Identifying the

causes of educational inequalities is an essential ingredient in raising Black children's attainment because research evidence has shown that intervention from local authorities (LAs) and schools can help raise the achievement of Black children (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Rhamie, 2007). In this chapter, we therefore conclude by highlighting some of the approaches that schools and local authorities have used to raise Black children's achievement; some of which the Black Children's Achievement Programme draws on.

This literature review aims to identify the main aspects which have been identified as affecting Black attainment and to also examine some of the complexity surrounding Black children's achievement and in particular, that no single factor underscores Black achievement. But before continuing, it is important to indicate that for the purposes of this literature review the generic term 'Black' is used to refer to the composite group of children from Black African, Black Caribbean, Black Other, Mixed White and Black African, and Mixed White and Black Caribbean heritage (Tikly et al, 2006, DCSF, 2008b). This is in line with the definition employed in the Black Children's Achievement Programme. However, within the Black group as a whole there are variations in terms of educational attainment such as between different Black and Mixed Black groups. For example, use of the Extended Ethnic Background categories reveals differences within the Black African category, with Black Ghanaian and Black Nigerian children having higher attainment than Black Somali children (DfES, 2006). This suggests that the generic term 'Black' might mask differences between different Black groups and is one of the reasons why Cline et al. (2002) and Tikly et al. (2004) called for the needs of 'Mixed' heritage children to be recognised and addressed. As there is a danger that the inclusive term 'Black' could lead to simplistic and at the same time the wrong conclusions being drawn about Black children's achievement, it is important that any attainment differentials within the Black group are identified and explored in greater detail.

Achievement / underachievement / attainment

In order to further contextualise the discussion below it is useful also to define the terms 'achievement' and 'underachievement'. Although the terms 'achievement' and 'underachievement' are often used in educational discourse, there is little consensus among researchers as to what they mean. The concept of 'underachievement' as defined by Thorndike (1963 - see Smith, 2003:577) is usually described in terms of 'achievement falling below what would be forecast from our most informed and accurate prediction, based on a team of predictor variables'. The phrase 'achieving below' in this definition is fundamental because it denotes a particular set of standards; performing below suggests failure or underachievement. Gorard and Smith (2004) simply note that the term 'underachievement' is used to refer to achievement relative to another group, whilst Gillborn and Gripps (1996:1) suggest it is a 'relatively crude term relating to differences in group averages'. For Demie (2003: 233) underachievement is a 'stereotype' which is 'sometimes wrongly related to an outdated older concept'. But nevertheless is used to stereotype the attainment of particular Black groups, namely Black Caribbean. Smith (2003: 585) asserts that 'applying the 'underachievement' label to a diverse group of individuals is incorrect' and suggests instead that a 'more apposite term might be 'low achievement' or, more generally, 'differential achievement' (Smith, 2003: 576).

Although 'underachievement' has been linked with low aspirations and goals (e.g. Demack et al., 2000), 'underachievement' appears to be strongly influenced by ethnicity, gender and class (Archer and Francis, 2007). Teachers have increasingly used the term to describe boys' performance rather than girls' (e.g. Jones and Myhill, 2004; Abbott, 2005) and for that matter Black boys (LDA, 2004). The relative underperformance of boys in comparison to girls has led to the prevalent portrayal of boys in schools as failing or underperforming (Epstein et al., 1998; Francis and Skelton, 2005; Cassen and Kingdon, 2007). Furthermore, it seems that teachers' perceptions of the social class backgrounds of children and their parents

influence their conceptualization of underachievement (Gazeley and Dunne, 2005). For example, the concept of 'underachievement' is often used in educational discourses to differentiate educational outcomes among different ethnic groups (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000, p.7). However, research evidence has found a dissonance between teachers' expectations and children's actual performances:

> …teachers' judgments about which pupils are underachieving do not necessarily relate to high or low levels of prior attainment but to teachers' perceptions of potential attainment (Gazeley and Dunne, 2005:8).

'Attainment' is another term used to describe the achievement of children. It usually refers to measured attainment as illustrated, for example, by key stage national assessment test results. A significant proportion of Black children consistently perform below the national average across all key stages, and at GCSE and equivalent and Post-16 in comparison to their White British colleagues (ONS, 2006; DfES, 2006a). For example, in the Key Stage 2 results in 2005 of pupils who obtained level 4 and above, the passing grades show variations in performance between the different ethnic groups (DfES, 2006a). The average proportion of Black children achieving the expected level in English was 70%, maths 62%, and 76% in science respectively. Contrastingly, corresponding percentages for White British pupils were 80 % for English, 76% for maths and 88% in science. Examination results published in the *Statistical First Release National Curriculum Assessment* (DCSF in March 2007a) show the percentage of Black children that obtained five good GCSEs had increased from 2003-2007, with the proportion of Black African and Black Caribbean pupils getting five good GCSEs having increased by 4.6 percentage points from 51.0% to 55.6%, and 4.2 percentage points from 44.9% to 49.1% respectively. In 2007, 49.1% of Black Caribbean pupils achieved 5+A-C* compared to 32.9% in 2003 (DCSF, 2007). Tikly et al's (2006:5) *Evaluation of Aiming High: African Caribbean Achievement Project* found that between 2003 and 2005 in *Aiming High* schools the percentage of Black African-Caribbean boys who achieved level 5 and above in Key Stage 3 considerably improved by 12 percentage points in English, 13 percentage points in mathematics and 3.5 percentage points in science. Similarly, Black Caribbean boys who took GCSE examinations improved their attainment. Notwithstanding they are still achieving at a lower level than other groups of pupils.

Overall, it appears that Black African pupils have made steady progress with 55.6% achieving five good GCSEs compared to 40.7% in 2003 (DCSF, 2007). This indicates that Black children can improve their attainment. Gillborn and Mirza (2000:10) report findings of an extensive survey about attainment in 32 LAs which found that Black children were performing well in one in ten LAs. Furthermore, research in schools in the London Borough of Lambeth has shown that Black children's achievement can be raised considerably; in some schools, examination results show that Black children (e.g. African-Caribbean) (Demie, 2005) and Black Africans (Demie, Lewis, and McLean, 2006) respectively, outperformed their White peers in GCSE examinations. Research also indicates that Somali children in some London schools equally achieved high results as a group (Demie, McLean and Lewis, 2007).

Despite recent improvements in Black GCSE examination results and claims of the ethnic achievement 'gap' significantly narrowing (DCSF, 2007), the 'gap' remains wide (Demack, Drew, and Grimsley, 2000; Equalities Review - see Cabinet Office, 2007). The extent of the 'gap' led the *Equalities Review* (Cabinet Office, 2007) to argue that closing the gap will take almost half a century. Findings such as these exemplify the need for suitable measures to be found to address disparities in Black children's achievement. Evidence of differential attainment (both higher and lower) amongst Black children additionally suggests that conclusions about Black children being low attainers can be misleading, and illustrates the need for a wider understanding to be developed about Black children's attainment and some of the factors contributing to differential outcomes.

Demographic factors

The attainment data presented above highlights some of the complexity surrounding Black children's attainment. Children's education is principally influenced by a variety of factors, broadly categorised as demographic and school based factors. The demographic factors would include, for example, Sewell's (1997, 2009), identification of the absence of Black fathers and Black boys' negative perceptions of schooling. However, this review is primarily concerned with the most widely cited demographic characteristics such as; gender, ethnicity and class which have often been used in educational research to explain variations in children's attainment (e.g. Demack, Drew, and Grimsley, 2000; Mamon, 2004; Archer, and Francis, 2007). These variables are drawn on here to explore Black children's attainment in greater detail.

Gender

Gender is a significant indicator of attainment among school children, but it is not the strongest (DfES, 2007; Archer and Francis, 2007). Nevertheless, studies that have used quantitative data have shown that even when you hold constant the effect of other factors such as deprivation or socio-economic status (SES), gender impact is increasingly profound. Examining attainment data by gender suggests that girls outperform boys in major examinations such as Key Stage 2 and GCSEs (Demack, Drew, and Grimsley, 2000; Archer and Francis, 2007). A recent study by Cassen and Kingdon (2007) produced identical conclusions. It shows that overall more boys failed to obtain five good GCSEs or more than girls. This broader gender achievement disparity is also evident within the Black groups:

> *The gender gap at GCSE does seem to vary by ethnic group with Black Caribbean and Black Other pupils having wider gender gaps than other ethnic groups. In particular, Black Caribbean and Black Other boys are the least likely of any ethnic group to achieve 5+ A*-C passes, but Black Caribbean and Black Other girls are not disadvantaged to the same extent. (DfES, 2007:4)*

GCSE examination results show that the gender 'gap' between Black boys and Black girls is wide. For example, in 2005, 33.3 % of Black Caribbean boys achieved five or more grades A*-C at GCSE and equivalent compared to 49.4 % of girls - a difference of 16.1 percentage points, compared to a difference nationally of 10.1 percentage points (ONS, 2006). The attainment of children of Mixed White and Black African heritage and Mixed White and Black Caribbean heritage is similarly illustrative of a gender 'gap' (DfES, 2005, 2006, 2007).

Whilst gender seems to play an important role in some Black children's attainment, nonetheless, some studies appear to relegate its significance as a predictor of attainment on Black children's performance. Bhattacharyya, Ison and Blair (2003), for instance, raise doubts about the consistency of the claim that gender impacts on Black children's performance. Smith's (2003: 581) study which examined the role of differential factors in Key Stage 3 tests ranked gender seventh in the order of significance in children's performance as it only explained '0.8% of the variance in academic achievement at Key Stage 3'. Smith (2003) appears to suggest that other factors play a more detrimental role than gender in pupils' attainment. Smith's (2003) thesis appears to be confirmed by other studies. For example, Connolly's (2006) findings about GCSE examination results for 1997,1999 and 2001 respectively found that boys from middle class backgrounds were more likely to achieve better than girls from disadvantaged backgrounds. He concluded that social class and ethnicity were more significant than gender. In contrast with the general pattern of girls outperforming boys, Demie, Lewis, and McLean's (2007) study about Somali children's performance in London local authorities noted that in one London authority, which analysed Somali children's attainment by gender, Somali girls were underperforming in comparison to Somali boys.

Furthermore, evidence from Blair's (2001a:31-32) research undermines the widely held assumption that Black girls relatively performed better than Black boys and White girls respectively. Her findings depict a complex situation whereby in some schools Black Caribbean children do better than the other groups, while in others Black African children underperform (see also Blair et al. 1998). Blair and Connelly's studies, therefore, indicate that in public examinations not all girls would do well and not all boys would underperform either. Connolly therefore warns against making comparisons between boys and girls. He regards this as simplistic. It seems that Smith (2003), Connolly (2006) and others have raised some important questions about the significance educational research should attach to gender when investigating Black children's attainment. Demie, Lewis, and McLean's (2007) work, in particular, represents a stark reminder to educational authorities and schools that the widely held assumption that Black girls outperform Black boys could be misleading, and that schools must equally keep an eye on Black girls' performance as well.

Ethnicity

The significance of ethnicity in Black children's achievement has been clearly highlighted in Connolly's (2006: 9; see also Archer and Francis, 2007 for further discussion) study which reported that '68.9% of Chinese respondents gained five or more GCSE grades A*-C compared to just 35.7% of Black respondents'. He believes therefore that membership of particular ethnic groups has a much greater effect on a respondent's chances of having gained the required five or more GCSE passes than their gender. However, it seems that the term 'Black' masks some important disparities along the lines of ethnicities within the different Black groups. This is especially, evident amongst African-Caribbean heritage children who Gillborn and Mirza (2000:14) argue have 'drawn the least benefit from rising levels of attainment'. Black children's GCSE results highlight variations in achievement between African-Caribbean and Black African students (DfES, 2006a). There are also significant disparities within the African group itself. For example, a DfES report (2006a: 55) *Ethnicity and Education: The Evidence on Minority Ethnic Pupils aged 5-16, London,* notes that some Black African groups, particularly the Nigerians (54% achieving 5+A*-C GCSEs in 2003 and 56% in 2005) and Ghanaians (46% achieving 5+A*-C in 2003 and 53% in 2005) respectively, are likely to do well in GCSE examinations. Contrastingly, during a similar period only 22 % and 29 % of Somali children achieved 5A*-C Gases. Interestingly, while Somali pupils underachieve nationally this is not necessarily true at a local level. Demie et al. (2007) found that in 23 local authorities no Somali children achieved five GCSEs at grades A*-C whereas in five other London authorities 52% to 69% of Somali children achieved 5 A*-C GCSEs. This suggests that differential attainment by ethnicity identified at a local level warrants further investigation. This is pertinent because even with the various measures and strategies put in place to address racial inequalities in education (see below), research evidence suggests that the attainment 'gap' associated with ethnicity, and in particular between Black and White children, is large (Archer and Francis, 2007; Gillborn, 2008; Strand, 2007, 2008). Indeed the 'gap' at Key Stage 3 (Strand 2007) is equivalent to a whole year of progress in terms of National Curriculum levels.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

As with ethnicity, English as an Additional language (EAL) is a key identity and attainment indicator. In 2004 it was estimated that there were about 658,670 (9.7%) pupils in England for whom English is an additional language (Demie, Taplin and Butler, 2003; DfES, 2004a: 4; St Claire Hoare and Taylor, 2005), speaking over 200 different languages, most of whom are children of Black origin. According to the DfES (2005, 2006a) children for whom English is an additional language have lower attainment than children whose first language is English, and EAL has been identified as a key variable influencing the attainment particularly of Somali children (DCSF, 2008a). Rutter (2006: 189) found that Somali pupils' English oral competencies 'were not matched by [their] reading and writing skills' which were deemed to

be below the expected level. This has implications for their academic work. Clearly, English language fluency, particularly written language skills, for some Black children for whom English is an additional language could be particularly problematic where these skills are absent (Demie, Lewis and McLean, 2007). However, some Black children for whom English is an additional language are also known to do very well in school (Demie, Taplin and Butler, 2003), but in attaining, targeted interventions in English are sometimes required to enable them to attain the right linguistic level (DfES, 2004a). As many children (for whom English is an additional language) appear to require continuous support with academic writing even when they have achieved oral fluency (DfES, 2004a), the impact of linguistic ability on attainment is especially acute in schools where there is no provision for language intervention beyond the initial stages (Cline et al., 2002).

Socio-economic status (SES)

Children's social class background has also been identified in the research as a significant determinant of achievement. For example, in 2007, GCSE results showed that 62.8% of children from high socio-economic backgrounds obtained five or more A* to C grade GCSEs, compared with 35.5% pupils from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. The 'social class attainment gap at Key Stage 4 (as measured by percentage point difference in attainment between those eligible and not eligible for free school meals) is three times as wide as the gender gap' with Black Caribbean free school meals boys doing 'significantly less well than the national average at GCSE' (DfES, 2007:4-5). Yet evidence suggests that while Black children from low SES backgrounds make strong progress during Key Stage 4, Black African and Black Caribbean boys underachieve, which indicates that Black children's attainment inequalities are less well explained in terms of social class background (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000; Demack, Drew, and Grimsley, 2000). Indeed Strand's (2008) analysis of minority ethnic attainment data from a longitudinal study found little class effect for Black African children or Black Caribbean girls. This supports Weekes and Wright's (1998: 21) contention that 'social class factors do not override the influence of ethnic inequality'. Most significantly, Gillborn and Mirza (2000) show that African-Caribbean pupils from middle class backgrounds are the lowest attaining of the middle class groups. In some cases they are barely matching the attainments of working class pupils in other ethnic groups (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000; Archer and Francis, 2007). The fact that educational inequalities are not reduced even for Black children from middle class backgrounds (DfES 2007; Strand 2007) led Gillborn (2008: 53) to conclude that 'an exclusive focus on inequalities associated with class profile is of most benefit to White students where class inequalities are most pronounced' (see also Archer and Francis, 2007).

Deprivation and Free school meals

Like socio-economic status, deprivation along with the take-up of free school meals (FSM) is considered a key predictor of attainment[5]. Educational research (e.g. Gazeley and Dunne, 2005) has consistently identified deprivation as one of the main reasons that contributes to low attainment: 'If your family is poor, your educational potential is less likely to be realised' (Cabinet Office, 2007:15). The DCSF (2009: 25) note that 'disadvantaged pupils are more likely to be concentrated in primary schools with high FSM'. Thus, children from low income families are most likely to underachieve in schools. Many indices of economic disadvantage indicate that a disproportionate number of Black and minority ethnic families are mostly likely to be economically disadvantaged (Bhattacharyya, Ison and Blair (2003, p.21). According to

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[5]Eligibility for FSM is 'a proxy measure of deprivation' and is 'based on family income, and area based measures notably the Income Deprivation Children Index' (DCSF 2009:39). The number of pupils eligible for FSM is a factor in setting a school's budget as it seen to be an indicator of the level of deprivation in a school. The race equality assessment impact of the Higher Standards Better Schools for All White Paper and the Education Bill 2006, found that 'pupils not eligible for FSM out perform FSM eligible pupils at each Key Stage' (www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/educationandinspectionbill/docs/raceequalityimpact assesspdf)

the DfES (2006a), economic deprivation appears to be widely prevalent among Black groups with 27% of Black children living in a low income household (DfES, 2005; see also Bhattacharyya, Ison and Blair, 2003). Many Black children are further disadvantaged by the fact that they are likely to attend under-resourced (Foster, 1992) and less successful schools (Weekes-Bernard, 2007). Cassen and Kingdon (2007) also suggest that where schools have opportunities to select children, this operates to the detriment of economically disadvantaged Black children.

The pervasiveness of deprivation among this group of children is evident, for example, in the disproportionate number of Black children eligible for FSM which is above average (DfES, 2006a:16). Black children eligible for FSM tend to perform less well in GCSE examinations than those not entitled to FSM (DfES, 2005). Levels of deprivation appear to be more acute among some Black groups than others such as children of Somali origin where between 80% and 90% of Somali children, claim FSM (Demie, Lewis, and McLean, 2007). Low-income levels are compounded by inadequate housing accommodation with many Somali children living in overcrowded accommodation (Diriye, 2006). Thus, for some children there is little privacy to study or do their homework. Inadequate housing also accounts for some Somali families moving house several times which also means that there is high pupil mobility as Somali pupils often change schools when they move house (Power, Whitty and Youdell, 1998 - see also discussion below).

As with gender and ethnicity, the impact of deprivation on attainment appears to vary across different ethnic groups. For example, Strand (2008) found that that whilst 15% of White working-class boys and 20 % White working class girls finished compulsory education with basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic, for Black boys from similar backgrounds, the figure is 22%, while it is 29% for Asian boys and 52% for Chinese boys.

While the identity variables of ethnicity, social class and gender were examined above separately, it is salient to consider these variables as intersecting and interacting in various ways on the attainment of Black children (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000; Strand, 2008).

Pupil mobility

Pupil mobility is defined as 'movement between or changes of school, either once or on repeated occasions, at times other than the normal age at which children start or finish their education at a school' (Strand and Demie, 2007:313). More primary pupils are likely to be mobile than secondary (Strand and Demie, 2007). Pupil mobility has a detrimental effect on the achievement of children from 'mobile groups' (Bhattacharyya, Ison and Blair, 2003; Demie, Lewis and Taplin, 2005; DfES, 2006a; Strand and Demie, 2007) particularly at Key Stage 4. Pupil mobility is a factor which affects the achievement of Black immigrant children. It therefore has implications for how schools are able to meet the needs of this group of children within their overall raising achievement strategies.

Black children's aspirations

According to Strand (2008), the largest influences on minority ethnic childrens' attainment are:

- pupils' educational aspirations and parents' educational aspirations for their child;

- pupils' academic self concept; and

- frequency of completion of homework.

This analysis suggests that Black children and their parents should be largely responsible for raising individual Black attainment. However, even where Black children have high aspirations and a positive academic self-concept, Strand (2008) found that they often still do not achieve as well as White British pupils, which points towards the need for a wider understanding of the school factors affecting Black children's achievement. Importantly, in a recent presentation of findings from his 2008 study, Strand challenged policy makers and researchers to come up with more nuanced interpretations which might explain differential attainment within and between Black groups; such as, why do Black Caribbean and Black African children (particularly boys) from high socio-economic status backgrounds underachieve relative to their high aspirations and high academic self-concept? In answering this challenge, attention is now turned to consideration of in-school processes, which might help to explain different performances amongst Black children.

School based factors

Evidence suggests that the educational achievement of Black children is fundamentally shaped and structured by school factors. Smith and Tomlinson (1989) found that minority ethnic pupils performed better in some schools than others. An Ofsted (2002a:3) survey of 129 schools with 10% or more Black Caribbean pupils showed that Black Caribbean pupils 'do well in good schools'. But how does the concentration of Black children in schools with large numbers of children facing disadvantage impact on their attainment? It is evident that Black Caribbean pupils do well at primary school (up to Key Stage 2 - Ofsted, 2002a; Ofsted, 1999) and that once in secondary schools, their attainment declines and they appear to fare worst of all the groups (Ofsted, 2002a; Gillborn and Mirza, 2000). Cline et al. (2002) also found that geographical location (combined with individual schools) negatively impacted on minority ethnic attainment. They point out that the attainments of minority ethnic pupils are 'often described in terms of stereotyped expectations that a group whose members tend to do well or badly in one geographical area will tend to achieve similar results elsewhere' (Cline et al., 2002:21). Similarly, Gillborn and Mirza (2000:11) found in their review of the statistical returns for the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant from 118 LAs that there are 'significant and consistent inequalities of attainment' for minority ethnic children across local authorities. Such differential attainments are further indicative of variations in attainment within and between groups which are affected by school location, type and processes within.

Other school factors that are considered to have played a role in the attainment of Black children include: the National Curriculum, low teacher expectations / negative attitudes, setting/streaming and pupil exclusion.

National Curriculum

Maintained schools are required to meet their statutory obligations under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to tackle underachievement among Black (and other minority ethnic) children by addressing problems within pedagogical practices including the National Curriculum (Ofsted, 2002b, 2005) i.e. the National Curriculum should reflect ethnic and cultural diversity. A culturally inclusive curriculum (to address issues of cultural diversity and race equality) is considered essential (see e.g. Osler, 1997, Parekh, 2000; Ofsted, 2002a) to facilitating learning opportunities for Black children and motivating Black children to learn by exciting their interest in the various subject matter. Delivering a culturally relevant and inclusive curriculum is a statutory requirement (DfES, 1999). However, Maylor and Read *et al's* (2007) research review of diversity in the curriculum demonstrated that not all schools adhere to this provision or are aware of flexibility within the National Curriculum to make the curriculum more culturally relevant and inclusive (see also Ajegbo, Kiwan and Sharma, 2007). Indeed some schools actively pursue a mono-ethnic curriculum. A group that appear to be particularly excluded from the curriculum are Mixed heritage pupils (Cline et al., 2002; Tikly et al., 2004). McFarlane (2005) also drew attention to the absence of Black people in

the curriculum and especially, the contributions of Black scholars in disciplines such as science. The Commission on African and Asian (2005) heritage has similarly bemoaned the continued provision in some schools of a monolithic and Eurocentric curriculum.

Institutional racism

Most writers concur that one of the main issues that appears to impede Black children's performance is institutional racism (Troyna, 1984; Macpherson, 1999; Parekh, 2000; Graham and Robinson, 2004; DfES, 2006b), which is revealed for example in teachers' differential treatment of Black children vis-à-vis other groups in terms of school exclusion, low teacher expectations, setting / streaming and in assessments made about the abilities of Black children. Moreover, it has been argued that teachers' sometimes 'conscious or unconscious stereotypes and assumptions about minority groups can impact negatively on pupils' achievements' (Archer and Francis, 2007:42; see also LDA, 2004). Cline et al. (2002) found that staff in majority White schools stereotyped minority ethnic groups in relation to physical prowess. So, for example, Black Caribbean children were perceived to make good netball players and or good athletes. Consequently, less attention was paid to these children's academic ability or how it might be fostered.

As well as providing an insight into institutional and teacher stereotyping, institutional racism is also considered to:

> offer important insights into how African Caribbean students can attend schools which appear to have developed and be implementing equal opportunities policies and still be significantly *more* likely to be excluded (suspended or expelled) and less likely to attain benchmark educational outcomes than their counterparts from other racial or ethnic groups. (Youdell, 2003:5 - original emphasis)

The issue of Black exclusion is discussed in more detail below. Arguably, the significance of the existence of institutional racism in schools is reflected in the fact that four of the recommendations made by Macpherson (1999) were concerned with addressing institutional racism in education, because, if allowed to go unchallenged, inequalities of educational experiences and outcomes for Black children will persist.

Low teacher expectations

School practices, particularly teachers' expectations, have been cited by many researchers as contributing to low attainment amongst Black children (e.g. Nehual, 1996; Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Crozier, 2005; Maylor et al., 2006; Rhamie, 2007; Rutter, 2006; Archer and Francis, 2007; DCSF, 2008b). There is evidence to suggest that despite policy expectations (e.g. DfES, 2005) that teachers should hold high expectations for all children, that some teachers continue to have lower expectations for Black (especially Caribbean) children and what they will attain (e.g. Swann, 1985; Archer and Francis, 2007:42) and as such, it is argued that Black children receive less support from their teachers (Rhamie, 2007). Low teacher expectations appear to be influenced by racism which contributes to Black children being expected to experience some problems that will interfere with their performance (Gillborn, 1997; Gillborn and Youdell, 2000), whereas White children are expected to have no such problems (Archer and Francis, 2007). In fact Gillborn and Gipps (1996) suggest that the relative better performance of some Asian students over their Black peers could be explained by the differential teachers' expectations of Black children's academic ability. Arguably, this phenomenon partly explains the low performance of mixed Black and White heritage children as well (Cline, *et al*, 2002; Haynes, Tikly and Caballero, 2006). Tikly et al. (2006:9) argue that some Black children are aware of their teachers' low expectations of their work and because of this some are more likely to 'live up to' the perceived lower academic expectations held by their teachers, which affects their school performance. This finding supports earlier research

by Mac an Ghaill (1988), Wright (1992), Sewell (1997) and Connolly (1998) among others. Gore (1996) also found that in some schools teacher perceptions and low achievement expectations of African-Caribbean children, influenced how they prepared (or did not prepare) such children for examinations, and the type of careers advice that was given (i.e. to acquire practical rather than academic skills because they were not perceived as having academic potential). More recently, Strand (2008) found that teachers under-estimate the abilities of Black children in mathematics and science which results in White children being far more likely than Black children to be entered for higher tiered Key Stage 3 papers in these subjects.

Exclusion

In contrast to some of the findings identified above, Sewell (1997) contended that the difficulties Black children (especially Black Caribbean boys) have in attaining highly relate to their behaviour rather than teacher attitudes / expectations. However, a key factor influencing the attainment of Black children is the extent to which they are excluded from school and learning opportunities. Black children are most likely to be excluded from school (DfES, 2006a, b) and represent the most excluded group of pupils (Gillborn, 1990; Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Blair, 2001b; Youdell, 2003; Graham and Robinson, 2004; Parsons et al., 2004; Christian, 2005; Crozier, 2005; DfES, 2006b; Cabinet Office, 2007). Black pupils are often excluded for challenging what is perceived to be institutional (e.g. teacher racism) and individual racism (e.g. racist verbal bullying - see e.g. Mac an Ghaill, 1988; Sewell, 1997). Evidence suggests that schools perceive and respond to the behaviours of Black children more harshly than to other ethnic groups, and that this treatment is also differentiated by gender (Blair, 2001b; Osler and Vincent, 2003). Majors (2001:2) reported that children of African-Caribbean background are six times more likely to be excluded than their White counterparts, and in some London local authorities, they were 15 times more likely to be excluded. Furthermore, it is evident that in one London local authority, for example, Somali pupils were eight times more likely to be permanently excluded from school than their White peers (Rutter, 2006:190; see also Ali and Jones, 2000). However, these high levels of school exclusion might mask the full level of local authority and school exclusion as some local authorities failed to publish numbers or to name the communities that have considerable numbers of school exclusions. Temporary exclusion is so common among Black groups that figures might under-represent the true rates (Major 2001, Gillborn and Sewell, 1998; Crozier, 2005).The DfES (2006b:26-27) Priority Review identified 20 English local authorities and 100 schools as 'a cause for concern' with respect to the implementation of the provisions of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and their overly high rates of excluded Black children (see also Ofsted, 2005). Crozier's (2005) study with a socially diverse group of African-Caribbean families found that all the respondents in the study had a child that had suffered some form of exclusion. Thus, in spite of the Government's clear directives to reduce exclusions by setting targets, there seems to be a reluctance on the part of some schools and local authorities to do so. Like local authorities, a recent report on student teachers' perceptions of Black school exclusions by Gazeley and Dunne (2008) would also seem to suggest, that teacher understandings about Black exclusions and their impact on Black educational attainment are limited.

Setting / streaming

The practice of setting in primary and secondary schools in which children of the same year are placed into different ability groups, represents a major concern for many Black parents and the wider community (Richardson, 2005, DfES, 2006b). Similar to what Coard (1971) described almost four decades ago, many children of Black origin in the classroom are concentrated in low ability groups. Research suggests that teachers' perceptions and expectations of Black children's' behaviour often influences their decision to put Black children in lower sets as opposed to their ability (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Sewell, 2000;

Tikly *et al*, 2006). For example, Gillborn and Youdell's study suggests that more than two thirds (66 %) of Black pupils in secondary school are taught separately in lower academic groups, and that most of these Black children were put in low ability groups before they took the ability tests, which reinforces Gillborn's belief (2005a, b) that ability is not viewed objectively when it is associated with Black children. Moreover it is evident that just as Black children are under-represented in top sets, few are placed on the Gifted and Talented Register (Gillborn, 2005b: Dunne et al., 2007); thus reinforcing perceptions of Black pupils as low achievers or as having special educational needs (Lindsay et al., 2006).

Tikly et al. (2006:6) found that even in *Aiming High* schools the system of setting perpetuated underachievement among Black children:

> Pupils with low performance at the end of Key Stage 2 are more likely to be placed in lower ability sets for Key Stage 3, entered for lower tier papers and more likely to get poor end of Key Stage 3 results which in turn means they are more likely to be in the lower sets for Key Stage 4, more likely to be entered for lower tier examination papers and more likely to get poor end of Key Stage 4 results.

Tikly et al's (2006) research confirmed the fact that the effect of setting on Black children originates in primary schools and continually affects Black children throughout their secondary education. This supports earlier research by Gillborn and Youdell (2000) who demonstrated a systemic relationship between Black children's performance at Key Stage 4 and school practices of placing them in low ability groups (see also McFarlane, 2005; Gillborn, 2008). Despite these negative impacts and continuing concerns about decisions to set by ability and the consequent racial inequality (Gillborn 2005b, 2008; Gillborn and Youdell, 2000), schools have not been dissuaded from setting by ability:

> It will continue to be for schools to decide how and when to group and set by ability. But we will encourage more schools to adopt such grouping and help them to learn from the innovative practices that some schools are already employing without lowering expectations for pupils in lower ability groups or limiting choices in the curriculum. (DfES, 2005:53)

Initiatives to raise Black children's attainment

Having explored factors affecting Black children's attainment, the review now moves to examining some of the initiatives which have been used to raise the attainment of Black children. Raising Black children's educational attainment in school is underpinned by the provisions of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, which obliges schools to institute measures to address underachievement among Black and minority ethnic children (Ofsted 2002a, Ofsted, 2002b). According to Blair (2001a:30) if Black children's achievement is to be improved it will require teachers to understand and demonstrate willingness to address Black children's political and social concerns, and teachers should have empathy with the needs of their students and willingness to work with Black parents.

Similarly, the DfES (2002) report *Removing the Barriers: Raising Achievement Levels for Minority Ethnic Pupils Exploring Good Practice* suggested that schools that are relatively successful in raising the achievement of Black children are committed to a whole school approach underpinned by a learning culture, values and an ethos of achievement (see also Ofsted 2002a). Nehual (1996) calls such schools 'positive schools'. 'Positive schools' are characterised by, first, an ethos of good leadership which is shared across the entire school, particularly among the senior management and governing body (see also Blair et al.1998; Gillborn and Mirza, 2000). Secondly, in such schools there is a commitment to high standards of behaviour and there exists a culture of mutual respect between all groups and pupils feel a sense of belonging (Ofsted 2002a).Thirdly, teaching staff and parents are fully

consulted and any concerns and misgivings are acknowledged and dealt with effectively. The studies cited above suggest that the schools which are relatively successful in raising Black children's attainment address educational achievement concerns of the children with respect to the following: the curriculum, teachers' expectations, combating racism and involving parents. The Black Children's Achievement Programme draws on some of these strategies, focusing in particular on improving pedagogical practices, combating racism and raising teachers' expectations, and involving parents and carers of Black children.

Combating institutional racism in schools

It was stated earlier that institutional racism negatively impacts on Black children's educational experiences and outcomes. Researchers opine that any efforts that aim to address Black children's achievement difficulties must be underpinned by a process that tackles racism in schools (Coard, 1971; Swann, 1985; Nehual, 1996, Majors, 2001; Gillborn, 2002, 2008; Ofsted, 2005; Archer and Francis, 2007). Research evidence has shown that schools that are relatively successful in raising Black children's attainment have a strong anti-racism ethos in which they have developed mechanisms to enable children to discuss 'race' issues and share their concerns (see e.g. Gillborn and Mirza, 2000) and / or strategies to combat racism (Cline et al., 2002; Ofsted, 2002a). These strategies vary according to the school's ethos and commitment to combating racism and underachievement, however, Nehual's (1996:189-192) analysis suggests that in addressing racism as a part of raising achievement, schools should adopt the following strategies:

- question teachers' stereotypical perceptions of Caribbean children (Archer and Francis, 2007 suggest this should be done through INSET training);

- school improvement plans to include investigating disciplinary incidents occurring over one term to improve procedures and reduce such incidents;

- fully document incidents of racism by including perspectives of the children, parents and observers;

- implemented initiatives would need to draw on the school rich experience in developing equal opportunity policies and by reviewing different aspects of schooling; school ethos, classroom management; home-school relationships; racial harassments.

The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry's (Macpherson, 1999) recommendations and subsequent legislation provided further impetus for issues of racism in education to be addressed (see also the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, and DfES, 2002). The DfES (2004b) prepared guidelines for schools to tackle racism in its various forms in schools, and to send regular reports to their local authority about incidents, which arise. For example, combating racism in schools requires that schools must have established procedures to deal with race relations, and make conscious efforts to counter the effects of stereotyping and prejudices (DfES, 2002). Any monitoring framework should essentially allow pupils to raise 'race' issues and share concerns; and also ensure the designing and enacting of clear procedures for recording and acting on racist incidents (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000). In addition, Cline et al. (2002:5) outlined some of the most effective steps used by schools in their fight against racism such as:

- investigating the incident fairly, making sure that perpetrators understood what they had done wrong, and informing parents when children were involved in persistent or malicious abuse;

- developing a central role for the head teacher in combating racism in the school;

- implementing an anonymous "Bullying Box" where children could post messages that would receive staff attention within 24 hours;

- whole family admissions policies helpfully promote sibling support (see also DfES, 2006c).

Diverse curriculum

The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry's (Macpherson, 1999) recommendations suggested a change in the National Curriculum to include provisions for implementing a diverse curriculum, which should be an inclusive curriculum, which considered and showed respect for the cultural background of all pupils (DfES, 2002:3). The DfES (2004b) reminds schools of their National Curriculum obligations that the pedagogical practices should enable all pupils to take part in lessons fully and effectively. Arguably, schools, particularly secondary schools, that adopt a broad, diverse curriculum, in which a 'race' dimension is effectively integrated within the curriculum, are more likely to experience success in improving the achievement of Black children (Ofsted, 2005:11-12; Lindsay and Muijs, 2006:320).

Cline et al. (2002:6) report that some schools that developed effective pedagogical strategies that assist in raising Black children's achievement engage in the following activities:

- use the pupils as source for their peers' learning, and children from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds form a resource of great potential value in schools where their experience and knowledge are not widely shared;

- hold school assemblies that focus on other faith traditions besides Christianity; although many Black children (e.g. African-Caribbean and West African) in England are Christians, recent immigration patterns have brought large proportions of Black Africans (e.g. Somalis and North Africans) who are not Christians, which means that many Black pupils in schools are from Muslim backgrounds.

A key criterion for schools implementing a curriculum to meet the needs of a multi-ethnic / diverse society is schools' reviewing their curricular provision (and pastoral approaches) to ensure their sensitivity and appropriateness to children from diverse ethnic backgrounds (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000; Maylor and Read et al., 2007; Ajegbo, Kiwan and Sharma, 2007).

Schools that have no experience of working with children for whom English is an additional language seem to have benefited from support given by their LA's specialist teaching service to staff (DfES, 2004a). Other researchers (e.g. Tikly et al., 2006) have additionally highlighted the effectiveness of external support: such as the provision of a consultant and LA links.

High teacher expectations

The DfES (2002) report indicates that high teacher expectations constitute one of the most significant strategies for raising Black children's achievement. Bhattacharyya, Ison and Blair (2003) argue that schools can considerably improve the attainment of Black children if they adopt a strong strategy of a school ethos based on the expectation that all pupils will strive to achieve their best. As a part of having high expectations, teacher diversity (i.e. the presence of Black and other minority ethnic teachers) seems to be an important element of teachers having high expectations of Black children. According to Lindsay and Muijs (2006:325) Black children do well in schools where a large proportion of the teaching staff are of Black and other minority ethnic origin. The presence of Black teachers in school is likely to strengthen a school's overall strategy to raising Black children's achievement as they help to ensure a more diverse and culturally relevant curriculum, foster stronger relationships with Black parents and have high expectations of Black children's academic work (Maylor et al., 2006).

Raising achievement, however, is about more than simply having high expectations, important though this is. Schools that are relatively successful with raising Black children's attainment have developed channels of communicating the high expectations to all concerned and an explicit ethos that discourages underperformance (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000). As a part of having high expectations schools should therefore recognise and reward achievement (DfES, 2002).

Monitor by ethnicity

Monitoring children's attainment by ethnicity is another important strand of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000) framework to raise the achievement of Black children. The DfES (2002) report shows that schools that succeed in raising Black children's achievement developed ethnic monitoring systems that consistently focused on analysis, enabling pupils' academic progress, behaviour problems, truancy and exclusions to be carefully monitored and assessed. Gillborn and Mirza (2000:10) found that the LAs where Black children do well in their examinations were LAs that monitor GCSE results by ethnicity. Thus they recommended a strategy of monitoring Black children's educational progress as a routine and rigorous part of a school's / LA's self-evaluation and management. However, it is not sufficient to monitor achievement by ethnicity alone, it should be linked with other strategies such as rewriting schemes of work and developing the curriculum, creating interventions to target coursework and providing academic mentoring and booster and supplementary classes (Tikly et al., 2006:10). Furthermore, in a school that had high numbers of African-Caribbean children non-entrants for GCSE examinations and Foundation GCSE level respectively, the school halved the number of African-Caribbean children non-entrants, and the Foundation entries were drastically reduced by the introduction of a series of support strategies, including: a Saturday School, coursework catch-up clubs and a target setting day for parents and students. They also introduced a termly monitoring system to track children's progress so that action could be taken before students slipped through the net (DfES, 2004a: 10). Researchers recommended that:

> Schools should conduct an audit to determine their capacity for implementing whole school change to raise African Caribbean achievement. …Start targeted support of African Caribbean pupils at KS1/2 with coordination across all Key Stages and should be linked to initiatives targeting other groups. Training should be provided for teacher development initiatives with a focus on effective classroom practice for raising African Caribbean achievement (Tikly et al., 2006:10-11).

St Claire Hoare and Taylor's (2005) study of the primary school experience of children for whom English is an additional language led them to recommend that schools should consult Black parents, carers and professionals about their children's education. Consultation of parents is regarded as essential to informing school practice and effective monitoring schemes. The final section reviews the role of parents in raising Black children's achievement.

Involving Black parents

Government policy (DfES, 2007b) strongly encourages the involvement of parents in their children's learning. Research suggests that some Black parents are greatly involved in supporting their children's learning (e.g. LDA, 2004; Crozier, 2005; Maylor et al., 2006) with some adopting a range of strategies in order to ensure their children's educational success (e.g. Tomlinson, 2005; Maylor et al., 2006). Many commentators agree that Black parents are essential in raising Black children's achievement. For example, Sewell (2000) attributes the poor performance of Black children to parenting issues. Rhamie (2007) in her study of African-Caribbean children's educational experiences argued that the difference between low and high achievers were the parents who have high expectations for their children. Rhamie

argued that the schools that were most likely to raise Black children's attainment shared one criterion, and that is, they developed effective home-school strategies in which Black parents were actively and fully participating, and also supporting the education of their children. It is imperative therefore that a framework for raising Black children's attainment should be underpinned by a commitment for parental involvement (Nehual, 1996; Bhattacharyya, Ison and Blair, 2003). Gillborn and Mirza (2000:27) contend that a Black parental involvement strategy is more effective when it is established as a part of a school commitment to 'seeking and using pupil and parent perspectives' (see also Nehual, 1996). Rhamie's (2007) study and Byfield's (2008a, b) comparative research in the UK and USA underline the role of parents and the community in raising Black children's attainment.

The Ofsted reports on good practice in primary and secondary schools promoting the achievement of Black Caribbean children (Ofsted, 2002a, 2002b, 2005) respectively concluded that relatively successful schools evinced (amongst other things): 'close links with parents … based on shared values and expectations of behaviour, attitudes and habits of work'. These schools had developed a working partnership with the parents in which that facilitated active engagement with the parents to listen to their concerns (Ofsted, 2005). Through the partnership, the schools further ensured that any problems were resolved. Actively engaging the parents meant that they were sufficiently informed about the progress of their children. Moreover, the inspectors (Ofsted, 2002a, 2002b) reported that the Black parents and the teachers had candid relationships, and that the parents were encouraged to maintain contacts with the school at all times.

The DfES (2002) recommended that schools could involve Black parents/carers of Black children in two ways:

- ensure that parents were involved as fully and effectively as possible, for example the designation of staff members with a direct telephone link to parents;

- the establishment of staff / parent partnerships whereby accessibility was facilitated by home visits, 'open door' sessions and language assistance.

Tikly et al. (2006:9) found that ineffective communication with African-Caribbean parents which hindered their involvement in their children's schooling was addressed through schools 'establishing Black parents' groups, providing curriculum workshops for parents and developing more effective means of home-school communication'. At the London Borough of Lambeth, the schools that effectively raised the attainment of African-Caribbean children established regular contacts with the parents and placed a high value on the parents' active involvement in their children's education (Demie, 2005, p.6). The success of this home-school relationship approach meant that it was replicated in the borough's other similar projects that aimed to raise the achievement of Black African (Demie, McLean and Lewis (2006), and in particular Somali children (Demie, Lewis and McLean, 2007).

Conclusion

This review of the literature has shown that Black children's achievement is a complex subject with each of the variables identified playing a role in shaping our understanding of how and why Black children achieve in the way that they do. The patterns of attainment and progression are known to be correlated with a wide variety of factors including social class, deprivation, 'race', ethnicity, racism, racial stereotyping, institutional racism, English language proficiency, parental occupation, and parental educational achievement.
The main lesson in this review is that many Black children are capable of achieving highly if schools and local authorities address problems that appear to hinder their educational experiences and outcomes. The evidence reviewed here also indicates that although Black children's attainment data suggests some improvement, a lot still needs to be done if the

identified ethnic 'gap' is to be closed. The review further suggests that raising Black children's attainment is challenging and that even though government legislations stipulate that schools must raise it, research has shown that there is no simple way to address Black children's underachievement. Raising Black children's achievement may require changes in the schools' pedagogical practices, i.e. teaching and learning, and adapting the curriculum to suit the needs and heritage of Black children, and a change in teachers' attitudes towards Black children, together with a better understanding of the impact of school effects and processes on Black attainment. Importantly, however, any approach designed to improve Black children's educational outcomes should consider the roles of all stakeholders including the school, the LA, national government, parents and their children, and the Black community as well. The literature suggests that an interventionist approach that attempts to effectively involve all of these constituents to solicit their perspectives and roles, by engaging them in concerted, genuine and transparent debate about the education of Black children, is more likely to succeed in raising Black children's achievement.

Chapter 3 - Evaluation methodology

This evaluation is limited to the period 2006-2008 of the BCA Programme. The evaluation sought to identify the effectiveness and impact of the various elements of the BCA Programme (see Introduction), and to highlight practices that have a particular impact on enhancing Black children's attainment.

Specifically the evaluation aimed to:

1.   chart the awareness of a sample of the Black children in the 20 LAs of their heritage and identity

2.   evaluate the engagement of these children in their learning

3.   examine and analyse the culture and ethos of a sample of schools in the programme

4.   describe and analyse the leadership and management of these schools

5.   analyse these schools' approaches to teaching and learning

6.   evaluate the local partnerships between these schools and the EMA strategy, PNS and the School Improvement services

7.   examine the impact of the pilot on the work of EMA and PNS consultants

8.   examine the extent to which schools regard these policies and practices as sustainable and how they might develop them

9.   analyse and report on changes in practice and policy at the level of classroom, school and Local Authority that have had an effect on Black children

10. analyse and report on those conditions and aspects of the policy that has affected positively or otherwise, change in these schools.

The evaluation consisted of qualitative data collected between 2007 and 2008 from four case study local authorities and seven case study schools, and from Primary National Strategies staff who were interviewed in the first and second year of the evaluation.

Selection of case study local authorities and schools

Four case study local authorities were selected according to length of time in the Programme (two local authorities from Phase 1 that started in 2005 and two from Phase 2 - that started in the autumn of 2006). Selection of the local authorities also sought to reflect the various distributions of the Black school population and a geographical spread of those authorities involved in the BCA Programme.

The intention with regard to the Phase 1 local authorities was to include a school that had started in Phase 1 and one that had joined in Phase 2, but this was not possible in one of the Phase 1 local authorities selected.

The BCA Programme schools in the selected case study local authorities were invited to take part in the evaluation. There was an expectation that eight schools (two from each of the four local authorities) would consent to taking part in the evaluation, and that participating schools would vary in size, ethnic and socio-economic mix. Six schools self-selected into the evaluation, while a seventh school in consultation with the evaluation team and their local

authority, agreed to participate. However, one of the schools that had originally self-selected later withdrew their consent, although it is not known why. This meant that only six schools took part in the first year of the evaluation. In the autumn term of the second year of the evaluation (following further consultation with the local authority concerned) the participation of a seventh school was secured[6].

School data collection

Semi-structured interviews and focus groups were used to collect data from the case study schools over two years (see Appendix I). In Year 1 school data collection concentrated on Black children in Years 2 and 5. However, it should be noted that this focus was varied in one school owing to the concentration of the BCA Programme in Years 1 and 2, with second year interviews targeting Years 2 and 3. This was a condition of this school consenting to taking part in the evaluation.

Focusing on Year 2 provided an opportunity to explore the transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2, whilst Year 5 offered an insight into the lead into Key Stage 2 national assessment tests. In Year 2 of the evaluation, children who were interviewed in Years 2 and 5 were (as far as possible[7]) interviewed in Years 3 and 6.

In each school, interviews took place usually with the headteacher, lead co-ordinator of the BCA Programme (if that person was not the headteacher), teachers and teaching assistants (from the designated year groups). Interviews were sought with the Chair of governors in case study schools, but this was not always possible. Focus groups were conducted with Black children and parents / carers of Black children, that is except for one school where the children's focus groups consisted of children from Black, Asian and White backgrounds because of the school's approach to the BCA Programme. Parent / carer interviews / focus groups took place at the start or end of the school day. Unfortunately, these timings did not always coincide with parent/carer availability, and therefore may have prevented parents/carers participating in larger numbers[8]; this is particularly applicable to the second year of the evaluation as fewer parents / carers took part.

The fieldwork for Year 1 of the evaluation was conducted during the summer term of 2007. Year 2's fieldwork was conducted during the spring and summer terms of 2008. In both years of the evaluation (with the exception of one school), two days were spent collecting data in each school[9].

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[6] Feedback from schools that declined to be involved in the evaluation suggests that some Phase 2 schools were put off by the fact that they were new to the BCA Programme and had had insufficient time to implement achievement strategies before being asked to be evaluated. Some schools were unaware that there was going to be an external evaluation, some had experienced reduced staffing capacity owing to staff illness / turnover, and a few of the schools contacted were taking part in other initiatives that were also being evaluated.

[7] Efforts were made to conduct the focus groups with children that had previously participated in the first year evaluation fieldwork, but some of these children were absent or not available on the days research was undertaken in the case study schools.

[8] In one school 14 parents agreed to attend a parent/carer focus group but only four parents attended on the day. The parents who attended raised the timing of the focus group meeting as a difficulty. These parents revealed their preference for an evening meeting.

[9] The seventh case study school agreed to be involved in the evaluation in the autumn term of 2007. With DCSF consent, a reduced amount of fieldwork was conducted in this school in December 2007. Therefore one day was spent in the school observing targeted BCA programme children in Year 4 being supported by a teaching assistant with responsibility for ethnic minority achievement (EMA) and one with responsibility for English as an Additional language (EAL) supporting Year 1 pupils. Discussions were held with the deputy head that also had responsibility for EMA and EAL in the school. This provided an overview of achievement in the school, key concerns and the school's approach to raising Black children's achievement. School photographs of cultural evenings held by the school were shared with the researcher who visited the school, and informal discussions were held with two staff members about some of the culturally inclusive activities the school had engaged in.

The focus of the school interviews/focus groups is set out in Table 1. While the first year data collection concentrated on developing an understanding of school culture / ethos and practice, the second year data gathering allowed for changes in schools and staff understanding and practice to be examined.

Table 1 - School data collection

Data collected in Year 1:	Areas covered
Headteacher	School culture and ethos; leadership, management Approaches to teaching and learning
BCA co-ordinator (if not headteacher)	School culture and ethos; partnership with LA; changes in classroom practice
Year 2, Year 5 teachers	School culture and ethos; permeation of practice and policy; approaches to teaching and learning
Year 2, Year 5 teaching assistants	School culture and ethos; practice and policy; approaches to teaching and learning
School Governor	School culture and ethos; leadership, management
Focus groups	
Parents	Leadership; awareness of policies, practices
2 groups of Year 5 children	Attitudes to teaching and learning, awareness of targets; awareness of the BCA Programme; identity and self-awareness
2 groups Year 2 children	Attitudes to teaching and learning; awareness of targets; awareness of the BCA Programme; identity and self-awareness
Observation of lessons	Classroom practice; ethos
Class questionnaires	Identity and self-awareness; attitudes to school
Data collected in Year 2:	**Areas covered**
Headteacher	Issues as in Phase 1, but with emphasis on perceptions of change in policies and practices; in achievement; on policy effects; impact and potential for sustainable development
Specialist consultants	
Year 3, Year 6 teachers	
Year 3, Year 6 teaching assistants	
School Governor	
Focus groups	
Parents	Issues in Phase 1; but with awareness of changes in classroom policy and practice
2 groups of Year 6 children (seen in Phase 1 as Year 5)	
2 groups Year 3 children(seen in Phase 1 as Year 2)	

Tables 2 and 3 provide details of the school data collected. Across both years of the evaluation a total of **80** school staff, **194** children and **38** parent / carers participated in the evaluation research. The majority of the school staff interviewed were from White backgrounds. Two of the seven headteachers were Black and in one school most of the teachers and teaching assistants that participated in the evaluation research were from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds. Most of the parent / carers interviewed were Black with a small number of White parents/carers of Mixed heritage children.

In addition to the school data collected via interviews and focus groups, data was also collected using a class questionnaire and via classroom observations. A short **class questionnaire** (see Appendix I) was distributed to whole class groups in Years 2 and Year 5 (not just Black children) in the case study schools during the first year of the evaluation. The questionnaire aimed to ascertain from children in these year groups their attitudes (likes / dislikes) to their school work/learning, school culture/ethos and their perceptions of their

behaviour. The intention was to compare the whole class responses with those obtained from Black children who participated in the focus groups. There was an expectation that the questionnaire responses would be compared by gender and ethnicity. As such schools were asked to provide information regarding the gender and ethnic group of the children who completed the questionnaire, but in some instances this data was not provided which made overall comparisons difficult. In total **416** (218 Year 2 and 198 Year 5) children from Asian, Black and White backgrounds completed the classroom questionnaire. However, the absence of ethnicity (and gender) information in all instances makes it difficult to indicate the precise numbers who completed the questionnaire from Asian, Black and White backgrounds, and the numbers of males and females. Where the questionnaire results are discussed in chapter 7, the background information provided is only given for the children for whom data was obtained.

Four schools completed the questionnaire. Most children filled out the questionnaire during their lessons, while a few were completed with the aid of researchers. Although the questionnaire worked well with Year 5 children, researcher observations indicated that some younger aged children found completing the questionnaire difficult. The questionnaire had been designed to be accessible to younger children for example, by asking them to colour in faces with smiles or not. However, sometimes the younger children coloured in smiley faces in the same line while answering a different question and had to be guided through the questions they had missed. The lack of questionnaire completion by three schools further suggests that some schools found this an onerous task. As a result of these noted difficulties, it was agreed by the evaluation steering group that the questionnaire should not be employed during the second year of the evaluation.

Classroom observations

At least two classes were observed in each school in the designated year groups in each case study school (see Table 1). The classroom observations aimed to develop an understanding of how schools / teachers recognised and valued diverse cultures / heritages and how children responded to lessons where this occurred. The observations focused on interactions between teachers and majority and minority ethnic children, and interactions between diverse groups of children.

Raising Achievement Plans

Copies of school Raising Achievement Plans (RAPs) were collected from the case study schools. RAPs were informed by school audits and provided an insight into the activities that case study schools had or were intending to implement.

Local authority data collection

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with **14** local authority staff (see Tables 2 and 3) responsible for the BCA Programme including those with responsibilities for the Primary National strategy, School Improvement and ethnic minority achievement. In Year 1, participant views were sought as to local authority policy and practice in raising Black achievement prior to their involvement in the BCA Programme; local authority perceptions of why they had participated in the BCA Programme[10]; how schools were selected for inclusion in the BCA Programme; the culture and ethos of these schools, and how the local authority managed the partnership with schools.

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[10] Although the LAs were carefully selected by the DfES (now DCSF) and the National Strategies (based on attainment data) for participation in the BCA Programme, the evaluation was concerned to ascertain the ways in which the LAs accounted for their involvement.

Towards the end of 2007, short update interviews were conducted with the case study local authorities to ascertain if there had been any changes in BCA Programme focus in the case study schools and / or local authority, and to identify any issues of concern.

In the second year of the evaluation, interviews were conducted with local authority staff to ascertain their perceptions of monitoring the local partnership, changes in school understanding and practice, factors affecting this, impact of the BCA Programme at local authority and school level, and their thoughts as to the sustainability of the BCA Programme.

National Strategies data collection

In the first year of the evaluation an initial group meeting was held with representatives from Primary National Strategies responsible for the BCA Programme. This provided important background and contextual information regarding the aims and objectives of the BCA Programme, the culture and ethos of the BCA Programme local authorities and an overview of local partnerships. Brief update interviews conducted at the end of 2007 provided an insight into any changes in direction/focus of the BCA Programme, perceptions of change in local authority practice and policy and/or any issues of concern. Interviews conducted in the second year of the evaluation allowed for a review of the year's work.

A National Strategies meeting for BCA Programme consultants and managers was attended in March 2008. While attendance at this meeting was for observational purposes only, it provided an insight into the new materials (launched at the meeting) that the National Strategies had developed to help schools and local authorities to further raise the achievement of Black children. Another observational opportunity was provided by attendance at the final 'sharing practice and developing futures' meeting held in May 2009 for BCA Programme consultants and managers. Attendance at this meeting provided an insight into the experiences of a range of schools and local authorities that had participated in the BCA Programme, and the learning opportunities they provided for those in attendance; especially in relation to the ways in which developed resources and teaching and learning strategies (e.g. in numeracy, literacy, a culturally diverse curriculum) could be used or adapted to meet the needs of particular school and local authority contexts (e.g. where the percentage of Black children is low). Participants also shared examples of data analysis and auditing strategies together with the positive impact they regarded their involvement in the BCA Programme to have had.

Data analysis

The qualitative interview and focus group data was transcribed verbatim and analysed using the Nvivo qualitative software package, which allowed the categories and terms used by the interviewees and focus group respondents, and emerging patterns and themes to be coded, and further interrogated. The findings were analysed in light of the evaluation remit outlined above with a view to identifying the main sources of changes in perceptions and understanding in relation to Black children's achievement, and identifying any similarities, differences or tensions in school and local authority perspectives, compared to understandings derived prior to school/local authority involvement in the BCA Programme.

Ethical considerations

All of the interviewees and focus group participants were given assurances that their confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained. Thus schools and local authorities were given pseudonyms. However, it should be noted that some of the case study respondents (schools and local authorities) were concerned that their viewpoints might be identifiable. The extent of this concern was exemplified by four respondents in one case study authority (school and local authority) who agreed to being interviewed only on the proviso that their

interviews were not tape-recorded. In recognition of the identification concerns expressed by these respondents (and a few others) the data discussed in this report is done so without any attribution being made to a particular school and / or local authority or their location.

Weaknesses in the evaluation methodology

Two key weaknesses were identified. Firstly, despite the fact that this was an in-depth evaluation of case studies in four local authorities and seven schools and it offered an insight into some of the activities/practices undertaken by these schools and local authorities, the freedom schools were given to implement their BCA activities according to identified school need, combined with the relatively short timeframe within which the majority of the BCA Programme schools had participated in the BCA Programme (by the time the evaluation commenced), and the lack of time for the BCA Programme to be embedded in participating schools, made it difficult for an accurate assessment to be made of the impact of the BCA Programme. This difficulty was further exacerbated by the fact that in some of the case study schools the BCA Programme was being implemented alongside other initiatives, which also makes it difficult to directly attribute improved changes in attainment to the BCA Programme.

Secondly, the BCA Programme materials launched in March 2008 were made available on 28th July, 2008, however, the remit of the evaluation did not extend to an analysis of the BCA Programme schools and local authorities use of these materials; nor did the evaluation cover the materials themselves.

Table 2 - Interviews and focus groups carried out in case study authorities and schools in 2007

LA.s	L.A Interviews	School cases	School interviews	Pupil focus groups	Parents/Carers
A	1 Two consultants 2 EMA advisor	A1	1 Headteacher 2 Teacher Year 5 3 Teacher Year 2 4 Teaching Assistant Year 5 5 Teaching Assistant Year 2 6 Chair of governors	Two focus groups Year 2 (6 children each - 12 total) Two focus groups Year 5 (6 children each - 12 total)	One parent focus group (3 parents)
		A2	1 Headteacher 2 Teacher co-ordinating the BCA Programme 3 Teacher Year 5 4 Teacher Year 2 5 Teaching Assistant Year 5 6 Teaching Assistant Year 2 7 Chair of governors	Two focus groups Year 2 (6 children each - 12 total) Two focus groups Year 5 (6 children each - 12 total)	One parent focus group (6 parents)
B	1 Consultant 2 Primary Strategy Manager	B1	1 Headteacher 2 Teacher Year 5 3 Teacher Year 2 4 Teaching Assistant Year 5 5 Teaching Assistant Year 2	Two focus groups Year 2 (7 children total) Two focus groups Year 5 (6 children total)	One parent focus group (3 parents)
		B2	1 Headteacher 2 EMA teacher 3 EAL TA (informal discussion) 4 Teacher Year 1 5 Teacher Year 2 6 Teaching Assistant Year 1 7 Teaching Assistant Year 2 8 Parent governor	One focus group Year 1 (6 children) One focus group Year 2 (6 children)	One parent focus group (2 parents) Two parent interviews
C	1 Consultant 2 EMA Manager 3 Primary Strategy Manager	C1	1 Headteacher 2 EMA teacher 3 Teacher Year 5 4 Teacher Year 2 5 Focus group: Year 2 & 5 TAs 6 Chair of governors	One focus group Year 2 (6 children total) Two focus group Year 5 (5 children total)	One parent focus group (2) One parent interview One grandparent interview
D	Consultant	D1	1 Headteacher 2 EAL/SEN Teacher 3 Teacher Year 5 4 Teacher Year 2 5 Teaching Assistant Year 5 6 Teaching Assistant Year 2 7 Teacher governor	One focus group Year 2 (13 children total) Two focus groups Year 5 (12 children total)	Two parent focus groups (one group with 4 parents and the other with 2)
Total number of interviews and focus groups	**8 LA staff**		**39**	**105 pupils**	**26**

Table 3 - Interviews and focus groups carried out in case study authorities and schools 2008					
LA	**LA interviews**	**School cases**	**School interviews**	**Pupil focus groups**	**Parent focus groups**
A	1. BCA consultant 2. BCA manager	A1	1.Headteacher 2. Deputy (lead BCA) 3. Teacher Year 3 4. Teacher Year 6 5. Teaching Assistant Year 3 6. Teaching Assistant Year 6 7. Chair of Governors 8. Every Child Matters Officer	1. Group of 7 Year 3 pupils 2. Group of 11 Year 6 pupils	1. Parent interview
		A2	1.Headteacher 2. BCA lead teacher 3. Teacher Year 3 4. Teacher Year 6 5. Teaching Assistant Year 6 6. Teaching Assistant Year 3	1. Group of 9 Year 3 pupils 2. Group with 9 Year 6 pupils	1. Group of 4 parents
B	BCA consultant	B1	1. Deputy headteacher 2. Teacher Year 3 3. Teacher Year 6 4. Teacher Governor	1. Group of 6 Year 3 pupils 2. Group of 6 Year 6 pupils	1. Parent interview 2. Paired parent interview (one of whom is also a parent governor)
		B2	1.Headteacher 2.BCA lead teacher 3.Teacher Year 2 4.Teacher Year 3 5.Teaching Assistant Year 2 6.Teaching Assistant Year 3	1. Group of 12 pupils (6 Year 2 and 6 Year 3)	
C	**1.** BCA consultant 2. BCA manager	C1	1.Headteacher 2.BCA lead teacher 3.Teacher Year 3 4.Teacher Year 6 5.Year 5/6 intervention teacher 6.Teaching Assistant responsible for BCA children	1. Group of 5 Year 6 pupils 2. Group of 6 Year 3 pupils	1. Parent interview 2. Parent interview 3. Parent interview
D	BCA consultant	D1	1. Headteacher 2. Teacher Year 3 3. Teacher Year 6 4. Teaching Assistant Year 3 5. Teaching Assistant Year 6 6. Teacher governor	1. Group of 6 Year 3 pupils 2. Group of 6 Year 6 pupils	1. Parent interview (also a parent governor)-
		D2	1. Deputy head 2. Teacher Year 5 3. Teacher Year 5 4. EMA Teaching Assistant Year 4/5 5. EAL Teaching Assistant	1. Group of 6 Year 5 pupils	
No. of interviews & focus groups	**6**		**41**	**89**	**12**

Chapter 4 - Local authorities and schools in the BCA Programme

This chapter reviews the profile of the local authorities and schools involved in the BCA Programme including their type, the profile of children in the schools and local authorities, and the achievement levels in the schools and local authorities at the start of the evaluation period.

Profile of Local Authorities involved in the BCA Programme

National Strategies in conjunction with the DfES (now the DCSF) originally identified the 20 funded local authorities within which the BCA Programme schools were to be located. The identification of local authorities was linked to Black children's underachievement, representation of the target population and local authority capability to support the BCA Programme in schools. Before local authorities were offered the BCA Programme, it was reviewed by National Strategies Senior Regional Directors. This resulted in one local authority declining the offer due to capacity issues.

Table 4 provides an indication of the percentage of children by ethnic group and by local authority in primary schools in the BCA Programme authorities.

Table 4 - Maintained Primary Schools in the 20 funded BCA Programme Authorities: Percentage of children by declared ethnic group[11], January 2006, by Local Authority

Rank order*	Local Authority	% White and Black Caribbean	% White and Black African	% Black Caribbean	% Black African	% Black Other	% Black	%Total Black & Black mixed	% White	% Asian	% Chinese	% any other ethnic group	Total number of children
1	Lambeth	5.0	1.5	20.3	23.5	4.3	48.1	54.6	31.5	4.6	0.7	3.3	15,152
2	Southwark	3.4	1.3	12.4	29.5	4.4	46.3	51.0	32.8	4.7	1.3	5.2	17,498
3	Hackney	3.5	1.1	16.0	21.6	2.9	40.5	45.1	31.7	13.2	0.4	5.8	13,565
5	Haringey	3.6	1.2	13.1	18.7	1.6	33.4	38.2	41.2	6.9	0.6	7.6	16,661
6	Brent	2.0	0.9	12.9	16.2	2.6	31.7	34.6	24.6	28.8	0.4	6.7	17,926
8	Newham	1.7	0.9	5.7	19.4	2.0	27.1	29.7	18.9	42.1	0.4	4.4	23,014
9	Wandsworth	4.3	1.1	10.8	13.0	2.7	26.5	31.9	43.7	14.4	0.6	3.1	13,089
11	Croydon	4.1	1.0	11.2	10.1	2.9	24.2	29.3	50.9	12.1	0.4	1.7	23,556
13	Waltham Forest	3.4	1.0	9.6	9.9	3.0	22.5	26.9	40.0	24.6	0.4	2.4	16,441
15	Enfield	1.6	0.6	7.0	12.2	1.3	20.4	22.6	56.7	7.8	0.4	5.3	21,620
18	Ealing	2.4	0.8	5.7	12.4	1.3	19.4	22.6	34.1	28.5	0.5	9.4	19,693
22	Harrow	2.1	0.8	4.3	8.1	1.9	14.3	17.2	34.7	37.7	0.7	3.0	16,239
26	Manchester	3.0	0.9	2.8	6.6	1.2	10.6	14.5	60.5	16.5	0.8	3.7	30,450
28	Birmingham	2.9	0.4	5.3	4.1	1.0	10.4	13.7	47.1	32.8	0.3	2.1	80,229
33	Nottingham City	5.7	0.5	4.4	2.4	1.1	7.8	14.0	67.0	13.2	0.3	1.2	17,864
36	Wolverhampton	4.6	0.3	5.0	1.4	1.0	7.4	12.3	63.5	19.6	0.2	0.9	17,216
45	Sheffield	2.1	0.4	0.8	3.0	0.3	4.2	6.7	79.8	8.7	0.3	2.0	33,754
46	Leeds	1.5	0.3	1.2	1.7	0.7	3.7	5.5	81.4	9.2	0.5	1.0	47,516
51	Northamptonshire	1.2	0.4	0.8	1.3	0.4	2.5	4.1	90.1	3.2	0.3	0.4	46,646
63	Kirklees	2.7	0.2	1.0	0.6	0.1	1.7	4.6	69.3	22.3	0.2	0.5	28,117
	ENGLAND	*1.2*	*0.4*	*1.5*	*2.5*	*0.5*	*4.4*	*6.0*	*81.3*	*7.9*	*0.3*	*1.1*	*3,349,050*
	LONDON	*2.5*	*1.0*	*6.7*	*11.9*	*2.0*	*20.6*	*24.1*	*48.1*	*17.2*	*0.7*	*4.4*	*485,450*
	WEST MIDLANDS	*1.9*	*0.2*	*1.8*	*1.4*	*0.4*	*3.6*	*5.7*	*77.0*	*13.4*	*0.2*	*0.8*	*373,370*
	7 other English regions	*0.8*	*0.3*	*0.4*	*0.8*	*0.2*	*1.3*	*2.4*	*89.0*	*5.1*	*0.3*	*0.5*	*2,490,230*

Source: *Schools and Pupils in England: January 2006 Final.* DfES, 2006, Table 32
* Rank order: all 150 Local Authorities ranked by proportion of Primary School pupils of Black Ethnicity

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[11] Percentages do not add up to 100 due to unclassified and non declared ethnicities which have been removed.

The local authorities varied in terms of Black ethnicity and educational attainment amongst Black children.

Ethnicity: The authorities were made up of very different balances of children from different ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of Black children in each authority varied from 54.6% of school children in Lambeth to 4.1% of school children in Northamptonshire. The balance between those who described themselves as Black African and Black Caribbean varied in the different local authorities: in some authorities the two groups were evenly balanced, in others one group outnumbered another. In some local authorities such as Haringey, Black children were the main minority ethnic group. In others, such as Ealing or Newham, there are more children from Asian than from Black backgrounds. But although this is the case, some of the faith and the BCA Programme schools had over 85% of children represented from Black backgrounds.

Educational attainment: The attainment gaps in these local authorities also varied. For example, in 2005, the attainment gap between all Black children and White British children in the percentage gaining level 4 or above in English at Key Stage 2 varied from one percentage point in Wolverhampton and Southwark to 19 percentage points in Sheffield and Harrow. In the same year, a greater proportion of Black children in Newham and Nottingham City obtained level 4 and above in English than did White British children. The picture was subtly different again for Maths and Science and different again when looking at the different Black groups.

The literature review (see chapter 2) indicates that Black children's achievement is cross-cut by a large number of factors, and that economic deprivation is but one key factor. Rates of economic deprivation also varied in the 20 local authorities.

Schools involved in the BCA Programme

The number of primary schools that participated in the BCA Programme across the local authorities ranged from one to ten[12], but on average (i.e. in seven LAs) there were four schools represented. The majority of the participating schools were primary with approximately 10% designated as Infant, First or Junior schools. Around one quarter of the schools were either voluntary aided or voluntary controlled. This is similar to the proportions nationally.

The schools that took part in the BCA Programme varied greatly. This variation covered the proportion of Black children in the schools, the proportion of children eligible for FSMs, and the proportion of children whose first language was known or believed not to be English. The schools also had a wide range of achievement profiles. The sections below compare data about schools in the BCA Programme with other schools in the same LAs, and other school nationally.

Number of Black children in the BCA Programme schools

The proportion of Black children in the schools included in the BCA Programme varied from less than 5% in schools in Nottingham City and Kirklees, to more than 80% in several London schools. The balance of children from Black African and Black Caribbean backgrounds also varied. For example, in three schools, children from Black African backgrounds made up more than 80% of all children from Black backgrounds, while in eight

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[12] Three LAs had 10 schools participating in the BCA Programme. This number of schools is much higher than the recommended five schools local authorities were advised to work with given the level of supporting funding of between £4-5,000 available per school.

schools, Black Caribbean children made up more than 80% of all school children from Black backgrounds.

In most local authorities, the proportion of Black children in the BCA Programme schools was higher than in the authority as a whole. In some local authorities, this difference was very marked: for example, while Black children make up 10% of school aged children in Birmingham, 33% of children in the BCA Programme schools in Birmingham were Black.

Free school meal (FSM) eligibility[13]

The proportion of Black children eligible for free school meals in the BCA Programme schools varied from over 60% to less than 5% in 2005. Of the schools involved in the BCA Programme, 30% of children were eligible for free school meals. This is substantially higher than the national average for primary schools of 16.9%; due mainly to the concentration of the BCA Programme in urban authorities. In four local authorities, the mean level of free school meals in the BCA Programme schools was statistically significantly lower than in the authority as a whole. In these local authorities, the schools chosen to participate in the BCA Programme were less disadvantaged than schools overall in the authority. The largest difference was in Lambeth, where the mean level of FSM in the BCA Programme schools was 23% compared to 37% in the borough as a whole. In fourteen local authorities the level of FSMs among children in BCA Programme schools was higher than among school children in the local authority generally, with the largest differences in Southwark, Sheffield and Brent.

Special Educational Needs

In 2005 the proportion of children with special education needs varied considerably between the BCA Programme schools. There were a few schools where more than 40% of children had school action or school action plus plans in 2006, while more than half of schools had less than 20% of children with school action or school action plus in 2006. Of all schools in the BCA Programme, 20% of children had school action, school action plus or a statement of special needs in 2005. This is similar to the mean of 18% in all primary schools in 2005. In six local authorities (Ealing, Kirklees, Lambeth, Newham, Wandsworth and Wolverhampton) the BCA Programme schools had lower levels of SEN than the average for that local authority. In four local authorities (Birmingham, Nottingham City, Sheffield and Waltham Forest), the level of SEN in the BCA Programme schools was higher than that in the local authority generally.

English as an Additional Language

The proportion of children whose first language was known or believed to be other than English in the BCA Programme schools varied from 93% to 0 in 2005. In four local authorities (Lambeth, Ealing, Newham, Birmingham) the BCA Programme schools had fewer children whose first language is known or believed to be other than English compared to schools in these local authorities as a whole. However, in most local authorities, the BCA Programme schools had a higher percentage of children for whom English is an additional language compared to all local authority schools. In Haringey, Leeds, Manchester, Nottingham City and Wolverhampton, the BCA Programme schools had more than 15 percentage points more children (for whom English is an additional language) compared to other schools in the local authority.

Overall: In Lambeth and Newham the BCA Programme schools had lower levels of FSM, SEN and English as an additional language than did schools on average.

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[13] It is worth noting that the FSM variable picks up and represents all those eligible children whose parents apply for FSMs, not all possible eligible children.

School achievement

In 2005, 75% of children in the BCA Programme schools scored level 4 and above in English, 69% in Maths and 82% in Science which was lower than the national proportions of 79%, 75%, and 87% respectively. The average Key Stage 2 points score per pupil was 27.1, compared to 27.7 nationally.

There was considerable variation among the BCA Programme schools, with some schools in which all children achieved level 4 or above, and some schools where fewer than 50% of children achieved level 4 and above. In one school for example, 30% of children achieved level 4 in English and in another, 92% achieved a level 4.

In around one quarter of the local authorities, the BCA Programme schools performed above the local authority average at Key Stage 2 whilst in another quarter, schools performed below the local authority average at Key Stage 2.

Exceptions in educational attainment

In most of the BCA Programme schools, Black children attained less well at Key Stage 2 in 2005 than White children, and less well than the school average. There were a few schools (less than 10%) in which Black children achieved better than White children and better than the school average at Key Stage 2 in 2005. In most cases the Black children in these schools had still achieved less well than the national average. Two schools were exceptions: in these schools in 2005 Black children attained more highly than White children, exceeding the national average and with better value-added for Black children than for White children.

Ethnic group differences

The attainment gap between Black children and the average attainment at Key Stage 2, and between Black children, and White British children varied considerably across the BCA Programme schools. Overall, Black children in the BCA Programme schools achieved much lower point scores at Key Stage 2 than White children. The levels of achievement of the different ethnic groups in the BCA Programme schools were very similar to the levels of achievement of the different ethnic groups in English schools as a whole. This means that across the BCA Programme sample, the attainment gaps between Black children and White children were similar to the attainment gaps seen in national figures in 2005.

When looking at the average points score at Key Stage 2 in 2005 for the different groups of Black children in the BCA Programme schools, Black Caribbean children did least well.

There was a similar pattern in the value-added scores for the different ethnic groups in the BCA Programme schools. In 2005, the mean value added score across the BCA Programme schools was positive for White British children (indicating that on average, White British children had outperformed the score expected from their Key Stage 1 marks. However, the mean value-added score was negative for children from Black backgrounds, indicating that, on average, they had scored less well than the score expected from their Key Stage1 marks. Children from Black African backgrounds had the highest mean value-added scores of the Black groups, children from Any Other Black backgrounds had the lowest.

Summary

The local authorities and primary schools involved in the BCA Programme varied in size and Black ethnic make-up, FSM eligibility, and had different results profiles. The baseline data revealed an achievement gap among the children in the BCA Programme schools. In 2005, Black children in the BCA Programme schools achieved less well than White children in the

same schools. While there were achievement and progress gaps at the overall level, not all individual schools had achievement and/or progress gaps. Value-added measures for Black children were lower than for White children, and lower than the overall value-added mean in the sample.

Chapter 5 - Case study local authorities and schools

This chapter provides an overview of the case study local authorities and primary schools that participated in the evaluation. It explores their reasons for taking part in the BCA Programme and the evaluation.

In comprehending local authority reasoning, it is worth reiterating that National Strategies along with the then DfES initially identified the local authorities within which the BCA Programme schools were located. The identification of local authorities was linked to Black children's underachievement, representation of the target population and local authority capability to support the BCA Programme in schools. Nonetheless, the case study data suggests that local authorities saw their participation differently and this is exemplified below in the reasons they cited for taking part in the BCA Programme, and the role they saw the programme playing in their own commitment to raise Black children's achievement.

Profile of case study local authorities

The local authorities participating in the evaluation varied in their Black population characteristics such that one had a large Black population, two a moderate level and one a low proportion.

Reason for participating in the BCA Programme

A number of reasons were given for taking part in the BCA Programme. One Phase 1 local authority had prior experience as a pilot authority for the secondary African-Caribbean achievement programme and saw the primary BCA Programme as part of furthering its commitment to improving Black children's achievement. The local authority considered the BCA Programme appropriate because despite having experienced raised attainment for its Black children (African and African-Caribbean) since the late 1990s/early 2000s, with some exceeding national expectations, the local authority was nevertheless concerned to ensure the achievement of Black children, but particularly African-Caribbean and Somali children. Prior to its involvement in the BCA Programme, the local authority had put in place a series of targets to raise African-Caribbean achievement in national assessment tests at Key Stage 2[14]. The BCA Programme was viewed by the staff interviewed as 'building on' previous work and reflecting the local authority's commitment to improving Black children's achievement.

Similar to the Phase 1 local authority outlined above, the second Phase 1 local authority had witnessed improved attainment for its Black children (namely African and African-Caribbean heritage) with some exceeding national expectations. However, the local authority remained concerned about the attainment of African-Caribbean children. This local authority had also previously been a pilot authority for the secondary African-Caribbean achievement programme. The primary strategy manager saw the primary BCA Programme as integral to the local authority's commitment to raising Black children's achievement. He also regarded its participation in the BCA Programme as providing scope, in conjunction with other local authority achievement schemes that it had running, to create a 'whole city' strategy for raising attainment across different underachieving groups. This conception of a 'common' achievement strategy was underpinned by the local authority's comprehension of the government's 'personalisation agenda', and its own desire to build capacity within the authority to address underachievement on a larger scale, but without the need to increase the number of local authority staff recruited, as the primary strategy manager explained:

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[14] This Key Stage 2 project was followed by the implementation of an achievement project in a small number of schools aimed at improving GCSE outcomes for Black children at Key Stage 4; thus reflecting the local authority's commitment to raising Black children's achievement across primary and secondary aged groups.

What we are trying to do is to connect our different pilots that are running into one central piece of work. This is not to minimalise particular issues around particular under-performing groups, but we've dealt with it from the sort of personalisation agenda. So we're saying whether it's African-Caribbean children, White underachievers, EAL speakers, there are common things within the schools that come through in all the pilot materials for all these different under-performing groups. So quality of leadership and management, quality of teaching and learning in school, the breadth and range of enrichment curriculum, support that's offered for parents or links with parents. So we've got key themes that we've taken from a DfES personalisation agenda and said: 'whatever your under-performing group, what is there within the National Strategies materials that will support that particular group?'; but recognising that there are some common threads. It's really because we just don't have the capacity … to deal with a whole range of different pilots. (PSM)

In addition to building capacity amongst local authority achievement consultants, a key expectation within the second Phase 1 local authority was that capacity would be built amongst school staff, for instance, headteachers. It was anticipated that headteachers of schools participating in the BCA Programme would develop knowledge and skills (in some cases enhanced skills) that could be used within a consultant role[15] to support other schools in raising achievement. The primary strategy manger contended that capacity would be further built by headteachers and key teachers in the BCA Programme schools attending local authority training (i.e. in addition to that provided by the BCA Programme) and staff sharing ideas from the BCA Programme with other achievement 'pilots'[16] and vice versa. This sharing of expertise across 'pilots' was considered by the primary strategy manager as central to the authority utilising its resources 'more strategically' and 'connect[ing]' learning outcomes from a range of achievement pilots. However, one of the consequences of the local authority's emphasis on more strategic working is that for the local authority the BCA Programme was not viewed as a stand alone project, but as part of a portfolio of achievement pilots that were operating to different time-scales. During the first year of the evaluation the primary strategy manager was aware that these different emphases and timescales could have implications for the local authority working to the BCA Programme timescale as set out by the National Strategies:

It doesn't sit comfortably with the time-scale that is running underneath that for the National Strategies against the pilot, but we've made that point all the way along that the pilot has to sit with the strategic work that we're doing because we've other pilots sitting in that group. (PSM)

In common with the two Phase 1 local authorities outlined above, one of the Phase 2 local authorities had experience of the secondary achievement programme. In light of this experience, the local authority considered its participation in the primary BCA Programme as a 'natural' progression. Discussions with the primary strategy manager, senior EMA and BCA consultant revealed that the local authority regarded the BCA Programme as assisting the authority to facilitate its 'joined up' way of working with the authority's primary strategy team and delivering a 'shared agenda' on raising attainment/progression for all children. The desire for 'joined up' ways of working was largely influenced by the local authority's need to engender an understanding amongst schools that Black children's achievement is integral to all areas of achievement and should not be viewed as an 'add on'. The local authority expressed concerns about the achievement of dual heritage Mixed White and Black

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[15] Two of the headteachers of BCA Programme schools were already acting in such a capacity owing to the expertise they had developed over previous years in raising Black children's achievement.

[16] It is worth noting that because when the local authority became involved in the BCA Programme it was known as a 'pilot', the local authority continued to refer to it as a pilot initiative even when it was rolled out to 15 more authorities, and became designated as a Programme. Furthermore, they also referred to other achievement initiatives that were not fully integrated into the local authority as 'pilots'.

Caribbean children at Key Stage 2, and at the same time acknowledged that trends in achievement for Black African children were more 'difficult to identify' (PSM) as this group was relatively new to the authority. Nonetheless, the Black African children were known to have English as an additional language (EAL) needs and as such required extra support.

The fourth local authority (also Phase 2) was concerned about African-Caribbean children newly arrived from the Caribbean who were perceived by the local authority to have EAL needs. The attainment of African children notably in the foundation stage was also a concern. The primary strategy manager for the local authority pointed out that the local authority was keen to be involved in the BCA Programme because although 'there was a lot of work going on' in relation to raising Black children's achievement, the work was 'disjointed' because there wasn't an overview' as 'the primary strategy team was separate to the EMA team'. As the primary strategy manager explained participating in the BCA Programme was a way of helping the local authority to 'identify what needs to be done (to address underachievement) in a more coherent way'. It was also viewed as a way of enabling the local authority to help schools 'build their own capacity' and comprehend more clearly what they need to do in order to 'carry on and sustain development' (PSM).

All of the local authorities welcomed their involvement in the BCA Programme, as they saw it as enabling them to continue to make improvements in Black children's achievement.

How the local authorities selected schools to participate in the BCA Programme

One Phase 1 local authority had initially selected four schools to participate in the BCA Programme. However, the local authority found it difficult to maintain their original school selection as three schools withdrew in January 2006 after starting in September 2005. These schools were involved in other local authority intervention initiatives, and were said by the BCA manager interviewed to be 'overwhelmed' by the expectations of the BCA Programme, and to have had 'longstanding' school improvement issues that prevented them from fulfilling their BCA Programme commitment. The four schools that eventually participated in the BCA Programme from this Phase 1 local authority included one from the original selection (that started in September 2005), two that commenced in January 2006 and one that started in January 2007 under Phase 2 of the BCA Programme. Owing to staffing changes in the local authority it was not possible to ascertain the precise criteria for selection of the Phase 1 and 2 schools, as the local authority staff interviewed were not in post when the initial selections were made. Discussions with local authority representatives revealed that cohort size was a key factor in the original Phase 1 school selection (these schools had large numbers of African-Caribbean children, which fitted in with the original expectation of Phase 1 participation). For the subsequent school selections, identified attainment gaps together with school capacity to support the BCA Programme (i.e. not being in receipt of any other interventions) were influential aspects and were exemplified by the two schools that participated in the case study evaluation. It is important to note that the number of Black children in the three schools that eventually consented to being involved in the BCA Programme within the local authority was much smaller than in the three withdrawn schools.

The second Phase 1 local authority initially selected four schools to take part in the BCA Programme in September 2005. This was partly based on the number of African-Caribbean heritage children attending the schools, and primary schools where it was felt the BCA Programme would have an impact. But primarily they were schools where it was argued that the 'leadership were aware and were committed to the idea of raising achievement for African-Caribbean children' (Consultant). It was further argued that an existing commitment amongst these four schools meant that the school leadership did not have to be convinced by the local authority that the BCA Programme was a worthwhile initiative. After this initial selection two schools withdrew from the BCA Programme because of staffing capacity issues. This left two Phase 1 participating schools who the primary strategy manager stated

had 'significant numbers' of African-Caribbean children and who had 'a sound history of raising attainment for African-Caribbean children'. In the spring term of 2007 a further six schools[17] in the authority commenced in Phase Two of the BCA Programme, but unlike the Phase 1 schools who were selected by the local authority, these schools were reported by the primary strategy manager to have self identified for the BCA Programme from their own data analysis (as part of another achievement initiative running within the local authority) of children's achievement within their schools. This data analysis by the four additional schools (and local authority) suggested that for example, some primary aged African-Caribbean children were 'not switched on', that they 'underachieved the most … more than two points below the national average', and that they were unlikely to succeed without some additional support. Self-identification by the schools was considered vital by the local authority as this indicated the schools desire and greater willingness to participate in the BCA Programme

The third local authority's selection of its four BCA Programme schools was based on local authority initial analysis of attainment and value added data in schools with a Black population of at least 10% and data analysis of attainment gaps. Wider consultation within the local authority and with identified schools helped the local authority to select four schools that had the capacity (that is stable staffing and strong senior leadership) to support the implementation of the BCA Programme (which was a programme requirement), and where it was felt that the BCA Programme would have the most impact. When making their selection the local authority discounted schools that were involved in school improvement programmes. Despite this selection criteria, the senior EMA and BCA consultant pointed out that although the school senior leadership of one of the schools chosen for inclusion in the BCA Programme had favoured the school's involvement, school staff were reticent at the focus on Black children as the school had experienced increased attainment amongst Black children (especially boys) in comparison to White British boys in the school who were argued to be amongst the lowest achievers. The precise reason for this headteacher withdrawing his school from the BCA Programme is not known, but this left only three schools participating in the BCA Programme from this local authority.

The fourth local authority had 13 schools which participated in the BCA Programme. Ten of the schools commenced in March 2007 and a further three subsequently joined in October 2007. The primary strategy manager indicated that seven of the schools were initially selected according to their attainment and value added data for African-Caribbean and African children who were acknowledged by Ofsted to be underachieving. A further three schools then approached the local authority to take part, making 10. It was suggested that these 10 schools self selected into the BCA Programme after being informed by the local authority about funding that the authority had available for supporting the BCA Programme work. The primary strategy manager suggested that some of the schools were persuaded by the 'benefits of the whole school approach' which they saw the BCA Programme as offering. The BCA consultant also pointed out that one school had earlier 'requested help' as the school had 'tried everything' to raise Black children's achievement but 'nothing had worked'. While another school was reported by the local authority BCA consultant to have 'self selected' following attendance at a conference led by the consultant on Black achievement. Both the primary strategy manager and BCA consultant argued that the schools that sought involvement in the BCA Programme recognised that they had issues that needed addressing

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[17] It is important to note that the local authority had a strategic achievement group (SAG) that was concerned with helping schools to enhance the attainment of children (from diverse backgrounds) deemed to be underachieving. These six schools received support from this group. As a result of their involvement in SAG these six schools had identified particular issues that needed addressing, and as such, were not specifically derived from these schools conducting an audit as part of their participation in the BCA programme. It was expected that areas for improvement identified would be followed-up in these schools BCA Programme work. Given that these schools were part of the SAG, the Primary Strategy Manager regarded these schools as 'extended' to the BCA Programme. Being part of SAG also meant that these schools received support from consultants within the SAG as well as from the local authority BCA consultant.

in relation to Black achievement, but that they lacked appropriate strategies. And like the second local authority highlighted above, it was intimated by the primary strategy manager that the process of 'self selection' had 'encouraged schools to be more self evaluative' and to question, 'is this for me?', or to say, 'this could be for us because we've identified this problem'.

Commitment to raising achievement

Before exploring the profile of the case study schools it is salient to note that, across all of the local authorities there was evidence of a pre-existing commitment prior to their involvement in the BCA Programme to raising attainment amongst Black children as a whole (i.e. primary and secondary aged children), and that all of the local authorities had a range of experiences in facilitating Black achievement. In fulfilling this commitment, some local authorities had implemented, for example, a Black children's achievement strategy/action plan, developed training programmes for teachers/schools (including delivering 'tailor made' INSETs to address identified Black achievement needs) and supported inclusive curriculum development work. Some had also produced guidance documents on Black achievement. One of the local authorities had developed guidelines in relation to 'dual heritage' Black children whose achievement was a particular concern, whilst three pointed to extensive experience of research projects focusing on Black achievement, such as a long-term programme whereby African-Caribbean children were tracked through primary into secondary school. Another local authority had a project on Black African achievement running in a sample of primary and secondary schools where the achievement of Black African children was reported by the PSM to be exceeding national expectations, and the local authority's. One of these local authorities had initiated a number of projects focusing on attainment at Key Stages 3 and 4. It was also noticeable that one Phase 1 local authority had set up a strategic achievement group[18] that met twice a term with a group of schools the local authority had designated as 'underperforming' in order to explore effective methods of raising children's attainment.

Case study schools

Seven schools took part in the evaluation. Of these, two had a large pupil population (over 500), four were medium sized with between 300-400 children, and one was small. In one school 70% of the children were Black with 24 languages spoken and in another, English was an additional language for 80% of the children. The FSM eligibility in these schools ranged from average to above average.

Why Schools A1 and A2 participated in the BCA Programme

School A1 commenced in Phase 1, but was relatively new to the BCA Programme when compared with other Phase 1 schools. The headteacher said that as a 'successful' school, **School A1** had 'jumped on the opportunity' to get involved. For the headteacher, the BCA Programme represented an opportunity to continue to drive the school's attainment forward, and at the same time improve Black boys' achievement (particularly in relation to writing which the school had identified as a concern) and raise their self-esteem. It also allowed them to increase the cultural diversity of the curriculum which was an identified Ofsted improvement requirement.

School A2 started in Phase 2 and was similarly high achieving. Nonetheless, the headteacher was concerned by the underachievement of a group of Black boys. It was argued by both the headteacher and the lead BCA teacher that there was a tendency amongst some Black boys, especially those in Years 5 and 6, to think that it is 'not cool' to

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[18] This group was concerned with raising the achievement of all children.

achieve. In view of this particular experience, the headteacher said that she had been on the 'look out' for an initiative that would help the school to encourage Black boys to regard achieving as 'cool'. The headteacher additionally saw the BCA Programme as enabling the school to give 'greater priority' to Black achievement and to address a particular concern that she had in relation to engaging parents and carers of Black children at the school, and encouraging them to value education:

> *One of the things that really shocked me … a few months back I was walking through the hall and assembly was going on for Key Stage 2 and literally every couple of minutes maybe half a dozen children were coming in late and they were all Mixed race, Caribbean or African, and I thought you know we're not getting it right yet and we've really got to work on that, in engaging those parents. (Headteacher - A2)*

The headteacher also wanted to provide positive Black (male) role models in the school, as she explained:

> *Whether we like it or not there are a lot of Caribbean and African families that are … struggling without any kind of father figure or anything like that … I always worry about being misquoted on this, but encouraging Black men to come in and be really good role models I think is excellent. (Headteacher - A2)*

This viewpoint coincided with concerns expressed by the headteacher of School A1 who worried that Black boys had 'anger management' issues owing to a perceived absence of Black male role models in their lives; a viewpoint also shared by the headteacher of School D1.

Despite both Schools A1 and A2 being high achieving schools and their own experiences of Black children achieving good results in their national assessment tests[19], local authority achievement data had helped to develop an understanding amongst the schools that Black African children within the local authority were achieving below the national average, and that this was closely followed by the achievement of African-Caribbean children.

School BCA Programme focus and target group

School A2 chose to locate the BCA Programme within Years 3 and 4 and to target a group of African-Caribbean children in these year groups. It was anticipated that these year groups would enable them to see if Black children's achievement results improved as they progressed through the school. These year groups also afforded the opportunity for two years of the BCA Programme to be embedded in the school. School A1 on the other hand specifically sought to target African-Caribbean boys. The activities undertaken during the evaluation period are outlined in the table below. The BCA teacher stated that parental engagement was considered essential so it had been incorporated as a 'rolling target' in each of its RAPs.

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[19] The headteacher of School A1 observed that 'historically … our [African Caribbean] children have done quite well and actually have gone against the [national] trend and done very well in their results'.

School BCA Programme focus 2006-8

School	BCA Programme focus/initiatives	Target groups
A1	Employing a positive Black male role model to work on Black boys 'anger management' and to aid co-operation and tolerance skills; A Black male learning mentor was appointed in September 2007 to be a contact between home and school, to increase the involvement of the parents of the targeted children, also Black fathers in the school and to be a positive Black male role model to Black boys. The mentor supported Black boys with reading and mentored some; Making the curriculum more culturally relevant and accessible by Black children including developing stock of appropriate reading and other resources; Increasing parental involvement of Black children (the school sought to engage with Black parents and carers to bring in more Black fathers as part of providing positive role models); More effective monitoring of Black pupil achievement; In 2007/08 a school-wide tracking system tracked children through the year and recorded TA and mentor interventions with pupils.	Small group of African-Caribbean boys
A2	Making the curriculum more inclusive / culturally relevant* and developing culturally appropriate texts and other resources; The intention was to make Black children feel more 'positive and valued' (Headteacher); African drummers were invited into the school as part of widening the curriculum and providing positive Black male role models; A topic based approach was used to make curriculum links and develop an inclusive curriculum; Implementation of independent tracking of pupil data by ethnicity and improved monitoring / use of Black children's achievement data; continued tracking / monitoring in 2007-08; Increasing the involvement of parents / carers of Black children (e.g. a multicultural event was held in 2007 as part of valuing and engaging Black parents / carers); A carnival was hosted in the summer term*; In 2007-08 a parents' forum was set up (with a key aim of attracting Black parents); Improving Black children's writing (Years 4 and Year 5 literacy) Improving punctuality and attendance* in 2007/08 Guided reading in literacy* in 2007/08	Targeting 10-20 African-Caribbean children who were initially in Years 3 and 4 in 2005/06 and then in Years 4 and 5 in 2006/07; A separate group of 12-15 were targeted in Years 5 and 6 in 2007/08

*whole school focus

Why schools B1 and B2 participated in the BCA Programme

Schools B1 and B2 were Phase 1 schools. The headteacher of School B1 explained that the school had successfully improved Black boys' achievement:

> *In the last five or six years our African-Caribbean children, the boys particularly have bucked the national trend and they do very well. (Headteacher - B1)*

She attributed the school's continued success in improving Black attainment to maintaining 'an attitude that all children are going to succeed'.

The headteacher of School B2 drew attention to the overall high achieving nature of the school:

> *If you look at our stats there isn't one group that is outstandingly underachieving any more than another, it's not that sort of school … it's difficult to say that one group achieves better or not so good as others because we wouldn't be reflecting that. (Headteacher - B2)*

The headteacher of School B1 saw the BCA Programme as a way of improving staff practice and standards by helping the school to consider 'what is it that we do well, and how can we do more of it, or do it better to maintain the standards we've got?' This was not dissimilar to the headteacher of School B2 who wanted to build on existing skills. The achievement of Black children identified by both schools was however, tempered by concerns about the achievement of Bengali girls in School B1 and White British boys in School B2. The headteacher of School B2 also worried that children entering the school directly from the Caribbean often came in need of EAL support, but that this was often not recognised in terms of the achievement assessments schools were expected to make of such children. An area where some Black children were thought not to do as well as they should at this school was in science and was partly responsible for the school introducing Black scientists into the curriculum during Black history month.

While the schools B1 and B2 had experienced high achievement amongst their Black children, they also understood that Black achievement within the local authority was not as positive as they experienced in their respective schools.

School BCA Programme focus and target group

School B1 targeted African-Caribbean boys in Years 5 and 6 and got the children to focus on identity, and enhancing their speaking and writing skills. School B2 initially selected Years 1 and 2 to focus their BCA Programme activities as they wanted 'something that is going to work its way through the school' (Headteacher - B2). These activities were built upon in 2007-08 (see table below).

School BCA Programme focus 2006-8

School	BCA focus	Target groups
B1	Enhancing speaking and writing; 'My heritage' project (Years 5 and 6); Mapping African-Caribbean heritage into the curriculum*; From autumn 2007 - talking to mixed heritage children about their identity; In 2007/08 Tracking/monitoring achievement* but especially Year 1 and 5; Heritage project in Year 6 (history focus with an emphasis on raising self esteem and Black children's understanding of their identity). The heritage project formed part of the Year 6 scheme of work; Focusing on children's interests as a means of engaging them and 'teaching to their needs', and raising their self esteem and 'belief in themselves and what they can achieve';	Year 5 African-Caribbean boys; 'My heritage' project in Years 5 and 6 (whole class focus); In 2007/08 Year 1 and Year 5 - keeping targeted African-Caribbean children in mind but also 'embedding practice' in the whole year group as both will be National assessment tests groups next year; Year 6 is involved in the heritage project but with an emphasis on African-Caribbean children;
B2	Increasing parental involvement* through parent workshops on numeracy and literacy; Diversity permeating the whole curriculum*; Enhancing speaking, listening, reading and writing / vocabulary and skills through using African-Caribbean heritage literature, also role play; 2007/08 Tracking/monitoring attainment of each child*; Improving speaking and listening; Improving writing skills in Years 2, 3 and 4 and motivating pupils to write (e.g. getting targeted pupils to do research on a key Black figure). The intention was to 'push' pupils further; Improving behaviour by helping pupils to 'listen to each other and respect other people's viewpoints' (Headteacher).	Speaking and listening in Year 1 with 5 African-Caribbean children and 1 mixed heritage (mainly boys not contributing to class discussions). This was first done in 2005/06 and was repeated with Year 1 in 2006/07; 2007/08 Writing in Year 2 with 5 African-Caribbean children (at the higher ability end) Year 4 - a group of 6 Black boys 'who aren't at the right level for their writing' (Headteacher); these pupils were also paired with Year 2 pupils as a motivator (Year 2 teacher)

*whole school focus

Why School C1 participated in the BCA Programme

School C1 was a Phase 2 school and was generally concerned about the achievement of all children in the school with numeracy and literacy being key priority areas. The BCA Programme provided the opportunity for School C1 to work 'more effectively' with Black boys in Years 5 and 6 (and their parents). These boys were described by the headteacher as 'lacking motivation' to the point of 'almost switching off'.

School BCA Programme focus and target group

School C1 opted to focus on Years 1 and 5 because as the headteacher stated by 'the end of their two-year participation in the BCA Programme both year groups would have been through their Key Stage 1 and 2' national assessment tests respectively. Providing extra support in Year 1 was expected to give the Year 1 children 'a positive start' (Teacher - C1) and encourage those in the Year 5 group to work harder and apply themselves. The activities they engaged in are outlined below.

School BCA focus 2006-8

School	BCA focus	Target groups
C1	Increasing parental school involvement* (e.g. encourage parents to read at home / contribute in school; help review school policies / develop home school agreement) and opportunities for parents to have informal school contact*; Improving communication with parents*; Raising Black attainment by improving interpretation of achievement data, better sharing of pupil data/target setting with parents and providing parents with guidance to support their children; also better pupil target setting; Curriculum planning* with literacy and numeracy curriculum developed to incorporate Black perspectives in the curriculum; Developing early years writing skills 2007/08 Better use of data; Improving Parents / community involvement*; Making the curriculum more diverse*; Intensive support of BCA Programme pupils.	7 Year 5 'bright' African-Caribbean girls who 'are not working as well as we think they could' (Headteacher); 10 Year 5 African-Caribbean boys 'whose attitudes can get in the way basically of their ability to apply themselves' (Year 5, EMA); 10 Year 1 African-Caribbean children (some very able and some who need support) 2007/08 Year 2 - a group of 10 Black children (7 of whom received weekly EMA support, and 3 boys had daily TA support in literacy); Year 6 - a group of 6 underachieving Black boys and 1 girl were given 1 hour TA support a week; Year 6 - a group of 7 high attaining Black girls who are not achieving their potential are given 1 hour in class TA support a week in numeracy and literacy

*whole school focus

Why Schools D1 and D2 participated in the BCA Programme

Similar to School C1, Schools D1 and D2 were Phase 2 schools.

In School D1 Black Caribbean and other Black African children were reported to be 'working above national levels' with some 'surpassing expectations' (Assistant headteacher - D1). Although School D1 was high achieving, Somali boys had been identified as underachieving. This was in contrast to Somali girls who were achieving well with three represented on the Gifted and Talented register. The achievement amongst Somali children was generally affected by many being new arrivals to the country, having EAL and experiencing high school mobility. Several entered the school with 'relatively little English or no English at all' (Assistant headteacher - D1). Along with the achievement of Somali boys, both the head and assistant headteacher raised concerns about the achievement of Pakistani boys and new arrivals from Eastern Europe. These wider achievement concerns are worth noting and would need to be understood within the headteacher's overall justification for taking part in the BCA Programme. That is, she saw it as having the potential to facilitate the achievement of all children.

Importantly, the headteacher of School D1 wanted to raise Black boys' self-esteem and encourage them to make the 'right decisions' about their learning, and to dissuade them from possible involvement in crime'[20]. The headteacher was hopeful that the school's involvement in the BCA Programme would permit the school to 'cascade' effective strategies throughout the wider school by strategies being shared amongst other school staff.

The deputy headteacher of **School D2** considered the school to be performing at Key Stage 2 above the LA and national average in maths, science and English, but was concerned that at Key Stage 1 and 2 in reading the performance was just below average.

School BCA Programme focus and target group

School D1 concentrated on Year 5 as this allowed for a two-year implementation of the BCA Programme in Years 5 and 6. Year 6 afforded the school the opportunity to explore transition issues which the head and assistant headteacher had identified as a major concern, particularly in ensuring that children maintained a positive self esteem and motivation to achieve. It should be noted that School D1 targeted children from diverse ethnic backgrounds (not just Black children) as part of their involvement in the BCA Programme. In part this reflected the school's perceptions of the children who were underachieving within the school (based on attainment data) and in need of additional support, and encouragement received from the local authority to consider the BCA Programme as all encompassing.

School D2 targeted a small group of Black children in two Year 4 classes and focused on reading comprehension. Even though 'Year 4 stood out as underachieving', the deputy head argued that the 'African-Caribbean children within that year group [did] not necessarily' underachieve. Nonetheless, starting with Year 4 allowed the school to see if there were any improvements in Black children's reading over the two year period of the BCA Programme.

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[20] It is worth noting that all of the schools that took part in the evaluation saw pupil vulnerability to crime as a feature of being located in inner-city areas.

School BCA Programme focus 2006-8

School	BCA Programme focus	Target groups
D1	Increasing children's oral and problem solving, writing skills and motivation through conflict resolution, managing negative feelings, raising their self esteem, empowering children through drama and writers workshops - children were taught the consequences of making the 'right decisions'. They were encouraged to turn negative experiences (e.g. racism) into positives, to develop positive relationships and self images, and to become more competent writers and achievers;	Drama workshops with Year 5/6 children (Asian, White, Black), mostly high achieving;
	Transition - Exploring strategies for transition to secondary school, developing pupil self awareness, confidence and esteem and strategies for problem solving, so as to enable children to become 'leaders' rather than 'followers' (Headteacher);	Year 6 transition group
	Increasing parental involvement (esp. Somali and Turkish) through coffee mornings, workshops, using interpreters on pupil review days and by encouraging parents and children from these heritage groups to share their culture;	
	In 2007/08 the school concentrated on implementing the 'effective strategies' developed in the first year with its targeted Year 5 group as part of a whole school approach to BCA Programme, so it focused on Years 1 and 2 in developing speaking and listening and confidence and creativity skills, and shaping values and attitudes; analytical, creativity and listening skills in Year3; reading, listening and speaking skills in Year 4; developing ICT and writing skills in Year 5;	07/08 Year 6 Transition group (all ethnicities); Year 6- group of Somali boys received booster lessons;
	Raise self esteem / awareness / confidence of Year 6.	
	Involving and improving parental links with school (e.g. Somali and Turkish parents' days); offering extra information/courses to Somali parents about the educational system in an effort to empower Somali parents	
	Curriculum planning in Years 5 and 6 to enable staff to make links with Black history (e.g. linking the Arawaks and Caribs with the Tudors);	
D2	Reading and writing comprehension programme introduced in 2007, targeting Years 3/4 and 4 and 5; Tracking achievement and progress*	Reading comprehension programme targeting a small group of Black children in two Year 4 classes. These are children that are underachieving in reading 'because although they read really well, when they have to answer questions about a story, they get lost in the process' and so receive EMA TA support.

	Black achievement workshops (in spring and summer terms 2008, 1 hour a week) - External Black role models working with whole Year 5 classes doing music / poetry / role play activities as part of raising childrens' awareness of Black people in society (as positive role models) and raising childrens' self esteem (about their culture/identity and aspirations); Asia week (cultural events to involve Asian parents in the life of the school and working with East European families to involve them in the school); Summer carnival*	Black achievement workshop targeting 2 Year 5 classes (and in the summer term was extended to Year 6)

*whole school focus

The previous sections explained why the case study sought to participate in the BCA Programme and it highlighted some of the BCA Programme activities that they had implemented within their respective schools. Before exploring some of these activities in greater detail, it is salient to note that across the case study schools there was evidence of a commitment to raising Black children's achievement outside of their involvement in the BCA Programme. A number of activities / projects were identified as helping to raise Black children's achievement prior to their involvement in the BCA Programme. These included:

- Social skills interaction group, a six-week programme targeting Black boys in Years 1 and 2; designed to remove barriers to learning (A1);

- The introduction of Somali as a language of the month (D1);

- EAL booster classes in English and maths (D1);

- EMA in class support for new arrivals and children with EAL (D1, D2);

- Achievement assemblies/certificates and good behaviour awards (B1);

- Black role models project (C1);

- Diverse curriculum (B1, B2, D1, D2);

- Black history month/week (all schools);

- Black African-Caribbean male learning mentor - 'the children associate with him really well ... they have got a model there that they can aspire to'; and a Somali learning support assistant who is 'widening staff understanding of Somali culture' (Headteacher, B2)

- Caribbean week (B2, D2); and

- Work with transition groups (C1, D1).

Discussion of initiatives introduced in schools as part of the BCA Programme

During the course of the evaluation a number of the BCA Programme activities were noted in the case study schools, but the three main areas that schools chose to target their BCA Programme activities related to:

- making the curriculum and school resources more culturally relevant and accessible by Black children;

- improving tracking, assessment and monitoring of Black pupil achievement data; and

- increasing parental involvement of parents and carers of Black children in school and their children's learning.

In most schools, increasing parental involvement, making the curriculum more inclusive and more effective assessment and use of tracking/assessment data had a whole school focus, and in part reflected concerns these schools identified in the audits that they conducted at the start of their participation in the BCA Programme with children, staff, parents and governors of school policies, practice, achievement, and teaching and learning styles. Further attention is given below of the ways in which the case study schools addressed these key areas.

Making the curriculum more culturally relevant / inclusive

The case study schools sought to make the school curriculum more culturally reflective of the school community. They opined that with access to a culturally relevant curriculum Black children would be more motivated to learn and become engaged in their learning, and as a consequence, raise their achievement. Across the schools staff spoke of how the curriculum was being made more 'culturally relevant and interesting' for Black children through resources (e.g. books) that had been brought with the BCA Programme funds for example, to use in literacy, geography and history and in curriculum areas such as religious education, music, art and during Black history month/week. Music for example, presented learning opportunities for children to explore instruments and songs from other countries, as observed in an assembly in a Phase 2 school and a Year 2 lesson in a Phase 2 school.

Prior to their commencement in the BCA Programme three out of the seven case study schools had little experience of delivering a culturally diverse curriculum. The school staff interviewed at one Phase 1 school, for example, had welcomed the opportunity the BCA Programme presented them with to develop a more culturally diverse curriculum and use resources that reflected different cultures, as illustrated by the following teacher comments:

> *In literacy I use a range of texts I don't just rely on Benjamin Zephaniah or Michael Rosen. I try and get anthologies where there are maybe poems I haven't heard before and then you really are getting lots and lots of voices from really different places, different time, different genders, different ethnicities, and they will be interpreted differently depending on the children's own experiences of life in general and how they see things. (Teacher)*

> *When we did literacy we had 'Fly Eagle Fly' which is an African story and 'Gregory Cool' which is a Caribbean story. So with the Caribbean story … I bought yams and plantains in for the children to see and taste and experiment. It wasn't focused on 'oh yes because we have Caribbean children we're having this'. But it's a fantastic story, it gives a really good idea of what's going on and it tied in with our topic which we were doing which was St Lucia. But it brought the Caribbean children to the front because they knew, where they had been to the Caribbean they said 'oh yes, I've tried this and*

this is what I think it tastes like' and it made them a lot more prominent within the classroom, and they could come, even if they were low achieving it was something they had experience of and could share with the rest of the class. (Teacher).

Teacher 2 quoted above suggested that her school's involvement in the BCA Programme had not only flagged up curriculum areas where Black people were absent (e.g. QCA focus in history on Florence Nightingale and not Mary Seacole), but had led to her thinking much more about the backgrounds of all the children in her class, and how what is being taught can creatively draw on those heritages. Classroom observations of this teacher's classes (Years 2 and 3) over the course of the evaluation suggest that she was excited about the learning possibilities that delivering a culturally diverse curriculum presented not only for her class, but herself.

The potential for staff learning opportunities was also evidenced amongst practitioners more experienced in delivering a diverse curriculum (derived from teaching in other schools). One of the teachers interviewed at a Phase 2 school said that her attendance at professional development sessions led by the BCA consultant supporting the school had led her to realise that she was not only sending out 'inappropriate' cultural messages, but that she was not as 'culturally aware' as she had first thought.

The Phase 1 schools provided a range of examples of how diversity had been incorporated into the curriculum, and in many respects, as argued for instance by the headteacher at one of these schools a culturally diverse / relevant curriculum was an established way of working (i.e. prior to participating in the BCA Programme) and 'embedded practice'. This was exemplified by the headteacher and teachers at the school who spoke at length about 'teaching to the personal needs' of the children at the school which means 'working from the child's experience and interests' (Teacher) in delivering a more relevant, meaningful and inclusive curriculum which also provides examples of positive role models. As part of this strategy, one of the teachers at the school had incorporated Jamaican Patois (language) texts within the literacy curriculum covering folk tales. A classroom observation of this teacher's Year 6 literacy lesson noted all of the children in the class positively engaging with an Anancy story written in Jamaican Patois. A small group of children took it in turns to read aloud lines from the story, while other children responded to the teacher's questions about the text, some of which were related to the children sharing the text with their parents the night before. The teacher had chosen the text because as she said 'quite a few children [in the class] speak Patois'. Notwithstanding, it was evident that use of the text was intended to encourage the whole class to draw on their own linguistic and cultural heritage in the work (e.g. PowerPoint presentations) they were doing in relation to the Anancy text. So for example, a Black African child was encouraged to use his own (Nigerian) language in the story he was writing. A focus group with some of the children in this class reinforced the researcher's observation that the Black children (of African, African-Caribbean and Mixed heritage) were comfortable with this way of working, and especially the African-Caribbean heritage children who valued being able to use and share their (home) language in lessons. The value attached to the use of Jamaican Patois in lessons was evident in the wider school whereby Jamaican Patois had been formally recognised in school policies (e.g. equal opportunities and inclusive statements) as an additional language (for children of African-Caribbean heritage), and children using Jamaican Patois (along with other 'home' languages) in public speaking (e.g. drama and assemblies) was accepted practice. This was another way in which this school sought to persuade the children that 'their culture, language, their own identity is valued and respected' (Teacher).

Clearly, staff at the Phase 1 school referred to above were not only enthusiastic about delivering a culturally relevant curriculum, but their comments were also indicative of the extent to which the school's involvement in the BCA Programme had had a positive impact,

with children being encouraged to use their heritage language or languages more frequently in assemblies, the classroom and in other school activities.

The positive embrace of cultural diversity within the curriculum evident for example, in two Phase 1 schools was however, absent in two Phase 2 schools. For example, a teacher at one Phase 2 school described her school's drive towards developing culturally appropriate resources as 'inappropriate' for 'Middle England' (that is a predominantly White middle class school population), whilst a teacher at another Phase 2 school questioned the 'purpose' of 'stuff[ing] things into the curriculum'. This suggests that neither teacher fully understood the BCA Programme's goals. This contention is further illustrated by staff at another Phase 2 school. Previous examples have shown that some teachers at the school were keen to make their subject area more culturally diverse, but there were also teachers interviewed who were wary of making, as one teacher said, 'tenuous links to other cultures' in the curriculum.

This wariness and questioning the 'value' of a culturally relevant curriculum suitably identifies the need for teachers to be better informed as to how the curriculum can be made more culturally relevant without appearing tenuous or tokenistic.

Using data to raise attainment

A key priority of the BCA Programme is that schools developed strategies to identify and monitor attainment data as a way of increasing Black children's achievement. Across the case study schools there was evidence of case study schools having implemented systems for tracking and analysing Black children's attainment by ethnicity and gender, developing a better understanding of the systems that had been put in place, so as to be more effective in the analyses that they made, and in delivering the support which followed. One Phase 1 headteacher saw her school's data tracking as enabling them to 'have a clear picture of where the children are', while the headteacher of another Phase 1 school argued that its data monitoring had helped them to assess if the targeted BCA Programme children were in a position to move out of the BCA Programme group and go into the 'on track or on target group or the higher achieving group' in a way that they did not do before their involvement in the BCA Programme. A third Phase 1 school, despite reporting that they did not have 'any real concerns about Black children's achievement' (headteacher) were nevertheless not complacent about the achievements of their Black children. Consequently, the deputy head reported the school as:

> *Constantly looking at patterns and trends in the tracking system, if there are dips, and if there are any highs why? And equally if there are any dips why? And which group of children does that affect and what we as a leadership team can do to support them and springboard their achievements further.*

A teaching assistant (TA) focusing on reading comprehension with small groups of targeted Black children in a Phase 2 school, argued that the children she was supporting in their reading had 'gone up like two levels', with the children eliciting greater 'confidence in answering questions and in their reading comprehension' since their involvement in the BCA Programme, and consequently were requiring less support from herself. The TA said that the children were now more enthused to do their reading comprehension with her, and that they were 'knuckling down' and 'finishing two reading cards in a session'. These aspects were reflected in researcher observations. Other case study schools reported that the targeted BCA Programme children were making 'steady progress' with some 'improving slowly'. In assessing improvements in attainment one of the schools participating in the BCA Programme stated that achievement within the year groups concerned (as a whole, not just the individual targeted children) had to be taken into consideration when making any judgements about improvements that had been made (or not):

Yes, there's certainly kind of improvements … we've done a lot of work in Year 5 and the Year 5s are a really good year group. Very kind of motivated, very academic, the Afro (sic) Caribbean in that year group are really pushing, whereas the Year 4s are a different kind of make-up. So the Year 5s have made very, they've been really on board with the projects that they've had, and the Year 4s have, but they're at a different level so their progress appears less and is probably slower because they're not as able children. (Deputy Head)

For most of the case study schools the BCA Programme had enabled staff to not only 'closely monitor' potential underachievement, but make better use of their achievement data (including value and contextual value added) to more effectively support Black children, and in the case of some schools maintain previously high standards, for example:

For some time we've bucked the national trend in terms of Black boys and their achievements in writing, but the project has actually highlighted that and let us look at different ways into supporting those children and helped us maintain the standards that those children are reaching'. (Deputy Head)

It is interesting that one of the schools that a BCA consultant had reported as being 'resistant' to monitoring achievement data in the first year of the evaluation, had in the second year become in the words of the consultant 'more open minded' and had sought to monitor behavioural sanctions by ethnicity as a way of enabling them to use their achievement data to further raise Black children's achievement.

One of the consequences of having improved data tracking and analysis systems is that schools are much more aware of the achievement of children in their school. In this respect, one school had used its data monitoring of Key Stage 2 national assessment tests in 2007 as evidence of the school's need to pay greater attention to addressing observed 'underachievement' amongst White British (middle class) children in the school. Interview data suggests that this lower school-wide attainment had a greater impact in focusing senior management attention on attainment, than the targeted BCA Programme children not meeting their targets. It would seem that the school's initial focus in 2006/07 on prioritising Black children's attainment had become 'lost' in favour of achievement per se, which in the context of this school meant paying closer attention to addressing White (middle class) underachievement. This perceived shift in achievement focus by the headteacher was considered by a governor at the school to be underpinned by racism and was therefore viewed as a cause for concern, and something which needed addressing.

From last year we can see that the results were not good for the school as a whole … and the targeted BCAP children did not make as much progress as we had hoped. There's lots of stuff happening in the school and probably the head lost focus, and in terms of the head taking the leadership I would like to see it on the agenda for our governors meetings, that is another way of tracking it, we can ask the person who is taking a lead to come to governors meetings - we have never done that, but I think it's about how you prioritise it, put it on the governors agenda. I know it's hard to keep BCAP a priority as other things have come through, like you're bombarded with things about finance, and I know that the lower attainment of the White children is concerning. But you have to focus it [BCAP], someone with some power, the head has to take the strategic lead on the overview of what happens to all children, not just the majority ... If you have black kids in each class you need to know their progress, what they are doing? There has to be a constant review with the teacher who is teaching them. What is happening? Is there any improvement? If you're concerned about all children why is this not happening ... maybe racism? You tell me! (Governor)

Parental / carer involvement

All of the case study schools identified parental involvement as a key priority. The issue of Black/carer parental non-engagement was particularly concerning for the case study schools. This difficulty was underscored in the lack of participation in the evaluation parent focus groups in some of the case study schools, and particularly in one Phase 2 school (where the parental workshops it had specifically set up in 2006 - as part of the BCA Programme - for parents and carers of Black children, as a means of helping them to understand the work their children were doing in lessons and providing them with an opportunity to work with children in school) were viewed by the headteacher as largely unsuccessful as very few parents had attended. Consequently, fewer staff resources had been allocated during 2007/08 year to supporting the parental workshops. Despite the difficulties encountered the school was striving to find new ways of involving parents and carers of Black children in the school, but saw itself as being more successful in attracting such parents to parents' evenings and formal workshops which, for example, explained the different Key Stages and how this related to national assessment tests. The headteacher of a Phase 1 school explained that the parents and carers of Black children in her school were 'more interested in the nitty gritty' of schooling, with some also seeing education as the 'job of the school', and therefore not requiring their involvement. Parental and carer involvement was perceived by the headteacher to be restricted by a lack of confidence in using English where English is not their first language and/or using formal English (as used in schools) where it is not used within the home or other formal structures (e.g. workplace). Other factors that this headteacher advocated as affecting parental and carer involvement included a 'fear of authority' (based on past school experiences) and 'difficult family' circumstances. (Some other headteachers echoed similar concerns.) The headteacher was therefore not optimistic that the school involvement of parents and carers of Black children would improve in the short term. Moreover, the headteacher described the efforts the school had made to widen such involvement as a 'positive with a negative', as it was felt that the BCA Programme had not helped the school to actually increase the involvement of parents and carers of Black children. As she stated 'we're four years down the line now and it's still not improving'.

The disappointment articulated by the headteacher of one Phase 1 school mirrored that of the headteacher of a Phase 2 school. The experience of the Phase 1 school in trying to get parents of Black children to attend workshops designed to help parents and carers of Black children support their children's learning was also not dissimilar to the headteacher of a Phase 2 school who found that parents were less likely to attend such events; preferring instead to attend parents' evenings. One group that the school had encountered particular difficulties with was Somali parents. Given previous experiences, the headteacher was particularly pleased that they had been able to host a day for Somali parents in the spring term of 2008. The headteacher and other staff interviewed revealed that the 'Somali day' had encouraged Somali parents to attend and together with their children share information with the wider school about Somali culture. The day was deemed successful by the headteacher in terms of increasing Somali parental involvement in the school, convincing Somali parents that they had something 'to teach' school staff about their culture and heritage, and that where this information was shared it would be valued. The day was also considered useful in relation to raising Somali children's self esteem, developing their speaking and listening skills and engendering their confidence in speaking about their culture. One of the teachers interviewed suggested that the Somali day had helped her 'to understand where the children were coming from'.

Nevertheless, headteachers of two other case study schools, whilst having successfully held events (e.g. cultural evenings) for particular groups of parents and carers of Black children, were more sceptical about the benefits of such events, with one suggesting that minority ethnic cultural events did not allow for wider 'integration' (Headteacher) into whole school activities which was an ultimate concern.

Social class was identified by one headteacher as a key barrier to increasing the involvement of parents and carers of Black children from working class backgrounds in his school. Another headteacher opined that it was easier to involve middle class parents and carers of Black children than trying to engage what were described by the headteacher as 'more needy parents' of Black children. Despite increased efforts the school had found it difficult to encourage parents of children targeted within the BCA Programme to attend pupil progress meetings. Researcher discussions with a group of parents suggest that some parents and carers of Black children at the school were deterred from increased school involvement by the school's middle class ethos. These parents gave several examples of where they felt the middle class ethos had had a negative impact on their school involvement, such as the headteacher appearing 'friendlier' to White middle class parents on the playground at the beginning and end of the school day, whilst seeming to 'ignore' Black parents, and events (e.g. coffee mornings) targeting parents being held during the school day which working parents could not attend. There was an acknowledgement from school staff interviewed that the school's middle class ethos had had a negative impact on working class parental/carer engagement as a whole; not just parents and carers of Black children. This suggests that the perceived class barrier was more than an issue linked to Black parents.

As part of its continuing commitment to increasing Black parental involvement, one Phase 1 school was particularly pleased with the positive response from Black parents and carers (especially fathers who the head described as 'hard to reach') that had been generated by the work of their recently appointed learning mentor. Two events designed to encourage participation from Black fathers in the school were well attended, and this was attributed by school staff and the governor interviewed to the work of the learning mentor, who is, himself, Black. Nonetheless, it was evident that most school activities, including those organised by the parent-teacher association, continued to be attended predominantly by White middle class parents, whose presence (it was argued by one teacher) could be 'quite threatening for Black parents' and that was something which the teacher said would be 'very difficult to get over'; thereby discouraging wider Black parental and carer involvement in the longer-term.

A Phase 2 schools second year involvement in the BCA Programme brought with it a renewed commitment to engaging parents and carers of Black children, and as such increased its efforts to report positive (rather than negative) news to parents and carers of Black children. Interviewed teachers revealed being 'more persistent' in trying to contact Black parents who did not attend parents' evening (this was true of all the case study schools). They suggested that contacting parents had made them realise that there were sometimes social or family issues that prevented children from getting access to learning opportunities. This understanding had led the school to investigate the possibility of employing a family support worker to help with this. Additionally, home visits were made to parents and carers of children who were being intensively supported as part of the BCA Programme. Two of the parents interviewed at this school welcomed the positive communication they had received. For example:

> *The other day, because I speak to [name of teaching assistant] usually on a daily basis, just to check, because I do get worried about him, and she showed me his results and I was crying because I was happy that he was finally getting on. (Parent)*

Notwithstanding, consultant data from this local authority suggested that some of their BCA Programme schools (which were not involved in the evaluation) had found it 'more of a challenge' to effect whole school changes with regard to working with Black parents, which might account for the difficulty that some schools highlighted encountered in increasing parental involvement from this group.

In contrast to some of the schools referred to above, One Phase 1 and one Phase 2 school (prior to participating in the BCA Programme) had been more successful in effecting Black parental involvement. Staff at the Phase 2 school noted for example, that 'Caribbean parents always try to get involved in anything that's going on in the school', and that such participation had increased with the school's hosting of 'cultural evenings for Black history' (TA). The BCA consultant for the local authority also highlighted parental workshops as having a 'huge impact' at one of her BCA Programme schools (not participating in the evaluation) where 100 parents attended the first meeting, which the headteacher concerned was said to be 'overwhelmed' by, as previous efforts to engage Black parents and carers had failed. One of the teachers interviewed at the Phase 1 school who regularly invited parents into her classroom to see what their children were learning argued that teachers 'have to be confident to have parents in the classroom', a confidence which it was acknowledged that not all teachers have, and this was regardless of whether or not the parents being invited in are Black. Although senior management staff at this school had had a positive response from its parents and carers of Black children they were not complacent, and had sought to improve on the results they had had by surveying these parents views as a way of helping them to 'really think about what we do from an African heritage point of view and how we can improve on that' (Deputy head). Seeking the views of parents and carers of Black children was expected to help the school to focus on Black parents 'aspirations for their children, the needs of their children and what they'd like to see in school and in terms of parent partnership work with those parents' (Deputy Head).

Clearly for the case study schools, parental involvement was a key issue and one which was supported by their school audits. Whilst not losing sight of the need for parental involvement in school and supporting their children's learning, local authorities / consultants were also concerned that schools did not focus on parental involvement 'to the exclusion of looking at teaching and learning, and their data' (BCA Consultant) and how they can have a long-term impact on achievement.

The views outlined above on parental involvement would need to be compared with those of parents set out in chapter 8.

School ethos / culture and working with the wider community

As outlined in chapter 1, one of the outcomes that the BCA Programme sought to cultivate was a culture and ethos in schools within which 'everyone feels safe and valued', and there is 'whole school commitment to tackling underachievement and achieving high standards for all, whole school recognition and celebration of cultural and ethnic diversity', and the 'development of a proactive partnership with parents, carers and the wider community'. The previous section provided an overview of the type of activities that the case study schools implemented to address underachievement and raise standards, and the ways in which they sought to deliver a culturally relevant curriculum and engage and work with parents. Attention is turned here to examining the type of environment that school staff saw operating in their schools.

All of the case study schools were reported by school staff to be welcoming, inclusive environments that were respectful of diversity. For example:

> *We try to make the children aware of the religious as well as the cultural beliefs of the different ethnic groups within the school … the children have experience of taking part in all of the assemblies of different cultures, and we emphasise the school motto which is 'respecting yourself and respecting others'. (Governor)*

Outside of the curriculum the schools were viewed as attempting to value different cultures through for example, the creation of ethnically diverse displays that were visible in some classrooms and school hallways. One teacher went as far as to suggest that his school was a 'rare [multicultural] gem', whilst another provided the following description:

> It's a very friendly school, very multicultural. We have people here from different parts of the world. And I think this is one of the things that I noticed when I came here three years ago as a student. It is very friendly and I think a real community feel. And I think that is to do with the fact that the structure, the make up of the school children from all different parts and from all different backgrounds. And you come together as one, it is nice. (Teacher)

This sense of community present in some schools was extended with links being fostered with the local community. The headteacher at one Phase 1 school said the school had a 'history' of involving the community (e.g. the police, footballers, different religious representatives, artists and dancers) in the school. A second Phase 1 school reported enlisting the help of a poet laureate in the city to work with children targeted as part of the BCA Programme. As a way of linking with the local community and at the same time encouraging Black children to have high aspirations, one Phase 2 school had developed links with a small number of secondary schools in neighbouring boroughs whose sixth formers were asked to provide a photograph of themselves and information about the A levels they were studying and their future aspirations. These photographs were placed in prominent positions in the school. In some case study schools working with the wider community was a newer development, but had provided learning opportunities for whole class learning for instance with African dancing, drumming and storytelling. Nevertheless, some Black children had not always found such experiences positive (see chapter 7).

Clearly an inclusive school ethos is essential in promoting Black children's achievement. However, as the headteacher of a Phase 1 school argued, schools are more likely to conceive of such an ethos as important where greater priority is given to the impact of school ethos on standards, rather than improved attainment only being measured statistically, as she explained:

> If anything, I would want that balance to be some element of recognising how the school has moved on in terms of ethos and climate, because to me that has an impact on your relationship with parents and your relationship with the children, and the way the staff interact with the children. But I do feel it's just kind of outcomes in terms of national assessment tests results, QCA results and targets, and what I would call hard targets rather than the kind of every child matters outcome. I think there has not been enough recognition of what this project can do in that way. (Headteacher)

In addition to the above, another factor which may affect whether a school is considered to have an inclusive ethos or not is the diversity of the school staff. A teaching assistant at one of the case study schools suggested that the absence of diversity amongst the school staff at her school meant there were 'no role models for the Black children'. Such a contention was supported by a governor of another school who argued that as the teachers were 'White and middle class' this 'made it difficult' for the teachers 'to understand the experiences of Black pupils' (governor).

Summary

The then DfES identified the local authorities within which the BCA Programme would operate. Those schools which participated in the evaluation had varying proportions of Black population. Their reasons for participating varied; some wanted to build on previous work in raising Black achievement; others had particular concerns about Black groups new to the authority (e.g. Black African, newly arrived pupils from the Caribbean).

Local authorities took a number of factors into account in selecting schools to take part in the BCA Programme (for example, number of Black children; attainment gaps; leadership commitment to the Programme; previous effective work in raising Black pupils' attainment levels). Some of the schools originally selected withdrew, and the commitment of school leaders appeared to be the most significant factor in continued involvement.

Case study schools put forward varied reasons for participating. Most of the case study schools had high attainment levels and were keen to maintain these. Some were concerned about specific groups (Black boys, Somali new arrivals).

The three main areas that schools chose to target their BCA Programme activities related to:

- making the curriculum and school resources more culturally relevant and accessible by Black children;

- improving tracking, assessment and monitoring of Black pupil achievement data;

- increasing involvement of parents and carers of Black children in school and in their children's learning.

Schools chose to target Black children in different year groups. Some schools targeted all Black children in the year group, and other children from diverse ethnic groups, rather than only Black children. Others focused particularly on Black boys.

Chapter 6 - Children's experiences of school and engagement with learning

This chapter examines Black children's understanding of the BCA Programme together with their attitudes to/experiences of learning including accessing a diverse curriculum; perceptions of school ethos and their own self identity and self esteem; and relationships developed in the case study schools. It also explores findings elicited from a whole class questionnaire which was distributed in the case study schools to pupils in the same year groups as the children who attended the focus groups. The chapter begins with a discussion about the questionnaire findings.

The chapter will also draw on information derived from discussion groups with Black children.

Class questionnaire

As outlined in chapter 3 a questionnaire was used to explore whole class attitudes to learning at school in Years 2 and 5 (see Appendix). However, as the questionnaire was not completed by all Year 2 and 5 children in each of the case study schools, it is not possible to know whether or the extent to which the children who completed questionnaires or the findings from the questionnaires presented here are representative of all Year 2 and 5 children of the various ethnicities in these schools.

The questionnaire contained eight statements about children's experience of school. The children were asked to indicate if different aspects of school (their teacher, reading, number etc.) made them feel 'very happy', 'a bit happy', 'a bit sad' or 'very sad'.

A greater proportion of Year 2 children expressed positive attitudes to all aspects of school except 'my behaviour at school'. Table 5 shows that the categories that received the most 'very happy' responses were 'my friends at school', 'my teachers' and 'my school'. The categories that received the most 'a bit sad' or 'very sad' responses were homework and particular subjects (table 6).

Table 5 - Greatest percentage responding 'very happy' for each year group (N=416)

	Year 2 (N =218)	Year 5 (N=198)
1	My friends at school (83%)	My friends at school (80%)
2	My teachers (79%)	My behaviour at school (51%)
3	My school (72%)	My teachers (39%)

Table 6 - Greatest percentage responding 'a bit sad' and 'very sad' (N=416)

	Year 2 (N=218)	Year 5 (N= 198)
1	My homework (22%)	My homework (43%)
2	My behaviour at school (15%)	Science (37%)
3	Number (14%)	Reading (31%)

There are some differences between responses by boys and girls. In particular, a greater percentage of Year 5 girls were 'very happy' with their behaviour than Year 5 boys (79% of girls as compared with 11% of boys[21]).

There are some differences between responses by school. Year 2 responses were generally similar across the schools. However, one Phase 1 school had a greater percentage of Year 5 children responding 'very happy' in relation to 'my school', 'reading' and 'homework'

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[21] Chi squared - 10.355, df=3, p=0.016

compared with another Phase 1 school which had the lowest percentage of children responding 'very happy' to 'my school', 'reading', 'science' and 'homework'. These responses would seem to support comments made by Black children in the discussion groups in these schools, which are discussed later in this chapter.

The broad headings of White, Black, Asian and mixed were used to analyse the children's responses. In Year 2 (see figure 6.1), significantly more of the group of Asian children responded 'very happy' about 'my school', and significantly fewer of the group of White children responded 'very happy' in response to 'writing' compared to all other groups. Significantly more of the group of Black children responded 'a bit sad' or 'very sad' to 'reading', 'my behaviour' and 'my friends' compared to the overall responses, and a significantly lower proportion of children in the White group responded 'a bit sad' or 'very sad' to 'my behaviour at school ' and 'my friends at school'. In response to the statement about 'number' a significantly greater proportion of White and mixed children responded 'a bit sad' or 'very sad' compared to responses from Black and Asian children.

Figure 6.1 - Percentage of Year 2 children responding that they were 'very happy' about listed aspects of school
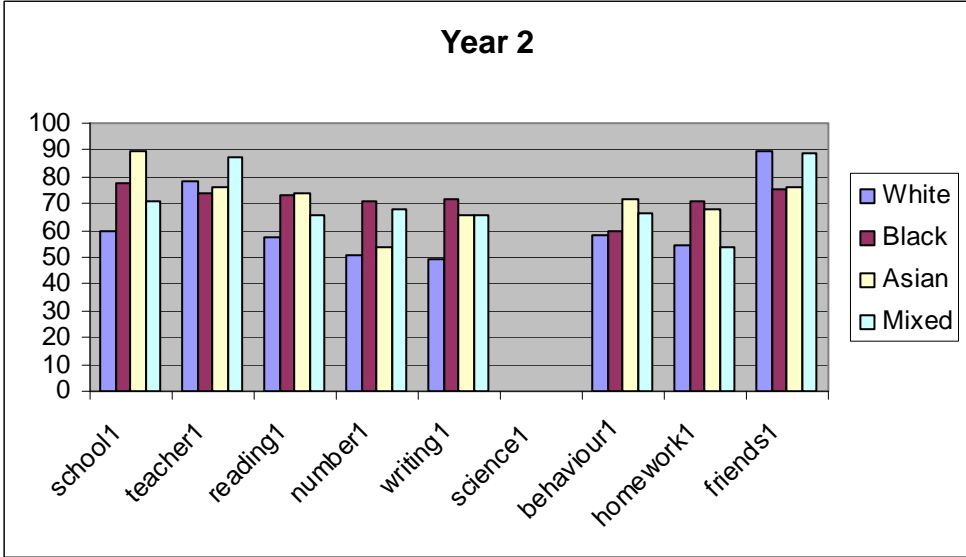
In Year 5 (see figure 6.2), significantly more of the group of Asian children responded 'very happy' about 'my school' and 'my behaviour at school'. A significantly lower proportion of White children responded 'very happy' to the statement about 'my homework' compared to the other groups. Significantly more of the group of White children responded 'a bit sad' or 'very sad' to 'my teachers', 'reading', and 'my homework'. Significantly more of the group of Black children responded 'a bit sad' or 'very sad' to the statement about 'my behaviour at school' compared to the other groups. A significantly lower proportion of the group of Asian children responded 'a bit sad' or 'very sad' to the statements about 'reading' and 'science' compared to other children.

Figure 6.2 - Percentage of Year 5 children responding that they were 'very happy' about listed aspects of school
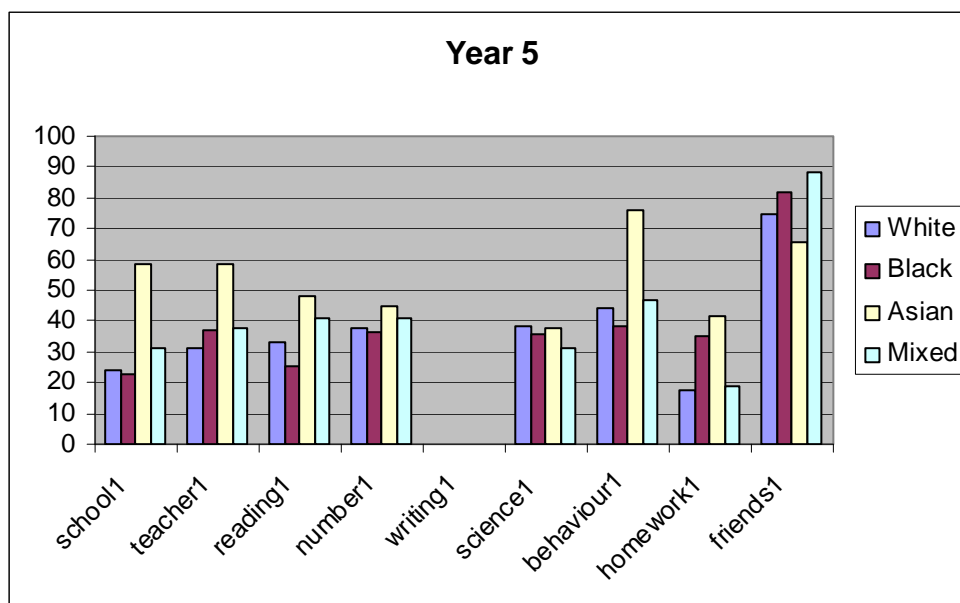
Overall, these questionnaire results suggest that attitudes to school among the different ethnic groups in the sample were very similar. There is no pattern across the items as a whole. This might suggest that in this sample in Year 2, Black children are over-represented in the group who are 'a bit sad' or 'very sad' about some aspects of school. In this sample in Year 5, White children seem to be over-represented in this group, except in relation to behaviour, when disproportionately more Black children indicated that they were 'a bit sad' or 'very sad' about 'my behaviour at school'.

Experiences of school

Most children in the discussion groups had positive school experiences and enjoyed going to school and doing their work. In one school, a group of Year 3 children thought it was important to go to school because 'it teaches you different kinds of things'. In another school the children saw learning and achieving as 'important' because 'you learn lots that you didn't know and you become smarter, so you can be rich in the future' (Year 6 boys). For some children learning was also experienced as 'fun'; a group of Year 1 children for example liked the use of DVDs in numeracy and literacy, whilst a year 3 girl said 'I love to learn'. As well as having good school experiences, school was sometimes experienced as 'too long' and 'boring' (mainly by boys). An example of this was given by a Year 3 boy who said 'I love going to school, but I don't do work, I just like to play'.

Issues of discipline and behaviour were noted with some of the younger children in one case study school. There were also some children who experienced negative teacher/pupil relationships. More specific experiences are explored below.

Views about school work

A range of subjects were liked by these children and the subjects they liked were often based on their skills and abilities in those subjects, such as a Year 3 boy who liked numeracy because he 'loved long multiplication' and was 'good at it', or a Year 6 boy who said 'I like everything apart from art, because I can't draw'. Some of the other reasons given for liking and disliking particular subjects are outlined in the following table.

Table 7 - Types of lessons liked and disliked

Lessons liked	Lessons disliked
Reading - 'I like reading stories and writing what happened'; 'I like reading because it helps me spell' and 'you can help your baby brother or sister' (Year 3 girl) 'I like reading chapter books because they have good stories' (Year 3 girl), 'I really like reading because it's always quiet and if I finish my book I sometimes put the book away and I can think about what happened in the book' (Year 3 boy)	Literacy - 'don't like writing'; 'It's boring'; 'I don't like reading because the words are too long and too complicated' (Year 3 boy).
Literacy - 'I'm quite good at poetry because I have so many ideas' (Year 5, FG2); 'I like doing writing because you get to use your imagination' (Year 6 - Mixed heritage boy) and 'when you write you learn more things' (Year 6 girl).	
Maths - 'I like doing maths because you get to count up' (Year 2) 'I really like doing long multiplication' (Year 3 boy); 'I like maths' (Year 5, Somali girl); Some Year 3 boys and girls were 'very happy' to do numeracy 'because maths is a great way to learn'; 'Because I'm good at my times table' (Year 3 boy); 'We're on the second highest table so when we think about numbers we feel a bit happy because when people know they're quite good at something they like to do it' (Year 3 girl);	Maths - 'hard', 'boring just looking at numbers'
Science - 'Because you can experiment' and it doesn't have rules' (Year boys)	'Science because they do too much work'
History - particularly 'interactive lessons' e.g. visits to museums	

The type of lessons liked by the children is exemplified by the following quote:

> *I like most subjects because my teacher really makes them fun and ... we do a lot of imaginative writing which I really like, I like literacy and as a warm up in maths we work on the interactive whiteboard and we do a few games. So I think that helps a lot. (Year 5 girl)*

The above quote suggests that the children like subjects that are interesting and which make learning fun.

The children had mixed feelings about homework with some finding it 'fun', 'challenging', 'boring' and some loving it (e.g. 'homework rocks'). Children for example at a Phase 2 school were 'very happy' to do their homework 'because when you do it, it makes you clever' (Mixed heritage Year 6 boy). While some children enjoyed doing their homework, some saw it as difficult or as one child said 'so hard that even their parents couldn't do it'. Some suggested they got very little homework, just reading and spellings, whilst some would prefer to get more. There were also those who argued that they should not get homework because home is a place for enjoying yourself whereas some saw it as helping them to practice their work and learn more. There was a feeling that homework sometimes took much longer to complete at home than when they had opportunities to complete their homework during school (e.g. during wet break). A few children claimed not to do any homework. It was clear that many children received help with their homework from parents, siblings or other relatives, and some said they received extra tuition outside school.

Some children had 'talk partners' that they worked with and a few also had teaching assistants who supported their work.

Across the schools children liked receiving stickers, ticks, lollies, smiley faces and other positive reinforcement when they did good work. Sad faces or negative comments on marked work were disliked as this meant that children had to repeat or keep practising particular aspects of their work. One school has a system whereby children show their work to their headteacher; if it is completed well they get achievement certificates in assembly. Children liked this acknowledgement. One pupil at this school was encouraged to do her work well by her mother who rewards her with additional prizes if the work is done to a good standard.

A group of Year 1 children were unhappy at 'losing ticks'; ticks represented being good/doing good work. A few children were upset that teachers sometimes ignored them when they said good things or put their hand up to answer. For example:

> *Sometimes when you put your hand up they won't see you. They never come to you .Yeah and then sometimes - but this is personal … there's 30 people in the class and sometimes when you put your hand up, you're waiting and waiting and waiting and waiting and then when they [come to you] you forget what you wanted to say, or when you have your hand up for so long and then they come to marking your work and you haven't done nothing, you have to stay in at playtime and do your work. (Year 5)*

But children were even more 'annoyed' when teachers 'ripped up' their work, named and shamed them in front of everyone or told them they had to do their work again. One child suggested that being told to re-do his work did not help him to improve as he merely 'copied it off the old sheet'. Also children did not find it helpful when teachers told them to 'work it out' themselves when they had not heard or understood the teacher's instructions.

Awareness of their own achievement

The majority of the children spoke openly about the different sets they were in and most were aware of the areas in which they were getting extra support and if this related to them being higher or lower attainers. The older children talked confidently about working in subject groups (e.g. literacy, numeracy) according to ability. Several children in the discussion groups were in higher ability groups (including being on the gifted and talented register) which meant that some received extra work, attended additional classes for numeracy and literacy and teachers treated them 'differently' to other ability groups. For example:

> *Because we're on top tables, different tables, the teacher says different things and asks us different questions and some tables don't give the answers. (Year 6)*

Nonetheless, some higher attaining children disliked being 'clever' because, as one Year 5 girl said 'other children look to me for the answers', or they were picked to go on trips which they described as being to 'show off their brains' (Year 5). Some younger children suggested they were in the top group because they 'know lots of stuff', whereas some other children seemed not to know why they were in different groups. They did however, recognise that some groups got 'really hard work' when compared to others. A group of Year 6 children who received extra support with their reading also recognised why this was necessary, and suggested that this was 'good' because 'you learn more' and 'it helps you to do the questions'.

For example, children, in lower ability groups understood that being in a 'low group' 'doesn't mean you're dumb' (Year 5) and they accepted that being in too high a group might mean that the work was too difficult for them to understand. Sharing a table with children of a similar ability level also meant that other children in the group could help if the teacher was busy. While some children did not mind being in the 'lowest group', a few objected to being teased because of this. On the whole children were contented with the level of the work they were doing, but some would have preferred to be doing harder work.

Most children were aware of what was expected of them and the targets they were working towards. They said that their targets were noted in their books and they received comments indicating whether their work was done well and whether they had met their learning objectives. This was also confirmed in pupil reviews / reports. Children were aware if they needed to improve their work and in most cases how (e.g. with the aid of learning mentors/teachers, by using 'number lines in maths' - Year 3), but some were unsure about particular things that could be done to improve their work. For example, some children were only told they could 'try harder'. This can, however, be contrasted with Year 2 children in a Phase 2 school who highlighted improvement suggestions such as 'putting openers, using punctuation and capital letters'.

Learning about other cultures and identities

There was a consensus amongst the children that they liked learning about different cultures (especially those they were less familiar with) as this helped them to understand different ethnic groups, or as one Year 5 child said, 'learning about someone else means I can describe it'. Some of the topics covered included:

- Work on where children and different foods come from (e.g. local area, African and Caribbean countries; project work on Sierra Leone and Malawi);

- Countries such as Australia, France, Africa, Egypt, China;

- Different religions: Sikhism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism

- Black history

- Black scientists.

In the focus groups when the children mentioned particular Black figures in history they were asked to say something about what they had learnt about these figures. The following illustrates the type of comments made by children across the focus groups:

We learnt about Nelson Mandela
He is old
He went to prison
He was in Africa, one of the countries in South Africa.

We learn about Black people, what they did, Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, Harriett Tubman
I: Who was Harriett Tubman?
Wasn't she a slave that built the underground thingy?
You need to know about what they did, Black people that fought against slavery.
(Year 6 - FG)

Although children had positive experiences learning about different cultures, it was noticeable in the second year of the evaluation where the same children had participated in focus groups in both years that they invariably gave the same answers as they did in the first year when they were asked for names of Black people and or countries they had learned about during the course of the school year. Some children recollected learning about for example, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks and slavery in Black history. But it was evident that whilst these children valued learning about important Black historical figures, some wanted to learn about positive things associated with Black people, and not just slavery, as illustrated by the following comment:

Every Black history month it's always about slavery and I think we sort of get it now.
(Year 6 girl)

The children in one Phase 2 school seemed to like having a Black teacher who could converse with them using Jamaican Patois, while children in a Phase 1 school suggested that having a former Black pupil talking about his experiences had made them 'feel proud' about who they are. These children also liked using Jamaican Patois to answer the register although they could not articulate why they enjoyed this.

There was a consensus amongst the children in one Phase 1 school that they did not learn about countries associated with their (parents') heritage, which was not dissimilar to children in a Phase 2 school where a group of Year 6 girls, when asked if they ever learnt about Jamaica (where their parents are from) in their lessons, replied 'of course not' and suggested that it would be 'cool' to learn about Jamaica[22]. This is in contrast to a Year 3 boy in another Phase 2 school who preferred not to learn about the countries his parents were from, as he argued that he knew 'everything' already. This child's perception of knowing 'everything' was perhaps influenced by that fact that he had visited the Caribbean island where his parents originate from 11 times. Interestingly, a few Mixed heritage children also said that their heritage was often not included in the lesson. For example:

My mom's from Scotland and my dad's from Ivory Coast, we don't usually learn about small countries ... Ivory Coast is quite small. (Year 6 boy)

It is salient that while the focus group children were enthusiastic about having access to a diverse curriculum, it was apparent that such a curriculum at times contributed to some Black children having negative experiences. For example, a Year 6 child who reported that an African storyteller who often came into the school was 'made fun' of by some of the White children in her class because the storyteller's 'hair is different' and sometimes the storyteller 'doesn't wear shoes outside' the classroom. This child found such experiences particularly difficult as she was of Mixed White and Black African heritage. Another Year 6 girl disliked the fact that when they did 'African dance' all the children in her class assumed she 'should know what to do' because she comes from Ghana. It was also evident that whereas in one Phase 1 school Black culture was 'more recognised throughout the year' (BCA teacher) and Black children in the school had a 'greater sense of their culture' owing to the school's

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[22] In the classroom observations undertaken in this school in both year groups there was no evidence of any culturally relevant curriculum input; emphasis was placed on, for example, 'how to get level 4', and vocabulary and times-tables etc.

participation in the BCA programme, in a few other schools there was a tendency to introduce Black culture for Black children. In one Phase 2 school for example, targeted BCA children were taken out of the lesson to be taught about Black history, which misses the point that all children can benefit from learning about Black cultures. Experiences such as this suggest there was a mismatch between school understanding of the BCA Programme and what an emphasis on Black culture would mean in practice. Having said that, it was noticeable that two of the children interviewed who had experience of being taken out of their lesson to learn about Black history felt more valued in these sessions because as they said:

> *We go to a group with a Black teacher and he teaches us Black history and it makes us feel good about who we are.*

> *In [name of teacher's] group I feel more important because I get to know about my, the history of my colour. But when I am with Ms [name of teacher] all we learn about is stuff that doesn't involve my colour. (Year 5)*

It would seem that the teacher who taught Black history also spoke Jamaican Patois to the children in the group which the children also valued. Despite the benefits these children derived from being taught Black history, a teaching assistant at the school saw it as 'tokenism' because 'for one day they learn about their culture and about things Black people in history have done'.

Importantly, while Black children did not necessarily have negative experiences of a culturally diverse curriculum, the data suggests that some Black children were doubtful about the value of having lessons about Africa taught, for example, by a White teacher because of uncertainty about their knowledge:

> *I just feel why, 'what's the point, couldn't they get an African teacher?' ... You don't know if they know what they're talking about. (Year 5)*

Which also suggests that there is a need for a wider understanding to be developed amongst Black children (and in teachers) that just because a teacher does not come from a particular ethnic group, this does not mean that they cannot be knowledgeable about the communities/cultures they are referring to, and/or that a person from a different ethnicity cannot acquire such knowledge and therefore impart it to others.

Views about relationships with pupils and teachers

Although most of the children in the focus groups across the case study schools spoke positively about their friendship groups which were comprised of children from diverse ethnic groups, it was apparent that not all children had positive experiences. Some children for example, talked about being left out of friendship games during playtime, whilst some complained about racist attitudes they had experienced from some of the children in their school:

> *She [name of child] said that Black people are made out of poo poo and wee wee … I'm mixed race but I have still got some Black in me and my family are mostly Black, so I didn't take that. (Year 3 girl)*

The child who recounted this negative experience was upset by what she described as teachers 'not challenging' or 'punishing' children who express racist views. Such experiences had also contributed to this child 'not liking' school.

In one focus group two girls also talked about being bullied. One said:

> *When people don't really like you they bully you and are not very nice. They say bad things to you, and like they ignore me, but I don't really know why.*

Classroom/school observations provided examples of schools that made it clear that racism is wrong such as in one Phase 2 school where there were several posters with statements and poems against racism. However, as the above comments indicate this does not mean that schools are racist free environments.

Within the case study schools there was also evidence of some Black children (boys and girls) in the focus groups feeling that some teachers treated them unfairly which led one group of Year 5 children to complain that some teachers 'got on their nerves'. These were teachers who the children said: 'don't respect your opinion' and 'think that you're back chatting all the time'. A student teacher was disliked for being 'unfair'. The children described 'unfairness' as the teacher 'sending people out', telling children off for 'no reason', not listening to them and being rude. Classroom observations of this particular Year group's English lesson corroborated their negative experiences with the student teacher who was White and from a European background. The BCA Programme co-ordinator in the school seemed also to be aware that this student teacher's approach presented particular difficulties in relation to Black children's school experiences. During the discussion group meeting children at this school also gave an example of being treated unfairly by a supply teacher:

> *'[name of child] get up, what are you doing?' 'I'm not doing anything.' 'Yes you are, basically you're being rude and impudent, now go to [name of deputy head] you are not coming back'. (Year 5)*

Black Children in other schools reported being treated 'differently' to other children on discipline and other issues. For example:

> *We don't get chosen as much [as White children] and whenever somebody [White children] does something [wrong], the teacher suspects us. (Year 6 boys)*

Such differential treatment resulted in some children (boys and girls) feeling 'frustrated' and 'angry' to the extent that in a couple of cases they expressed 'wanting to fight'. These children suggested that some of their experiences with school staff and children related to their skin colour. For example, a White girl reportedly called a Black girl a 'Black pig' and the teacher was perceived by the children to ignore it. Several children mentioned being told off when White children were not reprimanded for exhibiting the same behaviours as them. This sense of injustice reinforced these children's feelings of being treated unfairly by some teachers.

Negative experiences such as those highlighted above led the BCA consultant in one local authority to suggest that an all-embracing school ethos could not be 'fully created or achieved' until inclusive school practice 'moves from delegated to distributed and dispersed'; meaning that such practice, even if visible at a surface level would have to filter all the way down through schools (including teaching staff and children), and not just be evident in the school curriculum, or reinforced by the person with responsibility for ensuring a culturally inclusive ethos, if Black children are to feel truly included in the school.

Understanding and experiences of the BCA Programme

One of the aims of the evaluation was to explore children's understanding of the BCA Programme. With the exception of one Phase 1 school[23], children who took part in focus groups discussions were asked if they knew about the project and what it aimed to achieve. It was noticeable however that most of the children did not have a real understanding of what the BCA Programme was aiming to do. Children at two of the case study schools said they were in a 'special group' because 'we're clever'. There is also evidence to suggest that some Black children were confused as to what the BCA Programme pertained to as illustrated by the following comment:

> *Is it about what Black people have achieved and you learn about it? (Year 5)*

One child thought he had been sent for 'extra lessons' because he was 'down in [his] work' and his levels were 'not high enough', but later realised that the extra lessons were about Black history. Other children in the discussion group at this child's school similarly reported only learning about Black history and culture in their 'special group'. These lessons were valued however, by the children as it led to them feeling 'more important' and 'good' about themselves.

As part of one school's involvement in the BCA Programme Year 5 children in the school covered Benin. Some of the children in the focus groups reported watching 'weird videos' and argued that the topic was 'a bit alright, but a bit boring'. Discussions with some of the children in the wider class; perusal of their project work; and observation of a class rehearsal of a play using Benin masks they had made suggested that most children (Black and White) liked learning about Benin and found the topic interesting. Moreover a pupil with a Portuguese heritage said she was particularly excited that the project work had enabled her to talk to her father about his own experiences of visiting Benin.

A primary strategy manager in a Phase 2 local authority drew attention to teacher comments derived from local authority evaluation of school involvement in the BCA Programme which suggests that whilst the children might not have fully understood why they were included in the BCA Programme or why they were doing certain topics or were being monitored, this was not detrimental to either their engagement with the BCA Programme or their overall school work. The PSM noted that the children were:

> *Engaging with their homework, they are writing more passionately, they're `saying things like, 'can you please get us that textbook? We want to read it' and they feel more empowered as learners. That's what seems to be coming through. (PSM)*

In another local authority targeted BCA programme children were described as 'keen and eager' and 'motivated to write' because, as a result of the BCA Programme, teachers were focusing on things that interested them. This is further exemplified by a BCA consultant who shared the experience of a group of African-Caribbean boys in one of his BCA schools who, prior to their involvement in the BCA programme, had disliked writing:

> *A group of pupils mainly boys, African-Caribbean, who had an aversion to writing, they have …for the last two terms … produced a school newsletter. And that was done partly to give them a purpose for writing and also to give them some kudos for the writing that they do. They were given the opportunity to decide what goes into the newsletter and to design the format of the newsletter … They talked about how the production of the newsletter enabled them to enjoy writing for the first time. They saw*

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[23] This school informed the research team that they had taken the decision not to inform targeted BCA Programme children about their involvement in the project.

that what they were doing was of importance because they were writing to an audience and they were writing [about] the things that they actually liked. A couple of them talked about how the exercise actually helped them with their spelling and made them keener to improve their spelling and their grammar as a result of it. ...Perhaps in another setting [they] wouldn't have been selected to do something like a newsletter because of the fact that they didn't like writing and they were considered to be 'poor' at writing. And they also spoke about the fact that it has made them more disciplined as writers and to see the importance of writing as well as the enjoyment of writing. (Consultant)

This is not to suggest however, that all experiences were positive. In one school, targeted BCA programme boys in the focus groups expressed negativity about the extra lessons and school work they had experienced owing to being targeted BCA children.

Positive self identity and raising self-esteem

As outlined in chapter 1, a key aspect of the BCA Programme is that schools would encourage Black children to develop a positive self identity of being Black (where this was absent) and to raise their self-esteem (again where this was low). In an attempt to understand how Black children perceived their self identity and self-esteem, focus group contributors were asked a series of questions which focused on their identity, self-esteem and aspirations.

All of the children that took part in focus group discussions, and who talked with researchers during lessons or at lunch times/breaks, spoke positively about themselves as Black children, with many reflecting on the languages they spoke (where this was a factor), their religion, siblings and countries that they visited vis-à-vis their background. This positive sense of self was also reflected in teacher comments such as those by a teacher at a Phase 2 school who stated that the Black children in her class 'love to speak about their own cultures' and positively identified with athletes like Jesse Owens when they did Black history, with the boys indicating that they were 'going to be the best runner in the world'. One of the parents interviewed at a Phase 1 school was 'very happy' about the efforts her child's school was making in helping her daughter to develop a positive self identity and raise her self-esteem. However, it is worth noting that the school's contributions were valued in part because they were perceived by this mother as helping to 'build on' what she was doing at home:

I've always told her about Black history, to me it starts from the home and I've bought her books and took her to museums because I like her to know where she is coming from. (Mother)

Staff in the case study schools were also asked to indicate the various strategies they had implemented in an effort to raise Black children's self-esteem. One school had used its participation in the BCA Programme to organise drama workshops which they saw as helping to raise children's self-esteem and their confidence through the performances they enacted, for example, in school assemblies. Four others drew attention to positive images of Black people that they had on display throughout their schools and whose lives were explored in subjects such as art, history and in literacy. Examples were given of Black role models (e.g. footballers, athletes, poets, other professionals) in a Phase 1 coming into school and talking to the whole school. One school (Phase 2) revealed that it had engaged a Black charity organisation to come into the school and run raising self-esteem sessions for the Black children who were targeted as part of the BCA Programme. This included children being encouraged to achieve, to challenge negative stereotypes and to become more aware of Africa and African migrations. Although this was viewed by the headteacher as providing the Black children with access to positive role models and the children were themselves

positive about the sessions they had experienced (especially the emphasis on 'I can be what I want to be if I work hard at it'), one of the teachers in this school expressed disquiet at the fact that this additional input was provided at the time when other children attended lessons such as design and technology or art, and the targeted BCA children therefore missed out on these.

Teaching staff at a Phase 2 school favoured a raising achievement strategy which they had been introduced to through their participation in the BCA Programme. The Black achievement workshops (as they were known) were for all Year 5 children at the school. They were initially led by the BCA consultant supporting the school and later by two young Black women who had themselves achieved highly, were regarded by the two interviewed teachers as helpful in enabling them to develop positive relationships with Black children, and in raising their self-esteem. The headteacher also said 'if you're going to get achievement, you've got to have the children engaged and motivated and wanting to learn'. One teacher suggested the workshop was a 'good starting point' for building her own confidence and encouraging her to talk about cultural differences to a child recently arrived to the school from Uganda who she opined was 'struggling with settling into this society'. Some of the topics raised by the achievement workshops, such as learning about important Black people in history (e.g. Nelson Mandela) who had had an impact on the world, the involvement of some young Black people in knife crime, and the need for Black children to be ambitious and have high aspirations, like Ben Carson (a prominent Black surgeon) were considered by the teachers whose pupils attended the workshops to also provide insight for 'children who are not Black' (Teacher), and as such were regarded as a useful strategy in raising the self-esteem of children from diverse ethnicities.

The whole class workshops explored global issues and examined the different lyrics that are used for example, in rap music, as a way of empowering the children to 'change negative issues through positive means'[24]. The workshops were supported by the two Year 5 teachers setting related homework and research tasks which encouraged, as one teacher argued, the children to explore 'who's having an effect on the world and in what way they [as children can] have an effect on the world, [and consider] is it negative or it is positive?'[25]. The teachers also linked the workshops to literacy (with specific writing tasks on knife crime which culminated in letters being sent to a local MP), science, ICT, PSHE (personal, social and health education) and citizenship in terms of as one teacher stated 'how we as people affect the place that we live in and what we can do' to make a difference. The workshops were reported by teachers (and focus group children) to assist class discussions about racism and how things 'can be changed in the world'. Another key outcome for the teachers concerned was the fact that the workshops provided opportunities for them to develop the children's literacy skills including 'writing for an audience', creating 'persuasive arguments', 'debating' (for example, the attributes of different role models, whether children should carry knives etc,), doing research and report writing. Both teachers were impressed by the confidence the workshops instilled in the children to, for example, 'stand up in assembly or give their view point without shying away … or being scared to say what they think' (Teacher). An evaluation of the workshops written by one of the teachers at the school is outlined below:

> *The children have been enthusiastic participants of the Black Achievement workshop. The children have thoroughly enjoyed and been enriched by learning about the life of Ben Carson. The Afro (sic)-Caribbean children especially have felt even more valued and I have seen them even more engaged and passionate. The children of the Afro-*

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[24] The researcher who visited the school observed children in two Year 5 classes rehearsing the songs they had written as part of the workshop.
[25] Focus group participants gave examples of the ways in which they thought they could make a difference in the world. The focus groups comprised Black and White children.

Caribbean descent have enjoyed sharing what they know of their own culture and describing the experiences of their descendents, whilst the rest of the children have been amazed to learn about slavery and its consequences. The workshop has been a hugely motivating force for the children, who have eagerly anticipated each new session. They have been given the opportunity to explore how people have expressed themselves; their thoughts and feelings, and have been able to think about issues, which they feel affect their lives and express these positively through music; giving them a sense of empowerment to change negative issues through positive means. Each child regardless of ability has participated fully with each phase of the workshop. Each child has been supported and their learning guided at a level which is appropriate to their needs. Each child has been encouraged and their self-esteem has risen more with each session; this is not only due to the content of the workshop but also the positive way in which it was delivered. (Teacher)

The teacher's comments above suggest that the workshops contributed to African-Caribbean children feeling 'even more valued' (as they shared aspects of their culture with children from other ethnic groups) and being 'more engaged and passionate' about their learning, with another concluding that she had 'never seen' the children 'so enthusiastic about anything'. This perception was supported by the comments made by children (Black and White) who participated in a focus group at this school. The children reported the workshops they attended as helping them to 'believe in ourselves' and their abilities. As well as inspiring them 'to make a difference' in the world, and in some instances reinforcing ambitions they previously held, such as wanting to be a doctor (an ambition held by three - 2 Black and 1 White), the workshops were liked as they made learning 'fun'. It is evident also that the workshops had a profound effect on some of the White British children who attended the workshops, as illustrated by the following exert:

Interviewer: It seems to me that your involvement in the Black achievement workshop has been really good for you.

Child: Yes, we have the book and the title is 'Being me' and we copied our hand and then we wrote things in our fingers that we'd want to be and the first thing I wrote in it was being a model, and now I don't care about that. I don't know how I'm meant to say this, but I'd rather be a doctor and help people than be a model. I know that if I'm a doctor then I can help people and I can help myself as well. (Year 5 - White girl)

Aspirations

The quote above suggests that some children in the case study schools had higher aspirations as a result of their participation in the BCA programme. During the focus groups Black children were asked to indicate what they wanted to do after they finished school. While some children said they 'did not know' (mainly the younger aged children) several suggested a number of occupations that they aspired to. These were based on things they enjoyed doing such as football as well as on information they had gleaned from relatives working in differing professions. Boys in one school for example also appeared to be influenced to be policemen by talks delivered by police officers visiting the school (at the time of the evaluation visit). The occupations that were suggested can be grouped as follows:

- Legal (lawyer, solicitor)
- Finance (accountant, banker)
- Medical (doctor, nurse, midwife, paediatrician)
- Veterinary (vet)
- Self employed (own car company, mechanic)
- Beauty (beauty therapist, hairdresser, barber)
- Fashion (fashion designer)

- Arts (artist, comic book writer, actor)
- Building trade (builder)
- Music industry (singer - one girl demonstrated her talent)
- Education (teacher, scientist, marine biologist, professor)
- Protection services (policeman, army, fire fighter)
- Catering (cook)
- Entertainer (singer, dancer, cheerleader, actor)
- Sports (footballer, basketball player, cricketer, athlete, wrestler).

Even though a range of occupations are listed, the largest number of selections related to careers in medicine, education and the legal profession, but whereas teaching and being a doctor was chosen by boys and girls, girls were more likely to suggest beauty, fashion and nursing, with boys wanting to undertake sports related activities (e.g. a Year 6 boy said he wanted to be an athlete because he was 'good at running'). This suggests that some of the choices were gender stereotypical, but as illustrated by the White Year 5 female quoted above, children can be encouraged to aspire to different occupations and to make non-gender specific choices.

Two children as well as aspiring to be doctors, also had ambitions of being entrepreneurs which would help them as one said to 'raise money and help people in Africa'; aspirations which appeared to be largely influenced by their participation in the achievement workshops held in their school. Interestingly, one of the children said that her parents had 'always pushed' her to work hard, but her attendance at the workshops had made her realise that 'my mum and dad were pushing me in a hard way whereas the workshop pushed me in a fun way, so I actually wanted to do it'. So because the workshop had made learning fun she actually wanted to learn more and achieve her ambition of being a doctor.

Notwithstanding the above, it is worth noting that while there was evidence within the case study schools of Black children being encouraged to have high aspirations, some of the subliminal messages available to children might also have reinforced stereotyped perceptions / attitudes that Black (and minority ethnic) people are only able to excel in sport activities, as suggested by photographs of Amir Khan and Kelly Holmes observed (in the room of an interviewed respondent) with the question posed 'could you be Olympic champion?'.

Where children suggested an occupation they were asked to indicate why and whether they knew anyone who worked in the role specified. There were a few who claimed not to know why they had selected the particular profession such as two Year 5 children who expressed a desire to be teachers, but they 'did not know where the idea had come from'. This lack of awareness can be compared with for example, a Year 6 boy who said that he wanted to be a lawyer because he was 'good at arguing' with another boy insisting that he was going to be an actor because he is 'very dramatic'. One child at a Phase 2 school said that her mother was a doctor, while another's mother was a nurse. A Somali girl also at the same school said that she wanted to be a paediatrician (both her mother and aunt were doctors before coming to England). One Year 5 boy said that he wanted to be a 'doctor or a policeman' because he 'likes helping people', but his desire to be a doctor also seemed to be inspired by his uncle who was a doctor. The Year 5 and 6 children were also asked to indicate whether they had an understanding of what the role would entail, and the type of qualifications they would need. These Year groups seemed to have a good understanding of both.

Summary

The classroom questionnaire illustrated the attitudes of children from White, Asian and Black backgrounds to school and learning. A greater proportion of the Year 2 children who took part in focus group discussions had more positive attitudes to school than Year 5 children. Black children were more likely to indicate they were less happy about their behaviour at school.

Most children in the focus groups had positive experiences of school and identified things that they liked about school. There were differing views about homework; some enjoyed it and argued that it helped them practice, others disliked it and others claimed to have none to do.

There were mixed experiences and views on being in different (ability) groups; some children seemed to take no notice of the groups, others said that they were good because they did not get work that was too hard. Children generally knew when they did work that was good or not good enough. Some had very clear ideas about how to make their work better, while others had been given very general advice such as 'try harder'.

Most children had very little idea about what the BCA Programme was or what it involved. They liked learning about other cultures with some wishing to see their own culture talked about (more). Children had a range of aspirations based on what they enjoyed doing and information learnt from friends and family (and in one case, school).

Chapter 7 - Parents perceptions of their children's schooling

This chapter examines parents' views about their children's schooling including the school culture and ethos, their understanding of the BCA Programme and whether or not they saw it is addressing their educational/achievement concerns.

Perceptions about their child's school and school attitudes to raising Black children's achievement

School culture and ethos

Of the seven case study schools only one was praised by the parents interviewed. The parents concerned saw this school as actively promoting 'different cultures and religions sharing together' (parent group) and learning. Importantly, for these parents, the school had an all embracing school ethos which they argued was evident prior to the school's involvement in the BCA programme. One parent spoke at length about the type of ethos she felt her child's school was offering:

> *When a parent or child walks into this school … you feel that positiveness about the culture, the Black and Asian cultures… and they are not just sort of in a box that comes out in Black history month … The history and culture and images are here like in the fabric of the building in the school and within the staff, the resources - there's books on the shelves, there's poets and writers, there's photographs - so it just lives and breathes the Black culture even before [the school's involvement in the BCA programme] … It's not something that's just popped up now, so they're learning, they'll walk down the corridor and they'll point out Malcolm X, there from the day they step into the school and they'll have the input of Black history month or we may have the celebration at assemblies, achievement awards. (Parent)*

> *It's a really multicultural school. There's no one culture more dominant than the other. However, it's a church school and all the parents and children take on board the fact that the main thrust, the main ethos comes from the Christian perspective with respect to other cultures and religions as well. (Parent group)*

In chapter 5 a middle class school ethos was alluded to as deterring greater involvement of some parents and carers of Black children in schools identified as 'middle class'. The case study data also suggests that some parents feel the ethos of their children's school is not inclusive. This was true of two Muslim mothers of African origin at a school who felt that despite the headteacher's encouragement of teachers to 'embrace parents' by talking to them on the playground, the teachers did not speak to them. These experiences can however, be compared to the following statements made by two other parents (one of whom was Muslim) at the same school:

> *What is good in this school, before my daughter [started] they asked us whether she is Muslim and what she eats... and they really take into consideration our tradition as well. (Father)*

> *From a personal point of view I would say that the school is culturally aware, and as a Black person I think that is very, very important ... it deals with cultural awareness of the children, which doesn't just include Black children, it includes children from different parts of the world as well'. (Mother)*

Black parents' assessment of the inclusive nature of the schools their children attended seemed also to be informed by the ways in which the schools addressed incidents of racism. One parent reported her school being 'straight onto it' when her daughter was called a racist

name, whereas two parents in another school intimated that their school seemed unwilling to address Asian children's racism, which negatively impacted on their perceptions of the school culture and ethos.

Parental expectations

All of the parent respondents had high academic expectations for their children. The parent respondents at one Phase 1 school valued the school's goal of academic excellence which fitted in with their own goals:

> They [the children] know that they can achieve which is what the [name of headteacher] says at the end of the dance festival you know she's looking at her children and she could see politicians, MPs, you know doctors, teachers, whatever from the children that are there. And indirectly she's helping the parents to really think, 'yes my child can do it, my child can do it'. (Parent)

Whether or not parents identified any concerns about their children's education seemed to be underlined by their children's experience of school. For example:

> [Name of child] loves school, loves English, she loves reading and history, science everything on the whole really, she's doing really well... she loves the work... she's very intelligent … her teacher has nothing but praise … she just loves learning. I'm very lucky. (Parent)

Parents whose children were achieving well appeared to be satisfied that the schools concerned had high expectations of their children and were supporting their learning and meeting their needs:

> I feel my daughter has been supported to the best of her ability. I don't think that she has been behind in any way. I think they are aware of her culture and where she is coming from and I think she has been allowed to grow in that as well as being supported in her achievement and attainment. (Parent group)

One parent reported that her son's school had supported her child's love of maths and science: 'they really, really encouraged him'. This parent also stated that the school 'nurtured' her son's confidence which she believed had helped him academically whereas another parent suggested that more could be done to support children with an 'inquiring' mind. Notwithstanding, the parents interviewed at the school considered their children fortunate to be attending a school that was academically focused:

> You can tell there's a lot of gifted and talented children here … it's helped to raise their standard because they become really positive and confident. To see them in assemblies, to see them standing up there reading from whatever age, and you just think 'wow'… I mean academically [name of son] has done amazingly. It's fantastic, the school has been fantastic for him, and all the children here because they really see every child matters. (Parent group)

In contrast to the parents cited above, three parents in a Phase 2 school were concerned that the academic standards they had previously observed in their children's school had begun to slip, and that an absence of homework was an illustration of this:

> The problem is homework … not getting enough homework, two to three weeks, nothing this week. I am so fed up with these teachers … how he progresses in class I would say it is my teaching, it is not their teaching. … he is spending too much time playing. (Parent group)

Another parent at the school also thought that the work her daughter was given was 'too easy' and that the school 'should push her harder'. This viewpoint concurred with other parents who perceived the work their children were doing was 'not stretching' them enough. The importance of being stretched was further emphasised by a parent at another Phase 2 school who said that her son wanted to be a cardiologist, and that: 'you can't read formulas, and patients' notes if you can't read'.

Parents at one Phase 1 school called for the school to provide them with a 'more balanced picture' of how their children are doing and areas where they have weaknesses that need to be improved, in order that they can support them more effectively. These parents claimed that schools sometimes gave Black parents 'false hope' that their children were doing 'really well', only for Black children to later fail. This perception was based on their knowledge of the achievement outcomes of some Black children.

Unsurprisingly, the parents that expressed the most disquiet at schools not meeting their high expectations were the ones who felt their children were underachieving. For example, one parent who was experiencing difficulties with his daughter's progression suggested that the school had low expectations of her, and that the support she had received from the school was through his 'constant questioning and complaining', rather than the school's willingness to help his child and raise her attainment[26]. Similarly, a parent from a newly arrived African community was concerned that her son's school was not addressing her son's EAL needs, which was impacting on his school experience and ability to achieve. This parent's lack of fluency in English meant that she had difficulty supporting her son's school work. She was also concerned that her son's work was 'never on display' in his class, that he 'never participates in anything' and 'never received motivation stickers'[27]. This parent was so upset about her son's school experience that she broke down in tears when she was being interviewed. Conversely, another African heritage parent at the same school, who was fluent in English, was contented with his daughter's school experience. He said his daughter 'did not have any problems' and 'always achieve[d] her targets well' (parent group). This father also praised the school for taking the family's culture into consideration in the curriculum offered and in other aspects (e.g. reading) of his daughter's learning. The contrasting experiences of parents at the same school further illustrate the extent to which individual parent experiences need to be taken into consideration if wider understanding is to be developed about Black parental expectations and their experience with schools.

Parental engagement / involvement

Chapter 5 drew attention to concerns expressed by some of the case study schools as to the difficulties they had encountered in trying to involve parents / carers of Black children in the school and their children's learning, and the strategies they had adopted through the BCA Programme to engender greater parental/carer engagement. Parents who attended the focus groups were invited to indicate the ways in which they engaged with schools and how they were involved in their children's learning. The findings presented suggested that the views of some Black parents views were at odds with those of the teachers at the schools their children attended.

A high level of Black parental and carer involvement was alluded to by the Black parents interviewed at one Phase 1 school who also praised the school's efforts in engaging them in school activities and the learning of their children. These parents spoke of positive relationships that they had with their children's teachers and suggested that if there was 'anything wrong' with their children's experience of school they could speak to the teacher concerned and receive 'good feedback'.

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[26] It is worth noting that this parent spent some time after the focus group had ended highlighting some of the achievement concerns he had about his daughter.
[27] The researchers who interviewed this parent were shown examples of the child's work by the mother and taken into his classroom to illustrate the points she was making.

In other schools, some parents worried that their children's schools were not engaging them as parents, which would enable them to understand their children's progression and what more could be done to support them. Owing to work commitments, most were unable to attend parent events held during the school day. The limited amount of time available during report evenings was commented upon and the difficulty they had encountered in trying to speak to teachers at the end of the school day (on the occasions they had tried), despite schools having, as one parent said, 'open door' policies. One mother for example, while welcoming the school's policy of allowing parents to come into school and look at their children's books suggested from her own experience that this was 'unrealistic' as the teacher 'doesn't have time for you'. Moreover, she queried 'who is going to stay back for me to look at my daughter's books? The restricted time available at parents' evening meant that some teachers were unable to discuss the specifics of individual targets which left parents feeling uncertain about their child's attainment; whether or not targets had been set; and/or how to progress them. Where parents had been able to discuss their children with respective teachers they had intimated that they had raised some concerns, such as their children appearing 'bored' in particular lessons and not knowing why.

All of the parents identified various ways in which they tried to support their children's learning such as attending parents' evenings, helping with weekly spellings and other homework. Other examples included a parent in a Phase 1 school who had used the school's coverage of Black history to do some research herself and find out more about the Black figures her son was learning about as a means of helping him, and this was followed up with a visit to a museum during Black history month. This parent also acquired a tutor for her son to provide him with extra support during his national assessment tests preparation.

While these parents were actively involved in their children's learning, it was evident that not all were as self-assured as a parent in a Phase 2 school who stated that she was 'confident in being able to support' her son with the homework he received, and often 'did extra homework with him'. Instead they acknowledged their inability to support their children in particular subject areas. Mathematics was one subject that most parents felt unable to help their children with because they were unfamiliar with how for example, mathematics is taught in schools and sometimes felt the instructions given by teachers to their children about their homework were 'confusing'. Several parents mentioned 'struggling' with their children's maths homework and not having sufficient information about the homework and what is expected:

> *The methods of doing maths, she [her daughter] knows more than me.*
> *Mine is the same when she brings her homework home she wants me to sit down and work with her, but sometimes the maths I don't understand so she will tell me what it's about.*
>
> *To be honest I haven't got a clue what they're teaching, sometimes I'm teaching him maths and he says 'this isn't how Miss teaches me' and I say 'son I can only teach you how I know, if there's nothing to show this is the way you're learning it. I can only teach you how I know it'. (Parent FG)*

They were equally concerned that their children sometimes did not understand the homework set and that they were reluctant to talk about their homework at home, or to ask their teachers for help, despite being encouraged by their parents to do so. Several parents also complained at homework being brought home on, as one parent described it, 'obscure bits of paper … flying about the place'.

Awareness and experience of the BCA Programme

At one school the parents interviewed were aware of the BCA Programme. They saw it as a way of highlighting what the school is 'doing well' with raising Black children's achievement, but at the same time they pointed out that prior to the existence of the BCA Programme, the school curriculum and resources were diverse and that the school had experienced positive Black role models (including the headteacher). One parent went as far as to suggest that as parents, they were 'used to' this way of working.

Across the case study schools, parents' comments are indicative of parents and carers of Black children having a more appropriate understanding of the BCA Programme where it was located within their child's year group and/or if they had a targeted child. In one school for example, a Year 5 parent group had knowledge of the BCA Programme whereas the Year 2 parents claimed to have had 'no information whatsoever'. [The school was working with the Year 5's.] These differential understandings were further exemplified in another school whereby a parent who said that she had not heard of the BCA Programme had actually attended a BCA parent meeting because she thought something was 'wrong' with her child, but was later relieved when she learnt that the BCA Programme is for 'Black kids', and that her son was being supported through it. This parent's lack of awareness was evident in the focus group where she asked several questions about the BCA Programme. (This was also true of parent respondents in other schools.) Parents in another school appeared similarly uninformed, which is rather surprising given that one mother who was interviewed as part of the evaluation was involved in helping the children to make African masks as part of their BCA Programme work.

The lack of professed lack of knowledge about the BCA Programme by some parents possibly accounts for a parent (of a Mixed heritage child) in the focus group not realising that the school intended to introduce positive Black role models into the school which this parent felt her son could benefit from:

> *I've already heard talk of gangs and anxiety about gangs … it's not necessarily a Black thing but he [son] has identified himself as Black and he feels as though he has to be part of something as well. … If they had an initiative around achievement, something around that, like mentoring to deal with some of the anxieties that I think some of the children have as they are getting a little older and getting ready for secondary school, and some of the pressures there as well. You know being academic isn't cool either. (Parent group)*

In contrast another parent saw the BCA Programme as having made a 'real difference' to what her daughter was learning in Year 5, but was concerned that the school did not leave it too late to integrate diversity into the curriculum for all children, and not just those in the BCA Programme year groups. Parents were generally concerned that in having a diverse curriculum Black children learnt 'positive' things about Black people and not just about slavery, which coincided with the children's views highlighted earlier.

Tensions were identified between some parents' expectations and how the schools were addressing their concerns. For example, a Year 5 parent of a targeted BCA Programme child at a Phase 2 school questioned the academic content of a drama activity that was focusing on 'conflict resolution'. She did not interpret the activity as being associated with raising children's self-esteem (which is how it was framed by the school). This parent thought the school might have focused on 'something academic' such as 'science and mathematics, and presentation skills'. In one school, a parent of a child with special educational needs was particularly concerned that her son sometimes struggled with class group work because of his inability to hear what other children in the group were saying. She suggested that this was an on-going issue with the school, and while the school had discussed her son's targets

with her, this parent considered targets 'attached to numbers inappropriate'. She would have preferred targets such as her son having to demonstrate for example, being 'able to read three pages in a book' or to 'do a presentation'. It was also apparent that one parent in a Phase 1 school had withdrawn her child from receiving targeted support; although it is not known precisely why. These examples suggest that the parents concerned had not understood the purpose of the BCA Programme or why the activities had been implemented or why the particular targets had been set, and that the schools had failed to communicate their reasoning effectively.

Summary

Parents were generally positive about their children's school. In some schools parents knew nothing about the BCA Programme. Parents with children in years who were being targeted by the BCA Programme were more aware than others. Some parents felt that the BCA Programme was addressing their concerns, but others indicated that they wanted more academically focussed interventions rather than ones aimed at social aspects of behaviour.

Chapter 8 - School awareness of the BCA Programme and changes in understanding and practice

Having explored activities implemented in case study schools, and pupil and parental perceptions and experiences, this chapter aims to develop an insight into school staff comprehension of the BCA Programme, factors affecting understanding and changes in understanding and practice from a school and local authority perspective.

School case study respondents were asked about their understanding of the BCA Programme (i.e. what it aimed to do and how this was being addressed in their school; how they were informed about their school's participation; and the type of professional development they had received to develop their understanding and practice). Where teachers (and teaching assistants) had targeted BCA children they had a greater insight into the aims and objectives of the BCA Programme as illustrated by the excerpt below:

> *The main aims of the project are to raise the achievement of Black children. … My understanding is that we need to make sure that our curriculum is flexible, it's everything from body language, the language we choose to use, you know, reading materials, lessons that are being taught. It needs to be accessible so all children can achieve, can make sense of it, that their identity can be celebrated too. (Teacher)*

However, it was clear that not all staff saw the BCA Programme as offering 'different' strategies for raising Black children's achievement as illustrated by the following comment:

> *It's all been very general what we've heard, and I can't think of anything specific that I can say which is just specific to Black children's achievement because a lot of the stuff that we talk about children's achievement is things that are affecting lots of groups of children. …They're strategies I'm using across the board with all children, so it's not necessarily with Black children. So it's making sure they know what their targets are, making sure they know what they need to do to improve their writing or their maths. It's just things we're using for all children's attainment to move them on across the board. (Teacher)*

Most of the governors interviewed did not fully comprehend the aims and objectives of the BCA Programme. Indeed one claimed to know 'very little about it', and only two seemed to understand differential Black attainment and what their school was doing to enhance Black achievement. Nonetheless, all of the governors were supportive of their school's involvement in the BCA Programme.

Factors affecting schools understanding

The evaluation found that staff awareness/in-depth understanding of the BCA Programme in the case study schools was affected by internal school communication. There was not always sufficient internal school explanation/dissemination about the BCA Programme to ensure that staff were fully aware of the initiative and its aims. And not all staff had participated in training provided by the BCA consultants which further affected their understanding.

One deputy headteacher claimed to lack awareness about the precise focus of the BCA Programme and type of support available through the BCA Programme to schools. He expressed disappointment at what he regarded as a lack of external 'training, information and support' being offered to his school:

Maybe I got the wrong perception at the time, but I thought it was a kind of support network and that there was kind of training and information and support. And for the first year in all honesty, there was very, very little. It was kind of one way traffic that I kept getting 'can you complete this, and 'can you do this?' And 'can you do this analysis' and 'what are you doing?' And I found that quite pressurising because I wasn't quite sure what I was meant to be doing or where we should be going. (Deputy Head)

Discussion with him revealed that part of the frustration he had felt during the first year of his school's involvement in the BCA programme was because he had been expecting external support (and not necessarily a consultant) to come in and work with classes participating in the BCA Programme, and thereby counteract his own confessed lack of expertise in the area of minority ethnic achievement. This is what happened in the school's second year of participation which left him feeling much happier about the type of support that the school had received:

… the second year we've got a lot more going on because people from the local authority have been coming in and supporting classes and the children, and that's what I was hoping for, that there was outside expertise … young people working in the classes and achieving something that I couldn't even start to achieve because they're musically minded, they're talented and they're kind of talking from their life experiences as well, which I can see has been really effective to the children in the school. (Deputy Head)

The deputy's comments suggest that even if he had fully comprehended the nature of the BCA consultant and regional adviser support that he could have accessed, it would not have been adequate to address his needs, as he wanted young Black people who the children in his school could relate to, and who had musical and other talents to come in and work with the Year groups concerned[28].

Changes in staff understanding and classroom practice

A key aspect of the evaluation was to ascertain changes in school understanding and practice as a result of their experience of the BCA Programme. The data collected within the second year of the evaluation is indicative of staff awareness and practice having changed, as exemplified by the following quote:

We have been on the project for nearly four years now and staff are seeing the ethnicity groups within their classroom, within the groups they are in. [Achievement expectations] are now written into our school improvement plan … it's part and parcel of what we do in this school. (Headteacher)

Two of the teachers interviewed at this school explained that having targeted BCA children had encouraged them to find out more about the linguistic needs of African-Caribbean heritage children who joined the school directly from Jamaica. Their involvement in the BCA programme culminated in a visit to primary schools in Jamaica (funded from external local authority resources) and this had helped them to develop a better understanding of why some Jamaican children newly arrived in Britain encountered difficulty with writing in Standard English.

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[28] The raising achievement workshops discussed in chapter 6 were an example of the type of work that the 'external support' offered his school.

In contrast to their first year interviews, the second year interviews with teachers at a Phase 2 school demonstrated a marked change in their understanding as to how the school was using achievement data to monitor BCA children's achievement. They had not previously understood that data was available by ethnic group. As well as having a better understanding of how to track children's performance, some headteachers reported staff having a greater awareness of the factors affecting Black achievement, and how to implement interventions so as to improve attainment. The following examples from teachers at Phase 2 schools illustrate the ways in which some teaching staff felt their understanding had been enhanced in relation to implementing a culturally diverse curriculum, and developing a better understanding of Black children's backgrounds:

> *What this project has done for me is taught me, for example, to think more carefully about the multicultural texts that I use for literacy, the language I use, the body language I use when I am in front of the class. … I think what it has done, it has been really good, in terms of heightening awareness, for teachers who aren't necessarily aware, you can get to the end of the year and think, oh, and they haven't made any progress. […] In terms of the BCA stuff … I have learnt about [name of local area] celebrating the heritage, knowing our local area, what it has to offer. Which without the project - I have been here 10 years, and I didn't know it. I had never considered the texts I use for literacy, you can really broaden the amount of children you reach, and capture their interest. (Teacher)*

> *[Before the workshop] I wouldn't even have thought of taking apart the different ethnic backgrounds of the [Black] children because I would have just sort of taken them as a whole. But then it just made me realise that they've come to this country or maybe though they've been born in this country, but their families originate from another country. (Teacher)*

Interestingly, the teacher cited above suggested that her involvement in the BCA Programme had encouraged her to see the children in her class as 'individuals' and along with this, the supporting activities which the children did made her 'realise that [Black] children are capable, if they are given that little bit more freedom …to express themselves as individuals' and demonstrate their abilities. In addition to some staff perceptions being changed about the capabilities of Black children and how their learning and achievement might be enhanced, it was noticeable in other schools, that some White staff felt better able to develop relationships with Black parents as they had a more informed understanding about Black cultures and the experiences of some Black parents. For example:

> *Personally the thing I've found useful, not being Black, is when we had a staff meeting by [name of BCA consultant] and we talked about the culture and the history behind groups of people, what I thought was useful was when he mentioned to try and put yourself in the position of the parent, a lot of Black parents have had a bad experience at school themselves and it's really important that you as a teacher involve the parents and say, 'hello' to them and make them feel welcome and part of their children's education. And so I think that has really helped me. … It just makes me more aware that I'm always saying, 'Hello and how are you? Is there anything worrying you? Have you got any problems? Please come and talk to me'. (Teacher)*

One of the BCA coordinators stated that the BCA Programme had 'made a difference to [school staff] thinking about what interventions we are putting in place, and reviewing them and thinking how we can improve them', and had made them 'more aware of the need to tackle [Black] underachievement [and] to put things in place if children aren't progressing'. A Phase two teacher gave an example of how her own understanding and practice had changed and how she tried to encourage the Black children in her class to have high aspirations. This was through reference to Black role models depicted in newspapers

articles. One such example was of a headline, 'Black girl going to space' in the Voice newspaper in 2008. The story was shared with the class, which the teacher said, resulted in lots of 'oohs' from some of the Black children.

Case study school staff who were interviewed in 2007 and 2008 had become more confident in talking about school achievement data by ethnicity; articulating issues affecting some Black children; discussing issues relating to 'race' and ethnicity; and discussing the type of books they were using in their teaching as part of delivering a more culturally relevant and inclusive curriculum. However, there was a tension in those schools (two Phase 1 and two Phase 2) which suggested that prior to their school's involvement in the BCA programme staff were already well informed about Black children's achievement needs and were employing strategies to raise their attainment, and so saw the BCA programme as 'improving understanding' in terms of getting staff to 'think more about the examples they use' (headteacher) rather than enabling staff to become more acutely aware:

> *There's no change in that respect because our school is very multicultural and we're aware of the different ethnicities and different languages that are part of the work of the school … equal opportunities, race equality has always been part of the school's policy and we're just building on what we already have. (Headteacher)*

> *Because we are multicultural school, BCAP is not really new to us, because if you consider that we have got about 85 % of our children are EAL. (Teacher)*

Indeed for the headteacher cited above, the BCA Programme was merely 'icing on the cake'. This is in contrast to another headteacher who argued that the BCA Programme had 'built on' the diversity they had in the curriculum by assisting them in 'looking at the kind of diversity of the school, and the whole way we engage the pupils and the pupils' parents, family and community … so that the parents and children can feel valued'.

Despite contentions of the BCA Programme having 'fine tuned' existing practice, it was evident as indicated by the teacher comment above highlighted in relation to Black parents, that even in schools with established strategies for raising Black achievement not all teachers were fully aware. The deputy head of a Phase 2 school also felt a shift in staff understanding had occurred because of the BCA programme emphasis on implementing a culturally diverse curriculum and that it had contributed to staff thinking more about the resources they used that were reflective of Black children's heritage:

> *We have a book fair that comes into school, and it's the same one we always have but the staff were saying to me there aren't very many books in the book fair that are written by African-Caribbean people or for African-Caribbean people specifically. And so actually that's a request we've made for our book fair so that it's a more reflective selection of books both in terms of the author and in terms of appealing to our pupils in terms of different cultures. (Deputy Head)*

Moreover, the Deputy Head said that the school's involvement in the BCA Programme had contributed to staff being 'more willing' to accept suggestions (from school and BCA consultant staff) as to how to improve their practice in meeting the needs of Black children, whereas before the BCA Programme some questioned 'why are we doing that?'. It had also contributed to the school's governing body having greater awareness of how even a high achieving school can benefit from participating in the BCA Programme:

> *When we started the project two or three yeas ago one of [the governors] asked: 'well, the school is improving and our Black children are doing well, even more so the boys so then why do we need this project?' And I said: 'we need to improve on what we have already done and … make sure that teachers are fully aware of our goals and the*

ethos of the school'. If you get complacent and step back, you lose standards and the children don't achieve their full potential. So now we're in our second or third year and the governing body are more aware, and because as well our SATs results are quite good and we've got even better… we can see an improvement in the SATs for Key Stage 1 and 2, yes the project is working … it's opened their eyes to what the project has done to support the children's learning more, and it's not just Black children because the way I see it, if it's good enough for our Black children, every child will benefit. (Governor)

Nonetheless, one of the teachers interviewed at the school argued that governors with specific curriculum responsibilities could have their awareness improved further by their attendance at BCA consultants' or managers' meetings where they would be able to see 'theory and practice' coming together, and how different schools and local authorities had sought to raise Black children's achievement. Just as it was felt there was room for improvement in school governor understanding, a similar argument was put forward by a consultant for 'senior officials in local authorities to become engaged in the implementation of the BCA Programme', and further enhance their understanding and local authority practice.

Although some case study schools alluded to some changes in staff understanding and practice, it was noted that some schools were participating in other teaching and learning/raising attainment initiatives (for example, as part of pre-existing school improvement plans), and in one local authority the case study schools had accessed additional local authority training and other support pertaining to raising attainment, which interviewed teachers consistently referred to when they were asked questions about the training and support they had received in relation to the BCA Programme[29]. It was also apparent that in this and another local authority the consultants supporting the BCA Programme schools had worked with some of the schools for a number of years providing EMA/EAL support prior to their involvement in the BCA Programme, and as a consequence had helped to develop staff understanding and practice over a period of time. While it is recognised that the BCA Programme 'worked alongside other initiatives and promoted links between them' (National Strategies), the pre-existing support that these case study schools experienced makes it difficult to distinguish between the changes in staff understanding and classroom practice derived from respective school involvement in the BCA Programme and other local authority initiatives, training or support. This is not to suggest however, that any changes noted in the case study schools were not influenced by engagement with the BCA Programme, but rather to indicate that there would need to be an acknowledgement of previous participation in other initiatives, and that such involvement makes it difficult to ascertain with certainty whether it is the BCA Programme or another initiative (either directed by school, local authority and/or National Strategies) that has directly impacted on staff understanding and practice, and ultimately, on Black children's achievement in the case study schools.

Local authority perception of changes in school understanding and practice

As well as assessing school staff perceptions of changes in their understanding and practice of Black achievement, the evaluation sought to determine changes in school understanding and practice as identified by the case study local authorities and consultants who supported them. The schools that were discussed with local authorities included all of the schools that participated in the BCA Programme in respective local authorities, and not just those that were examined within this evaluation; thus they provide a broader overview of perceived change.

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[29] Staff responses suggest that they found it difficult to distinguish between the local authority CPD they had accessed and that provided through the BCA Programme. These staff also seemed to be confused between the Aiming High programme which the school had participated in and the BCA Programme, as researchers were often asked 'Do you mean Aiming High?' when a question was posed about their experience of the BCA Programme.

Across the case study local authorities there was a mixed picture of changed understanding. On one level the change observed was viewed as quite substantial. For example:

> *The [Phase 1] schools … I think they have gone beyond the level of it being a delegated member of staff who champions everything and tries everything, to a level where you have got all members of staff or key members of staff engaged so they think it's their responsibility as well. And you are already seeing sort of places where there are assistants put in place that will ensure that the project or the aims of the project are sustained, but that is now integrated within the school improvement plan. There is now evidence of curriculum changing because of it, and so there are elements of an African-Caribbean dimension across the curriculum, not in every subject but in more than one. There is a great awareness on the staff's part as to the needs of African-Caribbean children and the issues surrounding it, and that has been evident through the responses and participation of staff during the staff meetings, the PDMs that we run and issues pertaining to African-Caribbean achievement - and in the four new schools - schools are recognising that they have issues to deal with whereas before they didn't. (Consultant)*

Paradoxically, when one of the local authorities was asked for their perceptions of changes in schools, the consultant argued that the notion of change was 'quite interesting', as two schools which during their first year of being in the BCA Programme had expressed reservations and an unwillingness to take on board consultant advice, were in their second year embedding the BCA Programme principles 'through everything they do'. This change in attitude was attributed by the consultant concerned to the senior leadership team 'having greater responsibility for delivering the BCA Programme' (which was also a change from the previous year) and ensuring that the rest of the staff were 'fully engaged'. However, the consultant's experience with another school pointed to some school changes as not being necessarily positive:

> *The school has regressed in terms of their willingness of the need to do this work and not wanting to target pupils or withdraw[30] them for specific pieces of work thinking that they can address these issues holistically because of the structures they already have in place, and also not wanting to work with parents in a different way…. In some ways it feels like we're moving backwards in terms of their levels of awareness and their engagement with the Programme and the whole rationale why they became engaged in it in the first place.*

In a second local authority, the BCA consultant noted that one of the schools she had worked with had 'really moved on' in its understanding about Black achievement in its second year of involvement in the BCA Programme, and was for example, attempting to develop better relationships with parents/carers of Black children by being more proactive in involving them in their children's learning, and by informing these parents about positive things their children had achieved. However, the BCA consultant for this local authority was concerned that the PDMs she had delivered, and which she stated had been designed to 'unpick and challenge teacher racism' as a way of helping staff to develop inclusive strategies of all ethnicities, had not worked well in all her BCA schools as some staff were 'resistant' to the ideas being explored. Similar 'resistance' was encountered in the first year of these schools' involvement in the BCA Programme, and as such, school staff were considered by the BCA consultant not to have developed any further understanding in relation to challenging racist attitudes. The BCA Programme was also thought not to have challenged negative staff perceptions and expectations about Black children's achievement and/or negative staff attitudes towards minority ethnic cultures. The following teacher comments illustrate how negative perceptions

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[30] It should be noted that while this might have been the local authority's perception, the BCA Programme does not require children to be withdrawn from lessons in order to receive support.

about minority ethnic groups can be reinforced where ill-informed staff comments and attitudes are not challenged:

> *We went on a visit to China Town and the children were given a treasure hunt … but there was a statement about 'can you find any weird food?' And I saw it and as it happens the person who wrote it was the senior person in the phase … so the children were going around China Town 'where's weird food? Oh, yeah that's weird food'. (Teacher)*

Summary

There was considerable variation in the extent to which school staff understood the aims of the BCA Programme. Some identified it as a Programme that was equally applicable to all pupils, not simply the Black children. Others had misunderstood the nature of the Programme, and had not understood the expectations of schools or the types of support that would be offered. However, when staff were re-interviewed a year later, their understanding was much greater, and they were more prepared to accept suggestions about how to improve their practice.

This pattern of increased understanding in some schools during their second year in the BCA Programme was also noted by local authorities and consultants. However, some other schools were identified as having less awareness and engagement in the second year of the BCA programme than they had had in the first, possibly because of other priorities. Consultants also noted that some school staff continued to have negative or racist attitudes towards Black and minority ethnic cultures, and these were hard to shift.

Chapter 9 - Partnerships between case study local authorities, schools and National Strategies

This chapter explores the partnerships that were developed between the case study local authorities, the BCA Programme schools and National Strategies. It also explores the influence of the BCA Programme on local authority understanding and practice.

Local partnerships between LAs, schools and National Strategies

Across the case study local authorities a range of examples were given of how they were developing partnerships between schools and sharing practice. For example, one of the BCA Programme schools in one Phase 1 local authority had made available to other BCA Programme schools within the local authority African-Caribbean resources that 'cover every area of the curriculum' that the school had collected over 'many years' (Deputy head). Network meetings were a key forum for sharing practice.

Network meetings

Network meetings were introduced in Phase 2 of the BCA Programme with local authorities using a range of strategies to arrange these meetings termly. Across the case study local authorities various network meetings were held with the BCA Programme schools during 2006-2008. Such meetings had led schools in one case study authority to 'grow in confidence and competence' (Consultant), as those attending had taken advantage of opportunities to talk about the work they did in their school combined with the challenges that they had faced, and how they were trying to address such challenges. The consultant supporting this group of schools found such discussions 'heartening' because the network schools showed that they 'wanted to learn more about what faces them and [were] willing to be reflective on their own practice' as well as 'share resources' and 'ideas'. A lead BCA teacher had also found the meetings 'really beneficial' because as she said they offered 'tangible things that work in other schools', and at the same time they helped teachers to 'refocus', 'prioritise', and to say 'yes I need to do that'. It was evident however, that not all of the BCA Programme schools within the case study authorities had attended network meetings, and this possibly accounts for the headteacher comment below:

> *It would have been useful to have met up with other schools who were involved in the pilot the year before who could have shared the impact on their school, their successes, what strategies they used, so you are not inventing wheels because I don't know if the schools that did it last year, are they having the same mistakes, the same difficulties? (Headteacher)*

It was further apparent that where the BCA Programme schools had attended network meetings, the headteacher of the schools concerned was not always present. It was suggested by one local authority interviewee that while their BCA Programme schools considered network meetings important and often sent a representative to the meeting, they did not necessarily 'see it as an important meeting where the head needs to be there' (PSM), and given the workload responsibilities of some headteachers, this was not always possible. In view of the perceived lack of importance it was felt that some of the BCA Programme schools attached to the network meetings, this particular local authority had found it 'helpful to have the weight' (PSM) of their supporting National Strategies Regional Adviser behind the network meetings that they organised. The PSM said that the local authority had tried to give the meetings 'greater credence' by arranging network meetings to coincide with the Regional Adviser's visit to a school. The advantages of Regional Adviser attendance were further outlined by the PSM in another local authority:

The regional adviser is able to not only look at our context but draw on other work. She's been really proactive in offering guidance, coming to Network meetings. That's been positively received by schools because very often the wider agenda is up for discussion around race equality, around the strategy, the DCSF's policy on this, and headteachers value her input. (PSM)

Overall network meetings were viewed by local authorities as enabling schools to share practice, for example, on data and tracking achievement progress, and also to develop an understanding of good practice in other local authorities, as on occasion external schools had been invited to share their practice with the BCA Programme schools. An example of wider local authority sharing was provided by a Phase 2 local authority who held a conference in the spring term of 2008. The conference focused on transition from primary to secondary schools, with some of its BCA Programme schools sharing examples of the work they had been doing with other schools within the local authority. External input by National Strategies (and schools) was considered crucial by a Phase 1 local authority in helping the local authority to 'generate new ideas', and was part of a wider strategy that the local authority sought to promote[31].

Partnership working

Two case study local authorities (and schools) contributed case study examples to the BCA Programme materials that National Strategies produced for use with schools and local authorities in summer 2008. There was evidence of consultants working across local authorities and cross phase. For example, a consultant from a Phase 2 local authority worked in partnership with the consultant from a Phase 1 local authority to produce guidelines for involving parents in their children's education. This partnership working and sharing of practice was included in the BCA Programme materials produced by the National Strategies.

In 2008 a Phase 2 local authority identified a 'positive outcome' of its involvement in the BCA Programme as the development of partnership work with Black supplementary schools in the local authority. As a consequence of the links the local authority had developed with these Black supplementary schools, the local authority had been able to recommend one of its BCA Programme schools to visit a supplementary school in order to 'find out what they had to offer', and in turn, develop a 'package for their own school that would meet the needs of the BCA Programme' (Consultant) and the Black children in their school. This 'package' was expected to involve some of the targeted BCA Programme children and the wider school community in some after school Black history sessions and in class curriculum work. It was anticipated that the opportunity afforded by the BCA Programme school would enable the school to develop more appropriate strategies for raising Black children's' achievement. Partnership working within the local authority was further evidenced across strategy groups, whereby numeracy strategy consultants were able to undertake joint lesson observations with their BCA counterparts and provide feedback to the BCA Programme schools. This way of working was considered mutually beneficial:

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[31] In 2008 the LA expressed its intention to work with other local authorities and as part of this share practice with primary and secondary schools in neighbouring local authorities.

It heightened her [numeracy consultant] awareness of the issues around Black achievement and the things that [we] would be looking at around interaction and communication between members of staff and children. [This] wasn't something she would focus down on in respect of ethnicity and race. …. And it was beneficial for us in terms of the feedback process, and the fact that the particular consultant is very aware of the renewed frameworks and the targets that staff should be expecting their children to reach …. It showed [schools] that we are one authority, we are delivering one message. Ultimately we are looking at raising standards. (Consultant)

The consultant of another Phase 2 local authority also reported conducting joint work with Primary National Strategies consultants responsible for PSHE and citizenship in the local authority.

Impact of BCA Programme on local authority understanding and practice

A key source of developing local authority understanding about the BCA Programme has been the BCA consultants' and managers' meetings coordinated by the National Strategies Regional Advisers. However, not all of the case study consultants or managers attended all of these meetings owing to other commitments. Arguably, such opportunities which were lost to case study authorities have not enabled local authority understanding and practice to be further enhanced. That being said, it is evident that where case study BCA consultants or managers have attended these meetings they have been experienced positively and considered invaluable. Two observed examples of this were the BCA consultants' and managers' meeting held in the spring term of 2008 where the newly developed BCA materials were shared with BCA managers and consultants, and participants had an opportunity to explore how the materials might be used in working with schools and with local authority colleagues, and a subsequent meeting held in May 2009, which facilitated further sharing of practice.

On the whole local authorities alluded to positive experiences at BCA consultants' and managers' meetings. However, it would seem that for one local authority their involvement in the BCA Programme has had a 'very minimal' impact in terms of raising their awareness about progressing Black children's achievement, because it was argued by interviewees within the local authority that prior to their participation in the BCA Programme, raising Black children's achievement was already 'a huge priority' with 'a Black achievement strategy in place across the authority'. This authority's understanding had also been informed by its participation in the secondary BPAP Programme and to a certain extent used this experience to assess its experience of participating in the BCA Programme. So while it was felt that the 'input from the National Strategies had been useful', especially in relation to being encouraged by Regional Advisers to 'apply professional discretion and flexibility towards the BCA Programme (which was based on local contexts and school needs)', interviewees argued that the authority had also 'drawn' on its 'own experience and awareness' to develop its work with and support of schools.

The local authority viewpoint elicited above can be compared with a second local authority who reported that their participation in the BCA Programme had resulted in the local authority being able to have a positive impact on the BCA Programme, as participating schools were 'now monitoring achievement and the work they do'. Similarly, a third local authority observed that tracking strategies determined by National Strategies had been particularly advantageous:

The ISP tools has been really in terms of pupil tracking, pupil progress meetings have really raised that agenda for us, so schools are familiar with running progress meetings, looking at identified pupils, where they are, what needs to be done. They are having those sorts of conversations not only in the ISP schools and the high

priority schools, but I would say it's spread quite effectively over the borough, most schools use that tracking system and now with RAISE On Line they are able at pupil level to identify those pupils. It's the way we've been working and schools are prepared for that. SIPs also are looking at pupil level data. (PSM)

This local authority had also used its first year experience of the BCA Programme to develop the 'Extended Black Pupil Programme' (EBPP) which was rolled out to the BCA Programme schools within the local authority at the beginning of 2008. The EBPP utilises lesson plans[32], PowerPoint presentations and videos (delivered through workshops[33]) and book and resource lists (produced by the BCA consultant) which underpin the school curriculum. It aimed to raise Black children's achievement through raising their self-esteem; 'empowering' them to challenge negative stereotypes about Black people and to have positive attitudes and values towards education; and developing their cognitive and affective skills. An example of one of the activities used to raise Black children's esteem with the EBPP was set out in chapter 6.

The experiences and perceptions of these three different local authorities as to the level of impact they regarded the BCA Programme as having on developing their understanding and practice illustrate the differential understandings they brought to their engagement with the BCA Programme, and would accordingly need to be taken into consideration in any assessment of impact and/or influence on local authority raising Black children's achievement strategies implemented. This assessment would also need to juxtapose the perceived lack of impact with, for example, changes which one local authority acknowledged making which helped to make the strategies they applied more effective (see chapter 10). Other assessments of impact would need to acknowledge that in at least two of the case study authorities, PSMs were experienced as 'not be[ing] as active' as the BCA consultants and Ethnic Minority Achievement (EMA) managers concerned would have liked in 'helping to move the [BCA] programme forward'. An example of which included 'how best to involve School Improvement Partners' in developing greater awareness of issues affecting Black children's achievement.

Summary

Network meetings were introduced during the second year of the BCA Programme. Teachers and consultants noted that these were very useful, allowing an exchange of view and practices between schools. However, it was noted that headteachers did not often attend, and consultants argued that their presence would be beneficial to the effective running of the BCA Programme in their schools.

Partnerships between local authorities, and with supplementary schools, were also considered useful.

In order to effectively embed the BCA Programme, it was argued that School Improvement Partners should also be involved.

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[32] Examples of the EBPP lesson plans included lessons for Years 5 and 6 pertaining to the 'history and character of Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, Harriet Tubman, John Newton, Nelson Mandela and others. The lesson plans included learning objectives, activities, resources and key points of learning. For example, 'Black history has Black and White heroes, what shaped them?

[33] The EBPP workshops involved music linked to Black history, literature and drama, developing publishing, evaluative and analytical skills through writing and ICT, and film making which incorporated writing, speaking and listening, questioning skills, presentation and reporting.

Chapter 10 - Effective implementation of the BCA Programme in case study schools and local authorities

This chapter explores the factors identified by case study schools and local authorities as enabling the BCA Programme to be delivered in schools, and those which presented particular challenges to effective implementation.

Strategies for effective implementation

Schools

Case study schools identified a number of factors that they had found helpful in enabling them to implement the BCA Programme; improve their understanding and practice; and make a difference to Black children's achievement. These included:

Allocated finances

In accordance with National Strategies advice, local authority funding (of £4-5,000) given to the BCA Programme schools was linked to individual school RAPs. Such linking, contributed to some schools using their funding to broaden the resources that they had for making their school curriculum more culturally diverse and inclusive. One Phase 2 school, for example, utilised some of its funding to take the BCA co-ordinator off timetable to incorporate culturally diverse elements in the school's curriculum plans, whilst some schools had used their local authority funding to bring in external artists such as drummers and storytellers. In one school, supply teacher cover was used to enable the lead BCA Programme teacher to implement the school's data tracking system; buy in new culturally diverse resources for topic work; undertake inclusive curriculum planning (e.g. developing a unit of work for Year 6); assess staff continuing professional development needs in relation to delivering a diverse curriculum; and monitor the school's involvement in the BCA Programme. Funds had also been used to, fund EMA teaching assistants, which in turn assisted schools in providing intensive teaching assistant support to children targeted as part of the BCA Programme.

In some respects the provision of designated funds gave the BCA Programme 'status', because as one headteacher stated, it was not taking away funds from the normal school budget.

Although the case study schools appreciated the resources made available through the BCA Programme, there was no evidence that the case study schools regarded the various initiatives/activities they had implemented or developed as being possible without the additional local authority funding and/or access to other external funding. Rather, most of the schools argued that the work they did would not have been achievable without their ability to draw on extra finances. One Phase 2 school for example, had accessed an additional £10,000. Moreover, it was evident that at least two schools were persuaded to participate in the BCA Programme by the funding that was associated with it, rather than the added value they perceived it as offering. This was illustrated by the following deputy head comment: 'If ever money appears, we say 'well if we get money for it, then we'll go for it''. This has implications for any similar initiatives where funding is attached, especially as the deputy head concerned revealed that he had enlisted his school in the BCA Programme without having a real understanding of what it entailed, and/or what being involved would mean for his school. This raises the question of how schools can be encouraged to develop awareness and implement strategies to facilitate Black children's achievement without additional resources being attached to doing so.

Auditing practice

The BCA Programme expectation of schools having to audit their practice has helped schools to focus on 'what is happening' as opposed to what they think is happening, which is salient, because as one deputy headteacher argued, 'sometimes what you think is happening isn't always what's happening'.

Flexibility in activities implemented

All of the case study schools valued the flexibility that was offered by the BCA Programme in being able to choose the areas of focus (as indicated by their RAPs) most suited to their particular school circumstances and Black children's attainment needs. This flexibility suggested to participating case study schools that they were as one headteacher argued an 'integral part of' the BCA Programme, and that there was a recognition within the BCA Programme that 'it's not one size fits all'.

Time and space to prioritise Black children' achievement and develop staff understanding and practice

The implementation of the BCA Programme worked well where schools had sufficient time to think through Black children's attainment needs and to fully digest what is required in implementing the BCA Programme. One deputy head commented on the encouragement her school had received from the local authority BCA consultant to take their time and 'do it properly'. The school considered it essential to have had the time to make mistakes and to learn from those mistakes. The deputy head explained:

> *What [name of consultant] said is 'if it goes wrong this year', that is fine, it doesn't have to be a roaring success, you just take what you've done well and move on'.*
> *(Deputy Head)*

Staff in a Phase 1 school that was in its second year of the BCA Programme at the time they were first interviewed noted that it had taken 18 months for them to feel that they understood the direction they needed to take to begin to make a difference to Black achievement. It was argued that this time had contributed to staff developing appropriate strategies and the confidence to use the term 'Black' and to talk to Black children about their 'race and colour'. Participation in the BCA Programme had also given White staff at another Phase 2 school confidence to highlight their anxieties about dealing with Black parents, as the deputy head explained:

> *It enabled staff to say, 'well actually I feel a little bit intimidated sometimes by these particular parents because that's the way they come across'. It's enabled those tricky sorts of discussions to be able to be dealt with in an appropriate way, and it's given staff confidence to realise that actually some parents are not being aggressive, it's just the way that they're actually getting their point across. … It's cleared misconceptions and without the project I don't feel that the forum would have been opened for people to feel comfortable. (Deputy Head)*

Schools found it invaluable to have the time and space to reflect upon and prioritise Black children's achievement, and to drive their attainment forward. Having the space to focus on Black achievement allowed the case study schools to set targets for Black children and to monitor them more closely. For example, a teacher new to the area of Black achievement, suggested that having the time and space to adapt the school's data tracking system to include information on ethnicity and language, had 'opened up a whole lot more possibilities' in terms of the school being able to target more appropriately in order to enhance Black achievement.

Having designated space also afforded case study schools with a background in raising Black children's achievement to 'build on' existing work, and at the same time give greater consideration to how they facilitated Black children' progression, and what could be done to make this more effective, as illustrated by the following comments:

> *This girl here is interesting - she is a level 5 child, and that's what I'm hoping she will be in a year's time. But she has just slipped down one part of a level, and she has done that for reading and she has done it for writing two parts of a level, and for maths one part of a level. She is important to the Black community because she is the one that should be going on to university and becoming a doctor or whatever … So that is the sort of thing that I feel is important. Every child is an individual and can't be allowed to slip a little bit. She will get level 4, that is fine, but it's not fine, as she needs to be getting level 5. (Headteacher)*

> *The one thing it really made us do was really identify our areas that we needed to work on … Sometimes if you are a successful school like ours, it's really hard sometimes to see where you're not succeeding … and you don't often hone in on specific areas and this made us hone in on this specific area. (BCA coordinator)*

> *We've always been a school who has an interest of raising the achievement of all children and increasing their awareness and understanding about other cultures, but the project has given us the ability to analyse a little bit further and being able to say 'well we do that very well, but can we do it better?' (Headteacher)*

Having time to reflect enabled staff in the case study schools to think more creatively about how to meet the needs of Black children. For example, one school had bought football magazines as a way of encouraging Black boys to read. The ability to support children targeted as part of the BCA Programme either individually or in small groups had also been found useful in this school.

Some of the Phase 1 and Phase 2 case study schools regarded the BCA Programme as 'building on' what they were doing well before they commenced their participation in the BCA Programme. Nonetheless, they suggested that their involvement had helped them first, to look more specifically at their school's ethnic diversity and achievement profile, and how they might engage Black children in their learning and subsequently, raise their achievement. Secondly, it had helped them to identify how the good practice developed from working with Black children involved in the BCA Programme could then be 'cascaded' to working with children (and families) from other ethnic groups, and could be incorporated into whole school practice. In this respect, one deputy headteacher of a Phase 1 school argued that her school had 'moved on' from where they were when they first started the project, working with target groups, to 'taking what we've learnt from that and actually putting it into whole school practice'; such that Black achievement was now prioritised in all areas of school life. Another Phase 2 headteacher observed that the time afforded by the BCA Programme had allowed the school to further develop staff understanding of the attainment levels of their Black children and 'what the barriers may or may not be'. Crucially for this headteacher, such time had also helped new teachers in her school to comprehend 'that just because a child is Black Caribbean it doesn't mean they are going to be an underachiever'.

Culture / ethos of achievement

As shown in previous chapters, the BCA Programme seemed to work well in schools where there was a pre-existing culture/ethos of achievement for Black children.

Better use of ethnicity achievement data

All of the case study schools had implemented data analysis systems, which allowed them to monitor and track children's attainment by ethnicity. The BCA Programme emphasis on using achievement data more effectively was appreciated by, for example, one Phase 2 headteacher who argued that better data analysis had encouraged the school not to make excuses for Black children's underachievement but to 'give a reason why' and accordingly understand 'the reason behind' the strategies they used to address it.

One BCA consultant argued that the priority given within the BCA Programme to data analysis had encouraged the schools she was supporting to 'look more deeply into the data and to ask questions the behind the picture that is presented by the data … if there are trends, which particular cohort, which year and why is that?' Such analysis had led to the 'discovery' by one school that only one of the children on their gifted and talented register is Black. This consultant's experience was supported by comments derived from the case study schools who argued that their involvement in the BCA Programme had led to them becoming 'more analytical as to the barriers to learning and raising achievement' (Headteacher), and developing greater awareness of what Black children can achieve. An additional outcome highlighted by one headteacher was that the BCA Programme had 'improve[d] practice throughout the whole school' because it had made staff look at one group of children in detail, and because of this staff were now able to talk 'openly' about the attainment of other ethnic groups.

Delivering a culturally relevant and inclusive curriculum

As illustrated in chapter 5, the case study schools have found delivering a diverse curriculum beneficial in motivating and engaging Black children in the curriculum. This was supported by children's focus group comments and researcher observations.

BCA consultant support

The case study data suggests that in some schools BCA consultant support was viewed very positively. These schools praised the level of consultant support they had received through professional development modules (PDMs) and follow-up CPD sessions, particularly where those sessions had helped to enhance their knowledge and skills base with regard to factors affecting Black children's attainment, creating a culturally diverse curriculum, building targeted children's self-esteem and developing relationships with parents and carers of Black children. For example, the headteacher of a Phase 1 school suggested that their consultant support had enabled them to 'think outside the box' and bring in new resources. The consultant supporting this school provided an overview of the type of support he had provided:

> *We have looked at how best we can transform the curriculum and bring in elements of African-Caribbean interests and experiences within the curriculum into history, into maths and so forth, as well looking for resources to support the teaching. (Consultant)*

Another Phase 1 headteacher argued that without specialist consultant support the BCA Programme 'would have fallen flat on its face' in the school. This comment related both to the type of expertise and insights that the BCA consultant offered, but also the enthusiasm that the consultant had for raising Black children's achievement which had helped to enthuse staff to become more knowledgeable about the issues concerned, and commit to developing more appropriate teaching strategies. Equally important, for the headteacher was the fact that the PDMs led by the BCA consultant had enabled issues of stereotyping and racism to be explored in a way that allowed White staff to discuss the issues 'without feeling guilty'. Consultants were found to be invaluable also in helping schools to comprehend their Key

Stage 2 national assessment tests results more fully (e.g. by gender and ethnicity). These were schools (such as one Phase 2 school) that had not previously interrogated their Key Stage national assessment results in any depth, and had not explored differences in attainment within and between different groups of Black children.

It is worth noting that the consultants in two of the case study local authorities had worked with their case study schools prior to the respective schools involvement in the BCA Programme. Thus these schools saw the BCA Programme consultant support as the continuation of a beneficial working relationship. One of the schools saw their BCA consultant relationship as instrumental in enabling them to move forward and build on what they were already doing well. Without such a 'close working relationship' it was argued by the headteacher that staff might have felt, 'Well, we don't really need to do that much' because they were already a high achieving school. It is salient that staff in one case study local authority additionally ensured that they had access to professional development sessions run by the local authority and which were led also by the BCA consultant. All of the school staff interviewed saw this as an essential part of developing their understanding of issues affecting Black children's achievement and how to develop their practice. While effective, it was noticeable that the staff interviewed did not necessarily distinguish between the local authority staff development they had received compared with specific BCA Programme staff development delivered by the BCA consultant.

National Strategies support

A key ingredient to the case study schools being able to implement the BCA Programme was the support they received from their Regional Adviser. Such support was deemed 'very helpful' (Headteacher) in relation to the Regional Advisers' knowledge and expertise vis-à-vis Black achievement, the understanding that they showed especially to schools who were new to addressing Black underachievement, and the array of strategies, and good practice that was shared with schools. For example:

> *She's great, full of enthusiasm, she's quite insightful as to where the project needs to go next and what the overall focus of the project will be and she's very accessible, also her subj*ect knowledge and guidance of where we need to go. (*School BCA Coordinator)*

One school particularly valued the fact that the headteacher or another senior management staff member had been allowed to attend the BCA consultants' and managers' meetings, because such attendance enabled the information derived from the meetings to be 'cascaded' down to school staff by more than one person; thus giving the BCA Programme greater credibility in that a range of perspectives were shared with school staff. Schools also found it invaluable to have external validation of the work they were doing to enhance Black children's attainment, for example, in the materials produced to support the BCA Programme and the public acknowledgement of their practice, for instance at BCA consultants' and managers' meetings, and school network meetings.

Local authority

Just as case study schools identified how they had benefited from the BCA Programme, there was evidence to suggest that the BCA Programme had also provided learning opportunities for case study local authorities and BCA consultants. One local authority, for example, argued that as they had become 'more familiar' with the BCA programme and the schools they were supporting, they found it easier to 'tailor' the support they offered to individual schools so as to make it 'more appropriate, relevant …and more effective':

The biggest learning for us has been that you have to tailor the programme to meet the individual needs of each school and the current priorities of each school because the schools have got such different intakes, different needs. I think we've learnt that we've got to adapt any guidance and materials and dip in at the sort of most relevant point for the school at any particular time to suit their needs which we weren't able to do at the outset. That for us has been a little bit of a strait-jacket to some extent, feeling the need to move through the PDMs in a particular order, or to have to work at a strategic level before you're able to move into perhaps more operational classroom based work. (Consultant)

In another school, having tailored PDMs which were not only relevant, but 'fed straight into planning' and could be used immediately' and later 'reviewed' was considered by one lead BCA teacher to be invaluable.

National Strategies support

Similar to the case study schools, local authorities argued that without this essential layer of support provided by National Strategies, they would not have been able to effectively support their BCA Programme schools. This was particularly notable in the support given at network meetings (see previous discussion in chapter 9), at the BCA consultants' and managers' meetings and in the individual support provided by Regional Advisers.

Clearly, both the case study schools and local authorities welcomed the greater insight they had derived from National Strategies into how Black children's achievement can be enhanced and achievement gaps closed.

Challenges to effective implementation

The previous section outlined the factors that the case study schools and local authorities identified as contributing to the BCA Programme being implemented in their respective schools. The focus now moves to considering challenges schools and local authorities noted as impacting on their ability to deliver the BCA Programme.

Local authority

Timing of the rolling out of the BCA Programme

A Phase 1 case study local authority complained that the pace of introduction of the BCA Programme in 2005 had staffing implications for the local authority in terms of getting 'the right' consultants in place to help support schools to deliver the initiative. The PSM explained that it was necessary to have advance warning when consultant support had to be found from existing resources:

The LA won't allow us to add additional capacity (i.e. more advisors) to the team, so it's not about applying for or appointing someone, we have to find that capacity internally within the team ... All the National Strategies programmes come out with an expectation that you'll attach consultants to attend some of the training and so on, but that became quite difficult for us because it's not easy to identify consultants for the programmes. It's about finding the right people really. There just aren't the people out there with the range of experience, and … with a background in raising attainment for African-Caribbean children. (PSM)

This concern about the need to have prior warning was not confined to this Phase 1 local authority. A Phase 2 local authority argued that the notification they had received that they had been awarded 'pilot status' occurred well into the autumn term of 2006, which they argued was 'too late' for schools to get staffing capacity in place, and for local authority consultants to help schools properly prepare for the impending requirements of the BCA Programme. This view was supported by the headteacher of a case study school in this authority who claimed that the late notification had left his school 'playing catch up' and that with 'more advanced warning' he would have incorporated the project into the school's 'long term planning from the outset'. The local authority concerned identified the school timetable as having particular implications for the delivery of the professional development modules. It was intimated that it was difficult for schools to find free dates for professional development modules to be delivered as dates for staff development were filled six months before. The notification timing also meant that the case study Phase 2 schools did not begin to implement the BCA Programme until the spring term of 2007, which the headteacher of one Phase 2 school indicated had a 'knock on effect' on what her school was able to do. Other Phase 2 schools were additionally concerned at what they perceived as a 'relatively short timeframe' (headteacher) for schools to complete diagnostic visits, audits and raising achievement plans, given the time at which their BCA Programme involvement commenced.

Local authority consultant concerns seemed to be further exacerbated by perceptions that the information they received from National Strategies about the BCA Programme expectations was not sent far enough in advance of the time that it needed to be actioned, in order that the consultants could provide effective support to schools. For example:

> *We met with an adviser recently [late summer 07] and suddenly we had some information about the targets that we should be expecting from schools … and it was a bit too late … It should have been said earlier that we would be expecting a 3% increase in achievement. (Consultant, Phase 2)*

> *I've been in situations where sometimes I feel I've been giving false information to schools, although I believe it to be correct and then it might shift, and then I have to go back and say 'well actually you need to do it like this'. (Consultant, Phase 1)*

Experiences such as the above led to the case study local authorities calling for improved guidance as to the BCA Programme requirements and the precise demands on participating local authorities and schools. It is recognised that these were very real concerns for the local authorities, consultants and schools highlighted. Nonetheless, it was apparent that local authorities / BCA consultants were briefed in various ways such as: Regional Adviser communication (e.g. face to face, email, letter); National Strategies termly meetings held for BCA consultants and managers (providing further updates); and written documentation (e.g. newsletters) pertaining to the BCA Programme requirements. Thus several channels were used to communicate with local authorities.

Difficulties in challenging staff attitudes / practice

An issue that emerged right at the beginning of the evaluation and one which remained unresolved at the end was how to challenge negative attitudes held by some school staff in relation to raising Black children's achievement. Across the case study local authorities, BCA consultants reported that their efforts to develop staff understanding vis-à-vis Black children, and challenge negative views they perceived some teachers held about Black people/children had invariably been met with resistance. One consultant claimed that some schools have 'a significant journey' to make in relation to how they work with Black children. This view resonated with the consultant in another local authority who argued that some teachers found shifting perspective difficult 'because you are dealing with a lot of sensitive issues [and] within that you are questioning the competence of the teachers, and probably

questioning the motives of the teachers'. This concern was not dissimilar to that of a headteacher of a school within the same local authority who called for a discussion within the BCA Programme as to 'how teachers can inadvertently be racist'; that is it was felt there was a need for teachers to understand how although this might not be their intention, aspects of their practice could be construed as racist.

Other local authorities / consultants similarly acknowledged the need for changes in staff attitudes particularly in relation to the low expectations that they believed some teachers had of Black children. Based on her experience of trying to develop school staff understanding and practice in relation to raising Black achievement, one of the consultants said that 'one of the most challenging things' she had encountered as a BCA consultant was the association of Black underachievement with Black children's behaviour, and the perceived lack of challenge to this contention by the BCA Programme. As she explained:

> *Often Black underachievement is narrowed, whittled down to 'well the kids can't behave therefore they don't achieve', that whole deficit model. I don't feel the programme directly addresses behaviour although I can see why they wouldn't want to, in some ways, to maybe be seen to be reinforcing that. But maybe some guidance from the top for consultants on behaviour so when that charge is levied at you, what do you do with it? I always say behaviour is symptomatic of something else. It could be something external or it could be something happening in the institution, but they're always much more inclined to say, 'It's something external, it's nothing to do with us and our practice'. That's an on-going challenge because they [schools] haven't really got beyond 'we're trying to get Black male learning mentors to sort it,' which might solve it in the short-term, but it doesn't build their capacity. (Consultant)*

This consultant's comments, together with those of a teacher, suggest that, rather than racism, some teachers lacked knowledge about factors affecting Black achievement which could be used to challenge their own stereotyped perceptions, and they were unsure as to the specific aims of the BCA Programme, and how to improve Black children's achievement:

> *I'm not 100% on what they're actually aiming to achieve …they're such wildly different children that it's just, where do I spend the time with each one. … Do I spend an hour and 45 minutes with my least able children in the hope that they'll come back close to the level or do it with the ones that are just below the level and try and get them on the level? Do I give them more time? Do I give it equal time so that my level 5 child's, you know, so no, not really. It's a funny one to work out. (Teacher)*

Arguably, lack of understanding contributed to questions such as those posed by the teacher above. But regardless of whether school staff had negative perceptions about Black children, consultants interviewed wanted greater recognition within the BCA Programme (and particularly with the timing of the delivery of the PDMs in school) of the difficulty they sometimes encountered in trying to change staff perceptions / attitudes and the time-consuming nature of it:

> *I don't know whether the programme recognises that this is quite complex a process that takes place every time. You don't go through, say, one session on parents, and the attitudes that are long-standing will go away. If only! It's quite a long-term process. … You're talking about shifting attitudes quite often. [I: In what way?] Teacher perceptions of Black people, Black pupils, teachers' knowledge base in terms of wanting to make the curriculum more diverse, the will is there but their own personal knowledge isn't there in terms of where to get the information, how to find it or how to shift perspective, how to teach it in ways that are different to how they've always taught it. Attitudes towards parents, these are all the things that take time to shift. (Consultant)*

The fact that we're dealing with Black children's achievement, it isn't just about 'ok we're going to look at the data, we've done it, move on'. It is about changing attitudes and perceptions and that takes time, you can't do that in six weeks. You can't say, 'Yes we've cracked perceptions of parents of Black children in a school in six weeks', that's just impossible. …There were many times when we planned things, delivered training and we had to be taken off on a tangent because there were clearly underlying issues that schools hadn't had the opportunity to discuss, and before we could move forward we had to deal with those issues. (Consultant)

The fact that the timing of the delivery of the PDMs was raised as an issue by the consultant above would seem to indicate that local authorities had not fully understood that the six-week framework for the delivery of PDMs was suggested 'guidance' rather than an actual prescriptive requirement, or that consultants have flexibility over when the PDMs are covered. Nonetheless, this does not mean that addressing teacher racism has not been considered within the BCA Programme, and/or that the efforts and length of time involved in challenging attitudes which will help to make a difference to Black children's achievement are not understood[34]. Notwithstanding, it would seem that changing staff perceptions would be even harder to bring about where school staff find it 'difficult' to work with a Black consultant, as one consultant argued, and this issue requires greater recognition at a local and national level.

BCA consultant staffing capacity and workload

Consultant staffing capacity and workload (within the local authority) was a factor that affected consultants' ability to effectively support schools to deliver the BCA Programme. It was noticeable that supporting the BCA Programme was but one of many roles for all of the case study consultants; some worked cross-phase (primary and secondary) in addition to providing EAL and other EMA support. Although this was a constant feature amongst the consultants there was wide variation in the number of the BCA Programme schools that the consultants supported within their local authority. For example, during the first year of the evaluation, the BCA consultant in one Phase 2 local authority had responsibility for supporting 10 BCA Programme schools, whilst in the second year this increased to 13. In contrast, in another Phase 2 local authority, three consultants supported three schools; though it should be noted that one consultant had overarching responsibility for the three BCA Programme schools. Moreover, this particular local authority regarded it as essential to have this number of consultants to enable each to be effective in their role, because it was argued that some of the BCA Programme schools required more intensive support in light of the stage they were at in their understanding and development. Having a team of consultants supporting these schools also enabled the local authority consultants to give 'more time to developing relationships with individual members of the BCA Programme school staff', as one reported.

The differential BCA consultant workload within these two local authorities raises concerns as to local authority commitment to improving Black achievement, and the level of staffing resources that are considered appropriate by local authorities to support schools in addressing this particular need. The following comment by a primary strategy manager in relation to the sustainability of the BCA Programme and the perceived number of consultants required to facilitate it, suggests that having one consultant supporting 13 schools alongside their overall local authority workload would be unsustainable over a prolonged period:

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[34] Informal observation at BCA managers' and consultants' meetings in 2007 and 2008 observed that the issue of teacher racism and strategies for addressing it was explored.

> *It's nonsense to think you can make a difference to the attainment of [Black] children … by attaching one consultant to 2, 3 or 4 primary schools. It's not just a model that's ever going to be sustainable because on that basis we would need 70/80 odd consultants. (PSM)*

Indeed the consultant with responsibility for 13 schools own experience of ill-health during the second year of the evaluation illustrates that this was a misplaced strategy in the local authority, as consultants cannot be effective in supporting schools while they are on long-term sick leave unless there is a further layer of support underneath.

A consultant in another local authority identified consultant staffing capacity as a particular concern owing to the fact that during the course of 2007-08 he took on management responsibilities for the BCA Programme within the local authority; thus resulting in less time for him to visit the BCA Programme schools. It is understood from National Strategies that these management duties had previously been neglected by the local authority, and that a lack of an appreciation of the need for this work to be completed had affected the progression of the BCA Programme work in the local authority. However, one of the things that the consultant would have liked to do if there had been more time is to 'monitor' what was happening in schools 'much more closely', and 'give more time to speaking to and observing' the targeted BCA Programme children. Where such time was available the consultant had been able to engage in discussions which had proved invaluable for the local authority in comprehending how Black children saw themselves benefiting from the BCA Programme. This suggests that individual consultant workload would need to be taken into consideration if the BCA Programme is to be effectively delivered in all cases.

Schools

School leadership and management

From the outset, school leadership and management was identified by National Strategies as being essential in enabling the effective implementation of the BCA Programme in schools. Within the case study schools the evaluation data suggests that the BCA Programme was not being delivered from the headteacher down in all of the case study schools, despite this being a key programme requirement. Consultants observed that, where responsibility for delivering the BCA Programme was placed outside of the headteacher or other members of the senior leadership team, this made it more difficult to implement the BCA Programme within schools, especially as it often meant that school staff did not understand the importance of the project. It was further evident that, where the commitment of the headteacher or another key member of senior management staff was absent, a school's involvement in the BCA Programme could easily 'halt'. Moreover, any perceived negative changes in headteacher or senior management support for the BCA Programme were likely to be detected by school staff and could potentially influence their own disengagement from the BCA Programme, as was evidenced in one case study school. While acknowledging that some of this disengagement might have been influenced by the departure of the deputy headteacher who had previously been the driving force behind the school's involvement in the BCA Programme, the case study school concerned is illustrative of how headteacher commitment to the BCA programme can easily change (within less than a year) from positive to less than lukewarm. This was because the national assessment results of the majority White children were lower than previous attainment, and thus the Black children's achievement was seen as less of a concern. The resulting effect, as observed by a governor at the school, was that less emphasis was placed on improving the attainment of previously targeted Black children. A further wider effect is that the attainment of Black children was marginalised in favour of White achievement, which had tended to be higher in the school.

Naming and presentation of the BCA Programme to teachers and parents/carers of Black children

Chapter 1 explained that the focus of the BCA Programme had changed from 'African-Caribbean' to encompassing all Black categories when the initiative moved from being a 'pilot' to acquiring 'programme' status. In the first year of the evaluation it was noted that when the Phase 2 local authorities joined the BCA Programme in 2006 the guidance materials/documentation[35] in use at the time retained the term 'African-Caribbean'. The use of documentation with references to 'African-Caribbean' was however, found problematic by a Phase 2 BCA consultant who reported having to revise audit materials so as to ensure that the schools she was supporting understood the target groups they should be working with; that is all Black groups. A particular omission noted was the absence of reference to 'White parents of dual heritage children'. It might be argued that it is part of a consultant's role to adapt materials to make them more school specific, but the difficulty this consultant encountered was not helped by the continued use of materials focusing on one Black group.

Just as the consultant referred to above was concerned at the perceived lack of references to 'dual heritage' children and the messages that this could potentially send out to schools, a Black teacher and two parents (one African-Caribbean and one White British) objected to the BCA Programme's use of the term 'Black'. They argued that 'Black' was used negatively by Asian children in the school when referring to African-Caribbean and Mixed heritage children who they reportedly called 'Black something'. The Black teacher explained that 'Black' was a term she did not use as she found it 'divisive' and something which helped to fuel Asian children's racism in the school as she explained:

> *'Black' is politically loaded. The dictionary describes 'Black' in derogatory ways, 'White' is pure and good, 'Black' is dirty, horrible. … Asian kids use the word 'Gulla' which means Black and dirty. Children can be racist. (Teacher)*

This teacher opined that entitling the BCA Programme in this way, and referring to children as 'Black' served to 'put [Black] children into pockets' and she 'didn't like to pocket [children] too much'. This is not dissimilar to an Asian teaching assistant at the school who argued against using the term 'Black' as 'children are all equal'. A White headteacher in another school, while professing to being 'very comfortable' using the word 'Black', was nevertheless anxious (as she said) to avoid 'putting a [Black] label' on the BCA Programme, as she argued that this would send out the 'wrong messages' and possibly 'get parents' backs up'. Moreover, another Black teacher remarked that 'Black' as a label just doesn't do enough' as it cannot ever be fully reflective of a child's background or experiences. These views suggest that how the concept of 'Black' is perceived by teachers (and parents) might have implications for how the BCA Programme is implemented by schools/teachers and the Black groups that are supported. This contention is further supported by comments made by a teacher who was convinced that the focus of 'Black' in the BCA Programme was children of African-Caribbean heritage:

> *Children of Afro-Caribbean heritage - I mean that's very clearly defined by the project … the government has identified that there is underachievement amongst Afro-Caribbean children and they've put together this project to address that issue. (Teacher)*

As this teacher was in a Phase 2 school, one would have expected that she would have had a broader understanding of the term 'Black', but this possibly also relates to the school population that was present at this school. Nonetheless, the issues raised by these

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[35] It is acknowledged that new materials targeting all Black categories were in the process of being developed at the time Phase 2 started and later came on stream in 2008.

respondents indicate that there was a need for these schools to give greater consideration to how the aims and objectives of the BCA Programme were disseminated in schools, and what strategies were employed to ensure that they were understood and any misconceptions challenged.

Striking a balance between targeting and 'singling out' Black achievement

Examples highlighted above point to both Black and White respondents having concerns at the use of the term 'Black' within the BCA Programme owing to perceived negative connotations associated with the term, and the potential that use of the term has for labelling Black children. This is worth exploring further, especially as the evaluation data suggests that, despite their involvement in the BCA Programme, some teachers did not appear to fully comprehend the aims and objectives of the BCA Programme; but instead construed its focus as 'separatist', 'creating a divide' and as 'singling out' Black children'. For example:

> *My concern is that it creates a divide, it's just Black children. It does – for a society who wants to integrate, if I had a White only group there would be ructions, quite rightly, but I have a Black only group and I think: What messages are we giving there? Children notice that: 'Why don't I go with the TA?' What message are we giving out through a Black only group? A White only group would be wrong; it seems that there is one rule here and one rule there. We should all accept each other. (Teacher)*

> *… I get the impression that it's almost getting close to segregation … I have lots of children with problems who are below average, and it would be easier to have the extra support in to deal with children who all had the same problems, whereas I'm getting the impression … I've been given children because they're Black and I don't particularly like it being dictated in that way. That you're going to get extra support when you're not below average … One of them is gifted and talented in ICT, he doesn't need the extra support. (Teacher)*

The remarks referenced above imply that some case study school staff construed that the BCA Programme resources would be better placed supporting children who had greater levels of underachievement than the targeted Black children. A teaching assistant in the same school supported this segregationist viewpoint suggesting that Black children were being 'taken out[36]' of lessons because of 'their colour'. Other comments made by school respondents in this school indicate that they had misunderstood the BCA Programme goals, as they held the view that releasing class teachers (from classroom teaching) to provide targeted BCA Programme support 'disadvantaged' the children who were left behind being taught by a supply teacher.

The perception that the BCA Programme 'singled' out Black children, which was evident in the first year of the evaluation, persisted until the end of the second year. Some teachers still believed that Black children were receiving targeted support because they were Black rather than because they had specific attainment needs that required addressing:

> *It's something I find really difficult, because I don't think it should just be Black achievement; if you look at it statistically, White boys' writing is lower now than Black boys' writing. I think that any child you have in your class should be picked up. So Assessment for Learning is more productive in raising standards than projects like this. … It's got to be more than just Afro (sic)-Caribbean children that we look at. (Teacher)*

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[36] It should be noted the BCA Programme does not recommend targeted children being taken out of lessons in order for them to receive additional support.

There seems to be this tranche of support for Black children, but I don't think it is equally divided. There are other children who could do with support for one reason and another. ... I have underachieving children of all cultures and colours and that's where the attention should be. (Teacher)

But just as some White school staff regarded the BCA Programme as 'singling out' Black children, so too did a small number of Black teachers, Black parents and Black children. In one school some Black parents worried that focusing specifically on Black children would hinder their achievement, as explained by one parent:

I don't want my son to be singled out and … I don't want him to feel like he is special or anything else. … I think if you do pull out Black children, or any other child of colour, and say, 'You are more favoured and so therefore we are going to give you these special groups and special classes,' it's not going to work. They are going to rebel and it is going to reverse the whole situation. But if you say, 'OK, everybody is going to learn about this because, hey look, this is wonderful, and you know we didn't know this and we are all going to learn together', that is going to be a lot more exciting for children and they are going to look at it as a positive thing, rather than underachieving'. (Parent group)

For this parent, if Black children are to achieve well, it is salient that teachers emphasise 'learning together', that is, all ethnic groups, and raising achievement within a whole class situation. This would seem to coincide with the experience of two of the BCA consultants interviewed, who reported that some of their BCA schools had found it 'difficult to just target Black children' because they have a whole school / class approach to improving children's achievement, and that this had made it harder for them to convince the schools that this was an appropriate way of working. Apparently, the senior leadership team in one school was so concerned that the BCA Programme should not 'single out' Black children and that the BCA Programme should not become, as the deputy headteacher said, a 'Black Caribbean project', that they included children from White and Asian backgrounds in their target BCA group. It is also evident from a case study visit that children from different ethnic groups were included in the target group to avoid senior leadership fears of teachers being accused of racism (assistant headteacher). Similarly, in another multiethnic school children from diverse ethnicities were included in the BCA activities undertaken as the deputy head was 'not happy' about targeting Black children because as he said 'there wasn't an issue' of Black underachievement per se, as it only pertained to a small number of Black children. Consequently, although this particular school had targeted underachieving Black children, such targeting as the deputy headteacher argued had been 'discreet' as he was fearful of 'identify[ing] or labelling [Black] children as 'underachievers'. This concern not to label Black children as 'underachievers' epitomises concerns elicited by some other headteachers (both Phase 1 and 2) about how their involvement in the BCA Programme might be perceived by parents and carers of Black children.

Nevertheless, it is likely that local authority guidance / presentation of the BCA Programme to prospective schools may have contributed to the way in which schools in one local authority perceived the BCA Programme, and fears of focusing on Black children developing. The primary strategy manager of the local authority concerned explained that they:

Haven't gone down the route that this is an exclusive club just for these children because I think that we would not have had a positive response and also it would move away from 'quality first teaching' that we really need to be pushing. (PSM)

This had led to schools in the local authority 'not having a group that's just exclusively made up of children from those [Black] groups' (PSM). Instead they had included children from other ethnic groups. This was considered pertinent, as, according to the PSM, one headteacher was, adamant that 'she wasn't going to have parents' meetings just for African-Caribbean parents', whilst another headteacher was reported by the PSM to have questioned the purpose of having 'separate' achievement programmes if the local authority is concerned with 'quality first teaching':

> *The head was initially keen to be part of it, he came to the first initial briefing, but he was questioning the fact that this should be about quality first teaching and we can't have a separate programme for Turkish boys, a separate programme for Black African boys and a separate programme for Greek girls, because then you're getting, it's madness … He was a bit concerned that we were going down the route of a specific teaching strategy for a specific group of pupils.(PSM)*

Whilst not wishing to diminish such concerns, the use of funds specifically designed to benefit Black children to target interventions at children from other ethnic groups is problematic, particularly if such an approach results in the achievement of children from other ethnic groups being enhanced whilst the Black attainment gap is not closed. Moreover, adopting an inclusive 'colour blind' approach does not help teachers to either comprehend why focusing on Black children's achievement is relevant, or indeed enable them to feel comfortable targeting or supporting the achievement of a particular group of children. Importantly, as observed by Tikly et al. (2006), and as experienced by some local authority consultants, a colour blind approach can hinder addressing underachievement:

> *Some of them still have a colour blind approach so they wouldn't articulate a separate ethos. For them it's, 'We want all our pupils to achieve well, we do the best by all our pupils'. It's a constant struggle getting schools to feel comfortable looking at a separate group of pupils. (Consultant)*

Underachievement versus achievement

As well as fears of Black children being negatively labelled, there was a tension in five of the seven case study schools as to a perceived emphasis within the BCA Programme on 'underachieving' Black children. Headteachers of these schools worried that the stress on 'underachievement' reinforced national stereotypes about Black children as underachievers; a contention also shared by some of the parents interviewed. They argued that there should be some recognition within the BCA Programme that there are Black children who are high achievers as evidenced by their own experiences of Black high achievers in their schools. One school governor at a Phase 2 school, for example, drew attention to five children of Caribbean and African origin that were on the school's 'Gifted and Talented list', whilst the head said 'our Caribbean boys excel'. Such a viewpoint was supported by another Phase 1 headteacher who said 'my high achieving group are Black Caribbean pupils'. A governor from another Phase 1 school also pointed out that Black boys at the school had a 'record of achieving' and that 'it shouldn't be a surprise that Black boys achieve', but instead should be seen as 'part of the norm'. The experiences of one consultant in supporting her BCA Programme schools led her to conclude that teachers needed to be encouraged to work with Black achievers as well as underachievers in order to extend their attainment levels.

All of these viewpoints suggest that some respondents misinterpreted the aims and objectives of the BCA Programme, and the reasons why prominence was given within the Programme to raising Black achievement. They did not understand that while there is evidence of Black achievement at a local level, this is not necessarily replicated at a national level, and therefore needs to be addressed. Equally importantly, the guidance materials state that 'a child may be underachieving whilst getting a level 5 in English at the end of Year 6 or

they had the potential to do better than this', which reiterates the need for schools to have an in-depth understanding of the ways in which individual Black children/groups are both achieving and underachieving.

Labour intensive nature of the BCA Programme

During the first year of the evaluation case study schools reflected on what they saw as the labour intensiveness of the BCA Programme and why they considered it time consuming. For example, one BCA Programme school coordinator reported that the BCA Programme involved a 'lot of time out of class'. In some instances this amounted to 'three days per week'; time that the BCA coordinator stated was not always possible to support 'because there is not the funding' and her school was 'reluctant to give three days a week out of class for just one area'. The headteacher of another school worried that time spent out of the classroom on 'paperwork' diverted teacher attention away from enhancing the teaching and learning of Black children within the classroom:

> *There is a lot of bureaucracy and a lot of paperwork and form filling … I understand that we do need to have targets in place, but the level of paperwork just means that somebody is pulled away from something else. And you are pulled away from the children we are supposed to be targeting when somebody has to fill in reams of forms and coming up with facts and figures. (Headteacher)*

But there did not seem to be an understanding that the completion of paperwork relating to, for instance, targets set is essential if schools/teachers are to have a basis from which to enhance Black achievement. Having said that, it was evident that the level of workload was a major challenge identified by the case study schools in implementing the BCA Programme effectively. In assessing school perceptions about their BCA programme workload, it is important, however, to state that the case study schools recognised that the BCA programme had to be evaluated by National Strategies, and that this necessarily involved the completion of some paperwork. Nevertheless, schools expressed concern that the volume of paper work that their BCA school involvement appeared to generate as key BCA Programme requirements (e.g. school audits, RAPs and progress reports that schools had to complete) was not sustainable. However, it is not unreasonable that schools should be expected to submit progress reports, providing it does not result in unnecessary duplication, as alluded to in the following extract:

> *We have to fill in these school progress reports for the National Strategies, and a lot of the stuff takes quite a long time, and a lot of my time is filled in with doing RAPs, a lot of paperwork. And sometimes I feel all I do is analyse data, do paperwork rather than get in and do stuff in the classroom. I'd rather go to planning meetings and I only have a certain amount of time and I know National Strategies have to know what we're doing, but it does seem as if what's put on here [RAPs shown to researcher] is being put on here [example of progress report shown] and it just seems as if it's a lot of moving around of information. (BCA Coordinator)*

The workload difficulties identified by the case study schools also need to be understood within a wider context of the workload pressures that schools operate under. For example:

> *Schools are suddenly finding themselves with so many conflicting priorities; each month a new initiative is implemented. So the actual paperwork, the burden needs to be reduced, so that we can get down to the nitty gritty of quality provision for children. (Headteacher)*

The workload pressures identified by case study schools were supported by local authority comments. For example, one consultant intimated that because 'schools are under so much pressure' in fulfilling their BCA Programme requirements, it was 'tough going' for consultants to get progress reports from schools on time, which meant that they in turn were submitting their local authority reports late to the National Strategies team. It was argued by another BCA consultant that requiring schools to produce progress reports 'frustrates' schools, and in the longer-term it was suggested that this would 'turn schools off', as such production involves 'a lot of work for schools' and time commitment. This consultant also indicated that she 'did not have time to chase paper and frustrate schools'. This is not to suggest that either the case study schools or local authority consultants did not understand the importance of school progress reports and why they were required. However, it was felt by one local authority that such expected compliance might not only encourage some schools to 'pull out' of the BCA Programme (especially those in need of greater support), but also detract from the 'good work' that some schools are doing.

School staffing capacity

Throughout the evaluation period, school staffing capacity remained an issue of concern. Consultants across the case study local authorities reported that some of the schools within their BCA portfolio had operated at a reduced staffing capacity level as a result of staff illness and/or key staff taking maternity leave, and that this had affected their ability to effectively implement the BCA Programme. The illness of a deputy head was reported by one local authority to have contributed to one of its schools 'abandoning the project' (Consultant).

The difficulties these case study schools identified with staffing capacity, particularly in relation to staff departure, illustrates the need for schools participating in the BCA Programme to have sufficiently experienced staff with an understanding of the BCA Programme requirements and appropriate strategies to raise Black children's achievement to continue the work, once formerly designated BCA staff had left.

BCA consultant support

Earlier, attention was drawn to the benefits the case study schools considered were provided by the BCA consultants. It is also salient to note that some school staff considered the strategies adopted by their BCA consultant to be less effective in facilitating school implementation of the BCA Programme. This suggests that some schools had mixed feelings about the support they received from their consultant. Three case study schools, for example, expressed disquiet at the professional development sessions they received which were led by their BCA consultant. In one school for example, a White teacher was concerned at the consultant's use of the phrase 'socially confident' (during a professional development module) to describe Black children's behaviour. The teacher concerned saw this as teachers being encouraged to 'accept rudeness from a Black child because that is where they are coming from', whereas the school policy is 'not to accept rudeness from anyone'. The concerns of this teacher are indicative of a lack of teacher understanding of what the BCA consultant meant by 'socially confident'. They are also illustrative of how the phrase 'socially confident' can be interpreted differently when it is associated with minority ethnic groups. The professional development sessions led by the BCA consultant were also criticised for coming as one teacher stated 'straight from the book', and for not being particularly appropriate for a 'multicultural school like ours'. This however, was in contrast, to a teacher at the same school who argued that the sessions had made a difference to the way she understood Black achievement and the way that the attitudes of Black children are perceived. The differences in how the professional development sessions were perceived by these school staff are indicative of the need for greater staff discussion and openness about comprehending cultural differences (e.g. 'socially confident' versus 'rude') and why similar behaviours displayed by different ethnic groups might be viewed as more acceptable coming from some

ethnic groups than from other groups. Saliently, the negative views expressed about the development sessions would need to be considered in conjunction with the difficulties some staff had in accepting that Black children's achievement needed to be targeted and that raising Black children's achievement might require different strategies, with teachers developing appropriate understanding and skills (see earlier comments about a colour blind approach).

Two other schools were less positive about the consultant support they had received for two main reasons. In one, there was a lack of clarity on the part of the school as to the focus the BCA Programme would take in the school, and how the school would be supported by the BCA consultant to meet the school's desired goal of implementing a diverse curriculum. For example:

> *I thought it would take one direction [global multicultural perspective], but it seems to have opened up to more of a tracking and analysis. (Headteacher)*

The quote above suggests the school had not fully grasped the BCA Programme expectation that schools should monitor Black children's attainment and analyse their progression. Unfortunately, the school's lack of awareness of the BCA Programme requirements served to negatively affect the school's perception of the consultant's ability to meet their specific needs, and also undermined their confidence in developing a working relationship with the consultant. The second school complained about a lack of follow-up CPD sessions (following delivery of the PDMs) led by the BCA consultant, or where CPD was delivered, the consultant was perceived to give insufficient lead to the school as to the type of follow-up CPD that would be most beneficial. When considering school perceptions about the type of consultant support received, it is worth noting that both of these schools had experienced a change of consultant, and reported different experiences with each consultant. One school suggested the initial consultant had provided more 'intensive support' (e.g. working on their Raising Achievement Plans with them), whereas the second consultant was considered 'more hands off', so they found adjusting to this new way of working difficult. An example of the consultant being 'more hands off' was that he had encouraged the school to indicate areas in which they required additional CPD, rather than dictating where support was needed. The lead BCA teacher explained:

> *You know I'm not the expert and [we needed] some more kind of expert advice because what I think we're lacking a little bit in specific strategies for engaging Black children [in our school]. A lot what we do is good practice and I'm not sure what those would be. …sometimes I think it would be nice to have something from the real professional in the area kind of leading a little bit or suggesting a little bit what we could be doing … But sometimes I feel we're having to figure out everything ourselves, you know what we want and where we're going, whereas we need guidance on it [the curriculum].*

Staff in this school appeared to want guidance on how to adapt culturally diverse materials and strategies to their specific school context. They additionally questioned the relevance of producing lesson plans which involved 'a lot of work' that they did not later use. Such experiences suggest a lack of understanding on the part of school staff as to the strategies the consultant was employing in order to help the school to develop its own understanding and effective practice.

The difficulties that both schools experienced with consultant support compared with the schools which praised their consultant support indicate how important the school and consultant relationship is, and the need for effective communication between both groups, if the expectations of schools together with identified school needs (e.g. raised through the school audit) and the BCA Programme requirements are to be met.

Summary

A number of factors contributed to effective implementation of the BCA Programme in schools:

- The allocation of funding enabled schools to acquire more culturally diverse and inclusive resources; bring in external artists; allocate key staff time to track data; and employ EMA teaching assistants. Schools argued that without these resources they could not have implemented the Programme.

- Auditing their own practice had enabled schools to focus on what was actually going on.

- Schools valued the flexibility allowed by the BCA Programme.

- It was argued that it takes time for practices to develop and attitudes to change, and develop data tracking systems. It was also crucial that staff had time to develop confidence in , for example, interacting with Black parents, and time to reflect on pupils' achievement and potential, and develop creative ways of meeting Black children's needs.

- The emphasis on monitoring and tracking Black children's achievement by ethnicity was perceived to be very valuable.

- Developing a diverse curriculum was found to be beneficial in motivating and engaging Black children.

- The BCA consultant support was viewed positively in many schools, and it was argued by some that this was crucial to the BCA Programme's success. Schools also valued the support provided by Regional Advisers from National Strategies.

Interviewees also identified a number of challenges that potentially limited the effectiveness of the BCA Programme:

- Some local authorities argued that they had had insufficient notification to get staff in place and to prepare for the demands of the BCA Programme, and that some information from National Strategies arrived too late.

- Some consultants had substantial workloads (including roles outside the BCA programme), and their efforts were spread too thinly to be effective.

- The attitudes of some school staff to the BCA Programme and to Black people/children militated against the Programme succeeding. These attitudes were entrenched and hard to change.

- Where school leaders were not totally committed, the BCA Programme had less chance of success. Changes of leadership were often problematic in this respect.

- The term 'Black' was identified as problematic by some teachers and parents.

- Some teachers and parents perceived the BCA Programme to be divisive; separating out Black children.

- The emphasis on underachievement was seen by some as reinforcing negative stereotypes.

- The BCA Programme was regarded by some as resource intensive, particularly in its demands for paperwork. Schools with staffing difficulties found it difficult to maintain their commitment to the BCA Programme.

- Some schools were also unhappy about the level or the nature of the support they received from consultants.

Chapter 11 - Impact of the BCA Programme at local authority and school level, and sustainability of the BCA Programme

This chapter explores the impact of the BCA Programme on Black children's attainment together with factors that are likely to sustain the BCA Programme.

Impacting on attainment

The methodology chapter identified difficulties in this small-scale evaluation assessing the impact of the BCA Programme on Black children's attainment. A quote from a PSM in a Phase 1 local authority suggests that 'sustained improvement over a long period of time takes longer for longer periods to sort of embed the practice really'. The qualitative analysis undertaken as part of the evaluation suggests that there is a greater potential for assessing the impact of the BCA Programme interventions from 2008 onwards, and that any future assessments of the BCA Programme would need to need to take into consideration the different starting points for each school that took part in the BCA Programme, as this is likely to have an impact on the pace at which changes in school understanding and practice occur, and schools are able to move forward in raising Black children's achievement. It would also need to judge the added benefits and examples of achievement that have begun to be highlighted here through the qualitative analysis. For example:

> We have just done a summary of all the targeted pupils, what their achievement has actually been over the last three terms … There are about thirty odd pupils overall within the six schools, and only two pupils did not make any progress. Most pupils made two levels of progress and some, approximately five or six, made three levels of progress. Of course, what we have to look at is what their progress is or what their attainment is.. Is it in line with national expectations and that is actually being looked at? There are some pupils already who will be definitely level 5s come the information of the national assessment tests. (Consultant)

> [Name of son] has always been average. After he started doing BCAP with [name of TA] he has excelled. He's coming past the middle stage and moving into level 4, they think he could do well, he could get further past that. My children are conscious about putting their hand up in a large classroom environment, the classes are large, he's scared of what his peers will say if he constantly puts his hand up, but in a small group he has flourished. He can express himself, ask little questions, that sounds silly, [but] it's working wonders. (Parent)

Sustainability of the BCA Programme

A number of key areas of the BCA Programme were identified by schools and local authorities as sustainable. They broadly relate to the curriculum, use of resources and monitoring attainment:

- data tracking and monitoring of achievement data - both schools and local authorities concurred that 'good systems' were now in place;

- maintaining a diverse curriculum and including a range of Black perspectives through lesson planning and curriculum mapping;

- diverse resources including e.g. 'books from the Caribbean, Africa, books with images of Black children' (Teacher);

- embedding inclusivity in whole school philosophy and practice;

- developing understanding of Black children's cultures;

- modelling good practice in school and sharing good practice with other schools; (e.g. network or partnership meetings);

- 'celebrating children's differences in a positive way' (Deputy head);

- holding cultural evenings;

- conducting school audits; and

- the new BCA materials that have been developed.

In addition to the above, one local authority suggested that the lesson plans which the authority had produced to underpin the school curriculum so that it is inclusive and culturally relevant, would help to sustain practice. Another local authority argued that if the BCA Programme is to be sustainable it would have to 'strike a balance between working with headteachers and senior managers' and 'working alongside teachers in the classroom getting your hands dirty and doing some partnership work' (Consultant and PSM). From this local authority's experience, such partnership working was paramount because some schools were known to be reluctant to have BCA consultants working in classrooms with teachers.

Overall, case study schools and local authorities concurred that in order to be sustainable, the BCA Programme would have to be included in school improvement plans, seen as part of a school's vision and 'not just treated like a stand alone project' (Phase 1 LA). Moreover, it was intimated that the BCA Programme would need to be 'embedded into the way [schools] work with and progress children' (PSM). In other words, the BCA Programme would need to be become part of a whole school focus on raising children's achievement, which in many respects reflects how some schools and local authorities perceived the BCA Programme, and the long-term aim of National Strategies. This suggests that if the BCA Programme is to become more embedded in schools and the practice of local authorities there is a need for ongoing support from National Strategies.

Factors likely to affect sustainability

The case study data suggests there are five main factors that are likely to affect the sustainability of the BCA Programme being effectively implemented in schools. The first is staffing capacity. The case study headteachers were particularly concerned at their ability to meet BCA Programme requirements when also trying to meet their other teaching and learning commitments with reduced levels of staffing. During the evaluation, two schools across two local authorities withdrew from the BCA Programme and two others in a third local authority withdrew shortly after joining the BCA Programme because of staffing capacity issues.

Secondly, as indicated earlier, there was an expectation that the BCA Programme would be driven from the headteacher down. Leadership and management were therefore considered crucial in school implementation of the BCA Programme. However, the case study data suggests that where this does not occur, or the lead teacher with responsibility for the BCA programme is not a member of the senior management team, this can affect how the BCA Programme is viewed by school staff and whether or not staff are encouraged to become more informed about Black achievement, and improve their practice, as illustrated by the following excerpt:

I think if it comes down from management it will happen, people will make the moves to actually incorporate things far better ... if there is a push at a certain level, then everyone pulls their socks up. People are more conscious, [there is] an openness and an honesty, to say 'I don't know' and we find out in much the same way as we say 'I don't know about electricity', and we go and find out. It's about management not only leading, but also giving licence to ask the questions, to say 'I don't know', because I think in terms of race and race awareness, we are all in a different place on the journey, as it were. (Teacher)

A Phase 2 local authority pointed out that the departure of the lead BCA teacher in one of their BCA Programme schools not only had 'a huge impact on the profile of the BCA Programme across the school' (Consultant), but that the headteacher who subsequently took on responsibility for leading the BCA Programme in the school had found the task 'challenging', and therefore found that picking up where the lead BCA teacher had left off was 'quite difficult'. Similarly, in one of the case study schools where the person with responsibility for leading the BCA Programme left during the first year of the evaluation, school staff interviewed in the following year reported that the BCA Programme did not have the prominent focus it had had with the previous lead teacher because the new BCA leader appeared 'less enthusiastic' (Teacher). This was considered to negatively influence staff perceptions of their BCA activities. Data from a third school additionally suggests that where the incoming BCA teacher either feels no affinity with the BCA Programme or considers that 'there is nothing left to do' (Teacher), school staff may be less inclined to see Black children's achievement as relevant and needing to be addressed.

Even where the BCA Programme was led and managed by the headteacher, if staff perceived the emphasis on the BCA Programme to have altered (e.g. there was less keenness) or to lack direction, this could affect sustainability, as illustrated below:

I just don't know where it's going. The first year we were really clear and having the children where we were having this particular work … This [second] year, for me personally, I know I've done it with the planning, but I'm not sure where else I'm supposed to be going with this project. I know what I do, but I don't know the whole picture. The head is obviously the person in charge of it, but I don't know exactly where her direction is. (Teacher)

Third, changing school priorities impact on levels of staff interest, and in turn the sustainability of the BCA Programme. This was evidenced in one case study school in the second year of the evaluation where staff stated the school's involvement in the BCA Programme had been overtaken by their focus on an Ofsted inspection visit (which the school had to prepare for), together with all the new initiatives that schools are expected (e.g. by the DCSF) to implement.

Government priorities change, and what you are focussing on changes, and if you're in a classroom day to day dealing with children, you have to respond to what that need is. It can't always be Afro (sic) Caribbean children, it can't be EAL, and you've got to respond to what you've got in front of you. (Teacher)

Comments such as the above illustrate the need for schools to recognise first, that raising the achievement of Black children needs to be balanced alongside addressing school and other government priorities, and secondly, that the revised Ofsted inspection framework includes judgements on equalities, and on narrowing attainment gaps across ethnic groups. Ultimately, this means that Black children's achievement cannot be ignored, and Ofsted or other priorities should not be used as an excuse for not improving the attainment levels of Black children. Moreover, it is not beyond schools to begin to put measures in place which will help to counteract the impact of staff with BCA knowledge departing and leaving schools

devoid of such expertise; they could encourage other staff to develop greater awareness of the strategies considered necessary to raise Black children's' achievement.

Fourthly, staff commitment to raising Black children's' achievement was a concern highlighted by schools in terms of sustainability. In one school the headteacher was concerned that members of staff who were nearing retirement had not engaged with the BCA Programme as they felt they had 'nothing to learn'. A second headteacher argued that some staff were 'resistant' to seeing the BCA Programme as presenting them with learning opportunities, as they did not see it as offering different approaches to what they were already familiar with. This was evident also in a few case study school interviews.

Fifthly, while the case study schools recognised that schools were expected to draw on their own school staffing resources in responding to the BCA Programme, their experience of the intensive staffing required in supporting their targeted children, led them to conclude that the BCA Programme would not be sustainable without the availability of their EMA and teaching assistant support. The intensity of the support required by the BCA Programme as alluded to by these schools would need to be considered within the context that in some schools EMA and teaching assistant staff play an integral role in supporting targeted children as part of the BCA Programme.

Summary

It was argued that the impact of BCA on Black children's attainment will take some time to develop fully, partly because changes in school understanding and practice develop slowly.

Five main factors were identified as likely to impact on the sustainability of the Programme:

- having sufficient staffing capacity;

- commitment from school leadership;

- commitment over a sustained period of time, without competition from other initiatives and priorities;

- developing and maintaining commitment from all staff;

- support from EMA and teaching assistants.

Chapter 12 - Conclusion

The case study evaluation indicates that the BCA Programme was necessarily targeted at schools and Black children who would benefit most from the BCA Programme's aims and objectives. However, the evaluation found that in some schools (both multiethnic and predominantly White) the strategy of targeting underachieving Black children was not well explained to schools and teachers, many of whom seemed to believe that ensuring equality can be achieved by treating everyone identically. There was a lack of awareness and understanding in the case study schools that different strategies might need to be applied to meet the needs of different groups of children.

The case study schools identified the flexibility they were given in implementing the BCA Programme as a major strength. Nonetheless, the level of flexibility in the schools and the activities/practices implemented meant that it was hard to see which children were being consistently supported over the evaluation period.

The case study data revealed that staff awareness about Black children's achievement was more likely to be elevated, and changes made in practice, where staff were closely linked to the BCA Programme, whereas the staff who were new to the area or saw it as less important were the ones where greater 'resistance' and/or fewer changes in practice were observed. The evaluation findings suggest that the case study schools with previous experience of successfully raising Black children's achievement (prior to their participation in the BCA Programme) were less likely to regard the BCA Programme as offering additional strategies for enhancing Black children's achievement. Despite this, there was evidence to suggest that even previously successful schools welcomed the opportunity to take part in the BCA Programme because as well as assessing areas for improvement, the BCA Programme enabled them to consider 'what is working well' (Headteacher) and how such practice can be consolidated.

Through their involvement in the BCA Programme, the case study schools monitoring of attainment and use of ethnicity data has improved. Besides this, the BCA Programme has allowed school leadership to be much more explicit about teachers incorporating Black children's heritage in their teaching and learning.

Although case study schools found the BCA Programme time consuming and requiring a lot of effort and staff commitment, they considered it to be essential in helping to cultivate a different perception of Black achievement through its long term approach:

> *I think this is a great thing because it's not something that's just going to be done for one month or two months. I think because it's a slow overall thing that's going to be going on throughout. I think that's definitely a plus point for everyone, teaching staff, support, everyone, because Black history is like only for that week … but this will be something that is going to be going on. (TA)*

It has also begun to foster an understanding amongst school staff that 'just because the child is from that culture that there's no reason they can't achieve' (TA).

The BCA Programme appears to have worked best in the case study schools where there was a good relationship between the school and the BCA consultant, and both parties were able to work together to the benefit of Black children.

The case study data suggests that some teaching staff hold negative views about Black children / people, and that negative perceptions about projects targeting Black children are not confined to White school staff. Where negative perceptions were entrenched consultants found them hard to change. The views held by both White and Black staff in some schools served to undermine their ability to raise Black children's achievements.

The case study data also suggests that while schools might be representations of inclusive environments and most Black children have positive relationships with children and teachers from different ethnic groups, some Black children feel that they are treated differently by White teachers because of their skin colour, and where this differential treatment occurs, this is likely to impact on Black children' experiences of school, their approaches to learning, and on efforts to raise their attainment. The negative experiences recounted by some children would seem to support the contention by one local authority that an inclusive school culture and ethos is 'difficult to measure' because demonstration of inclusion (e.g. displays) does not necessarily reflect classroom practice or staff/pupil relationships/experiences. Moreover, while some case study schools felt they had made progress on making the school curriculum more culturally relevant and inclusive, the children interviewed did not necessarily experience the curriculum in this way.

It is worrying that BCA Programme funds which were intended to support interventions aimed at raising Black children's attainment were used by one local authority to benefit the wider school population under the pretext of race equality and quality first teaching. This is problematic because it implies that Black children's underachievement is not a legitimate area of focus, and as such, this will do little to reduce persistent attainment gaps for Black children. It is equally concerning that, despite the efforts of National Strategies, the BCA Programme seemed to be easier to implement in multiethnic schools where, as one headteacher of such a school argued, teachers do not need to be convinced of the benefits of this way of working. This headteacher also revealed that she would have viewed the BCA Programme less favourably if her school population had been mainly White. This suggests that where such attitudes are held by school staff, Black children in predominantly White schools could possibly miss out on essential and focused support. Clearly, there is still some way to go if Black children's achievement is to be regarded by all schools and local authorities as salient to address.

Before concluding, some attention needs to be given to the type of schools that took part in this evaluation. These were high achieving schools with a history of high Black attainment. Four schools had a track record in improving whole school (including Black) achievement. For example:

> *If you look at that group of schools you've got some well established headteachers, that have been in the job a while, that are outstanding in terms of Ofsted ratings, so you've got some good headteachers (PSM).*

The fact that these schools were recognised as being effective in raising achievement was evidenced by two headteachers being executive heads and having school improvement responsibilities for other schools, and a further two providing consultant support to other schools as a way of raising children's achievement. All of this suggests that these schools had the capacity and were sufficiently experienced to undertake the BCA Programme. This contention would seem to be supported by the schools within the case study local authorities that withdrew their involvement in the BCA Programme as a result of their participation in school improvement programmes. Clearly, the case study local authorities worked with schools that had the capacity to make a difference, but in doing this, they appeared to choose schools that had already put considerable efforts into raising attainment, and perhaps had less need of the BCA programme than some other schools.

Finally, the literature review highlighted a range of factors that affect Black children's attainment and the longstanding nature of Black children's (especially African-Caribbean) underachievement. This understanding led one school governor in the first year of the evaluation to question why the BCA Programme was time-limited and had not been rolled out more widely and fully supported with appropriate levels of resources:

Why should there be a pilot around the achievement of Black kids when the achievement of Black kids ought to be, 20 years we've been talking about the same thing, about the achievement of Black kids … we know it's around poverty, it's around racism, it's around access, it's around all those issues and it's not a local issue. It's a national one which people have to put their resources to and address. But that's the action plan I'm waiting for … If you recognise there is a deficiency and you know you've had it for 20 years, then you would have a five, ten year action plan to change it and those kids should be coming with extra packages of support. (Governor).

This raises the question of what further steps will need to be taken if the BCA Programme is to become fully embedded in future practice and appropriately resourced and which allows the needs of Black children with low attainment to be met. The answer perhaps lies in a comment made by two BCA consultants:

I think what it comes down to is the will and the time and the energy of the people [in schools] using the tools … but it is something that needs to be promoted as part of the local authority strategy for raising achievement.

The PSM [within the LA] has not engaged with it [the BCA Programme]. It's difficult to say whether that's just the nature of the primary strategy and the fact that they have so many more schools and possibly other priorities that are more time consuming, but I do feel that has been one of the negatives for BCAP compared with the secondary programme.

So this suggests that there has to be a two-pronged attack from the school and local authority, with schools and local authorities working in tandem, and with Black children's achievement being (as another BCA consultant said) at the 'centre' of whole school achievement strategies and school improvement plans rather than on the 'periphery'. These ways of working would also need to reinforced at a wider strategic level governmental level.

Chapter 13 - Recommendations

In setting out the following recommendations, it is acknowledged that the evaluation is constrained by the fact that it relates to a two-year period, a very small number of case study local authorities and schools (compared to the overall number that participated in the BCA Programme) and does not include work conducted within schools or local authorities or any input / support that the BCA Programme schools/local authorities received from National Strategies after July 2008. Notwithstanding, over the course of the evaluation the following factors remained constant within the case study schools and would need addressing:

- There is a need for a clearer understanding within schools and local authorities as to the main aims of the BCA Programme, and particularly about why it specifically targets Black children and what is 'different' about the BCA Programme. This is needed to avoid the implementation of the BCA Programme being undermined by school/staff perceptions that the BCA Programme does not do anything different from what schools did before. This would also help to prevent schools/teachers from seeing the BCA Programme as unnecessarily taking away teacher time and resources that they feel could be better spent on other ethnic groups perceived to be in need of greater support.

- In order for schools and teachers to take seriously the importance of raising Black children's achievement and promoting a social justice agenda in schools, there is a need for headteachers to be at the forefront of driving the aims and objectives of the BCA Programme forward. Alongside this, headteachers and teachers in post would need to access continuing professional development which covers issues of 'race' equality, diversity and inclusion. The courses would seek to break down barriers to raising Black children's achievement by exploring sensitive issues such as the meaning of 'Black', together with institutional racism and teacher attitudes/expectations (e.g. teacher perceptions, stereotyped assumptions/myths and expectations of children from different ethnic groups) that can affect Black children's achievement.

Exploring Black children's achievement at a school, local and national level, would help school staff to comprehend their legal duties with regard to diversity, inclusion and equal opportunities and how it is possible to foster Black children's achievement.

- Although exploring teacher attitudes was not a key aspect of this evaluation it emerged as a salient issue. In developing more conducive staff attitudes to raising Black children's achievement, there needs to be better understanding amongst school staff (both Black and White) that enhancing Black children's achievement and ultimately closing the attainment gap across ethnic groups might require different strategies:

   The project has highlighted for us is that actually you do need to treat your children differently, and that's not about making them stand out, that's about understanding them and their needs to create an inclusive classroom and I think that's probably the key thing in terms of the change of attitudes (Deputy Head).

The monitoring of staff attitudes by Ofsted as part of their monitoring of schools' compliance with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the race equality duty and also their compliance with the community cohesion duty may encourage teachers to develop more appropriate attitudes to facilitating the achievement of Black children.

- While the BCA Programme has been implemented in both multiethnic and predominantly White areas (e.g. in schools where Black children are in the minority), it is nevertheless salient to consider ways in which understanding be developed within schools where there are only two or three Black children, and their commitment to meeting the needs of a small number of Black children can be maintained.

Finally, if the BCA Programme is to become more embedded in schools and the practice of local authorities there is a need for ongoing governmental support. This will necessitate that financial and consultant resources would need to be provided per school not per LA (if an LA has lots of schools that need the programme, then they all need to be properly resourced). Although schools with the greatest attainment needs were previously identified further steps need to be taken to ensure that the schools where the attainment gap is greatest are identified and targeted with appropriate support. Ways of introducing the BCA Programme in schools where Black achievement is not viewed as a key priority will need to be identified. In relation to school strategies, the BCA Programme should continue to discourage schools from withdrawing Black children from the classroom, and creating all-Black groups. Ensuring that school staff understand the rationale for the BCA Programme is absolutely central to such understanding developing and the ultimate success of the BCA Programme.

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APPENDIX 1

Black Children's Achievement Programme
Evaluation Interview Schedule for Headteachers

Introduction

- Thank the respondent for agreeing to be interviewed and reiterate aims of the evaluation

- Explain issues re. anonymity and confidentiality

- Obtain respondent's permission to tape record the interview

Background information

1. I'd like to start off by asking how long you have been headteacher at this school?

2. Please describe your school, including the catchment area and pupil profile (or confirm description in most recent Ofsted report)?

Before I continue can you first tell me when you use the term 'Black' which pupils are you generally referring to (e.g. dual or mixed heritage, Black Caribbean, Black African) and the circumstances of these groups (e.g. new arrivals, settled and established, transient, Anglophone, Francophone etc.)?

School ethos / curriculum

3. Please describe your school ethos, particularly in relation to promoting race equality, challenging racism and valuing ethnic and cultural diversity?

   Probe how the school complies with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, children from diverse groups interact with each other and if links are developed with the local community / community organisations.

4. [**If not mentioned in 3**] Would you say that your school's curriculum is diverse and, how does it help Black pupils to be aware of their own heritage(s) and support their identity development?

Achievement

5. In the context of your school, are there any differences between achievements of groups of children?

   Probe for what s/he thinks the causes of these differences are.

6. What are your particular concerns about the achievement of Black children?

   Prompts: specific subject areas? A particular key stage? Gender, particular groups / individuals

7. How does your school identify, monitor and improve achievement at an individual and group level?

   Prompts: Whole school monitoring of / addressing achievement by ethnicity / gender, teacher identification, involvement of EMA staff; individual profiling, setting learning / achievement targets, setting h/w, monitoring pupil attendance etc.

8. What is your perception of pupils' (e.g. boys / girls; Black / White / Asian) attitudes within the school towards learning and achieving academically?

   Probe how children are encouraged to value learning and improve their achievement?

9. Where does the notion of improving BCA fit into the school's approach to teaching and learning (e.g. is it set within the context of raising standards for all pupils / whole school improvement)?

10. Prior to becoming involved in the BCA programme, how successful would you say the school was in raising Black children's achievement and enhancing their progression?

11. How are resources usually deployed to support the progression / achievement of individual pupils or groups of pupils (e.g. any extended school activities)?

BCAP

12. Can you provide some background information about how your school became involved in the BCA programme? What's your main understanding of the initiative and what are your main expectations of participating in it?

13. How much funding have you received from the Local Authority towards supporting BCA? Is this level of funding sufficient to address your needs? Have you allocated the funds in a particular way?

14. What has been the Local Authority's role in helping the school implement and develop the BCA programme?

    Probe whether had a diagnostic visit, if helped the school to conduct an audit of the school learning environment and developing Raising Achievement Plans and who is responsible for monitoring this?

15. What areas of Black achievement is the school looking to address (e.g. improving Yr 6 SATs)? Is the intention to target particular Black groups across the school or Black pupils within specific year groups or particular individuals? How have specific targets been set to raise achievement (e.g. year to year)?

16. Since joining the programme, how has raising the achievement of Black pupils been prioritised in the school (e.g. particular members of staff taking a lead) and what strategies have you adopted to raise BCA?

    Prompts: made changes to the curriculum, teaching and learning approaches, and the way achievement is assessed / monitored, different strategies for boys / girls, implementing pupil progress reviews, working with local schools etc.

17. In what ways, if any, does the BCA programme build on previous work done in the school?

18. What do you think about the BCA programme, generally? Are there any aspects that are particularly good? Any aspects that you think do not work well or should be done differently?

   Probe for aspects that work well / do not work in *relation to this particular school*, and for aspects that might work / not work in schools in general?

19. Overall, are there any particular challenges that you perceive in trying to raise BCA?

   Prompts: Pupils attitudes, staff knowledge / confidence, quality of teaching in core subject areas, resources etc.

Staff

20. How are teachers supported (by the school and BCA consultant) to develop their understanding of and improve Black pupil's achievement and progression?

21. Have you noticed any changes in staff practice re. BCA since you joined the programme (e.g. teachers have higher expectations)? Are they more focused or committed to this work?

Parents

22. To what extent does the school work with parents and carers to develop understanding of achievement and how the school is trying to improve achievement?

   Prompt: Consultations, implementing home / school agreements etc.

23. How are parents' generally kept informed about the progress of their children (e.g. parents' evening, reports, letters, phone calls etc.)?

24. Are parents and carers of Black children aware that the school is involved in the BCA programme? How were they informed and do you think they have a good understanding of the initiative?

25. Has the school's involvement in the BCA programme helped you to involve parents and carers of Black children more in the life of the school (e.g. as parent governors, volunteering in school, attending meetings) and support their children's learning?

26. Is there anything else you would like to add about:

   i)   the BCA programme
   ii)   the achievement of Black pupils in this school
   iii)   anything else?

Thank you - remind the interviewee about how the interview will be used in the evaluation. Do you have any questions?

Black Children's Achievement Programme
Evaluation Focus Group Schedule for Parents & Carers of Black children

Introduction

- Thank the respondents for agreeing to participate and reiterate aims of the evaluation

- Explain issues of anonymity and confidentiality

- Obtain respondent's permission to tape the interview

1. We'd like to start off by getting you to introduce yourselves and to say a little bit about the children you have at this school and their ages.

We'd now like to talk more specifically about your children's experience of education at this school.

Children's school experience

2. Could you tell us why you chose to send your children to this school?

   Prompts: local school / other siblings / relatives attend / other reasons
   Was this your first choice school? If no, which was your preferred school (and why)?

3. Which subjects / activities do your children like best / least? Why?

4. How are your children finding their schoolwork?

   Prompts: easy / difficult - reasons for this

5a. Are there any particular areas that they are doing really well in (reasons for this)?

   Prompts: If their child is doing well, what do the parents attribute this to (e.g. teacher, subjects learning, school ethos etc.)

5b. Are there any particular areas that they are not doing so well in?

   Prompts: If their child is not doing well, what do the parents attribute this to?
   (e.g. peer influence / friendship groups in / outside school, teaching style, child not working hard enough, experience of bullying, discrimination etc.)?

6. What do you think about the friends your children have made at this school? What has their experience been like in terms of friendship groups etc?

   Prompts: ethnicity, country of origin, gender

7. Have your children ever experienced any bullying and/or racism in this school? If yes, how was this dealt with by the school? Were you satisfied with the outcomes?

8. Overall, do you think the school is meeting the educational needs of your children adequately?

   Prompts: If yes, how? If no, what have the parents done to try and address this (e.g. anything extra that is done to facilitate / support the child's development - after school clubs / external schooling etc.)?

Parental experience of / involvement in school / child's learning

9.   Are your children given homework? If yes, what do you think about the amount and the quality of the homework?

      Probe for frequency, the subjects in which homework is given, the form of the homework and how the children get along with it?

If the children have homework: are parents asked to support their child in their homework? If yes, how happy are parents to do this and what guidance or support comes from the school in relation to this?

      Prompts: level / quality of guidance? If not, would you like to receive guidance or support?

10.   How does the school keep you informed about your children's progress (e.g. parents' evening, reports, letters, phone calls etc.)? Any specific preference for how you are kept up to date?

11.   Do you attend parents' evening and why attends / not?

12.   What do you think about the ways the school involves parents and carers of Black children in the education of their children?

13.   Do you participate in the school (e.g. as a governor, classroom assistant etc.)? If so, what has that experience been like? If not, would you be able to or want to if you had the opportunity?

14.   Have you organised any other aspect of education for your child outside the school (e.g. enlisted a private tutor / provide home tuition, child attends a supplementary school etc.)? If yes, why?

Perceptions of BCAP and school achievement practices

15.   As you know, we're interested in the school's involvement in a particular scheme to raise Black children's achievement. Did you know about the school's involvement in BCA programme before this focus group? (If so, how? Any communication / meetings set up for parents etc?)

16.   What activities / input relating to the BCA programme have your children experienced or been involved in? What do you think about the level or quality of these activities and input? Do you think your children have had a good experience of these activities?

17.   What do you think about the BCA programme, generally? Are there any aspects that are particularly good? Any aspects that you think do not work well / should be done differently?

      Probe for aspects that work well/do not work in *relation to this particular school*, and for aspects that might work/not work in schools in general?

18.   What are the school's expectations for children's achievements and to what extent are they in line with your expectations?

19.   What do you think about the school's overall strategies and success as a whole in raising the achievement of Black children?

20. What do you think about the school's overall strategies / success particularly in relation to the achievement of Black children?

21. Is there anything else that you would like to add about:

    iv)   the BCA programme
    v)   the achievement of Black pupils in this school
    vi)   anything else?

Thank you - remind the parents about how the focus group data will be used in the evaluation. Do they have any questions?

Black Children's Achievement Programme
Evaluation Interview Schedule for Teachers
(or lead professional with responsibility for BCA)

Introduction

- Thank the respondent for agreeing to be interviewed and reiterate aims of the evaluation

- Explain issues re. anonymity and confidentiality

- Obtain respondent's permission to tape record the interview

Background information

1. I'd like to start off with some questions about yourself - How long have you been teaching at this school, what year group do you teach and do you have any other responsibilities in the school?

2. How would you describe the school to someone who is new to it?

I'm now going to ask you a few questions about achievement in this school and then look more specifically at the BCA programme. Before I continue can you first tell me when you use the term 'Black' which pupils are you generally referring to (e.g. dual or mixed heritage, Black Caribbean, Black African)?

Achievement

3. How does the senior leadership team show it is committed to progressing and improving the achievement of all pupils in the school?

   Probe existing school policies / practices; school ethos for promoting achievement etc.

4. What is your perception of pupils' (e.g. boys / girls; Black / White / Asian) attitudes within the school towards learning and achieving academically?

5. From your experience, what are some of the factors that contribute to differences in achievement between diverse groups of children?

   Probe for what s/he thinks the causes of these differences are (e.g. gender, home / school factors, culture, language, new arrivals etc.)?

6. What is your experience of working with Black pupils who do not achieve as well as they should? What are some of the positives and main concerns?

BCAP

7. What is your understanding of the BCA programme and what it has set out to achieve? When was it introduced to staff? Were you consulted on your involvement? Did you have any particular expectations of the school being involved in the programme (what were these)?

8.   As a result of the introduction of the programme in the school, are there any particular areas of Black achievement (e.g. numeracy / literacy) that you are trying to address in a different way in your class or year group?

Probe whether specific groups / individuals are being targeted as part of this (e.g. Black boys); the type of targets set and how this is being monitored?

9.   Were there any areas that the school identified before joining the programme that the BCA programme gives you an opportunity to highlight, emphasise or expand?

10.   *Has your involvement in the BCA programme made any difference to your understanding of issues affecting Black achievement? In what ways?*

11.   *How has the school's involvement in the programme helped to inform the strategies that you are using to help you improve Black children's achievement?*

Probe for strategies used and how these are working?

12.   [**If not mentioned in 11**] *Are you able to use the curriculum to draw on the experience / heritages of Black pupils as part of raising their achievement? If yes, how?*

Probe for whether s/he thinks this is a reasonable thing to do?

13.   How do pupils' respond to lessons covering diversity (i.e. different ethnic groups / heritages / cultures, religions)?

Probe whether pupils' like / dislike, if some ethnic groups / individuals favour it more than others; if aids their learning etc.?

14.   *In what ways are you able to work with teaching assistants to support the learning needs and achievement of Black children?*

15.   *What kind of support and professional development have you been received (e.g. from the school / BCA consultant) to help you in this work? If no development received, has anything been set up?*

16.   *Are the teaching resources within the school sufficiently culturally diverse to help you facilitate Black pupils progression and achievement? What additional resources would be required to enable you to meet individual Black pupil's needs effectively?*

17.   *Has the school's involvement in the BCA programme made a difference to how Black children's achievement is prioritised in the school (e.g. whole school approach, senior leadership more supportive etc.)? Do you think it will make a difference to their achievement? How, why?*

18.   *What do you think about the BCA programme, generally? Are there any aspects that are particularly good? Any aspects that you think do not work well or should be done differently?*

Probe for aspects that work well / do not work in relation to this particular school, and for aspects that might work/not work in schools in general?

Parents and carers of Black children

18. Have you talked to parents and carers of Black children about the BCA programme and the ways in which you are trying to improve the achievement of their children? Do they understand what you are trying to do? How supportive are they?

19. Has the school's involvement in the BCA programme helped you to engage parents and carers of Black children more in supporting their children's learning? How? Are there any strategies that you have found particularly useful?

Community organisations and individuals

20. In what ways have you been able to work with relevant community organisations and individuals to support you in what you provide in the classroom for Black children?

21. Overall, are there any particular challenges that you perceive in trying to raise BCA?

22. Is there anything else you would like to add about:

  vii)   the BCA programme
  viii) the achievement of Black pupils in this school
  ix)   anything else?

Thank you - remind the interviewee about how the interview will be used in the evaluation. Do you have any questions?

Black Children's Achievement Programme
Evaluation Interview Schedule for Teaching Assistants

Introduction

- Thank the respondent for agreeing to be interviewed and reiterate aims of the evaluation

- Explain issues re. anonymity and confidentiality

- Obtain respondent's permission to tape record the interview

Background information

1. I'd like to start off with some questions about yourself - how long have you been working as a teaching assistant at this school? Do you have any other responsibilities at this school? How long have you been working on Black children's achievement?

2. How would you describe the school to someone (e.g. a parent) who is new to it?

I'm now going to ask you some questions about the BCA Programme and your role in supporting Black children as part of this. Before I continue can you first tell me when you use the term 'Black' which pupils are you generally referring to (e.g. dual or mixed heritage, Black Caribbean, Black African)?

BCAP

3. What is your understanding of the BCA programme and what it has set out to achieve?

4. Could you describe your role within the BCA programme?

5. In what ways do you work in partnership with teachers in raising the achievement of Black children?

6. What expectations are there that you will work in different ways in supporting Black children?

7. What is your experience of working with Black pupils and trying to improve their achievements (e.g. positive points or concerns)?

8. From your experience, what are some of the factors that affect Black pupil's achievements?

   Probe for whether there are differences in achievements of groups of Black children and what s/he thinks the causes of these differences are?

9. Has the BCA programme made a difference to the ways in which you are asked to support Black children (e.g. working with specific groups or individuals; school expectations)?

10. What kind of support has the school provided you with to help you in this work (including professional development or resources)?

Parents and carers of Black children

11.   What is your experience of working with parents and carers of Black children?

12.   Has the school involvement in the BCA programme changed the way in which you work with the parents and carers of Black children?

School ethos

13.   How do pupils' respond to lessons covering diversity (i.e. different ethnic groups / heritages / cultures, religions)?

Probe whether pupils' like / dislike, if some ethnic groups / individuals favour it more than others; if aids their learning etc.?

14.   Is there anything else you would like to add about:

x)   the BCA programme
xi)   the achievement of Black pupils in this school
xii)   anything else?

15.   Do you have any questions?

Thank you - remind the interviewee about how the interview will be used in the evaluation. Do you have any questions?

Black Children's Achievement Programme
Evaluation Interview Schedule for BCA Consultants

Introduction

- Thank the respondent for agreeing to be interviewed and reiterate aims of the evaluation

- Explain issues re. anonymity and confidentiality

- Obtain respondent's permission to tape record the interview

Background information

1. I'd like to start off by asking you when you were identified as a BCA consultant for the BCA programme? Can you briefly describe your previous experience in working to support the achievement of Black pupils?

BCA Consultant

2a. Can you describe your role as a BCA consultant?

Probe for how working with school(s), areas in which targeted support is provided, how monitoring / challenging the school(s) to improve the achievement of Black children, quality of classroom provision and teacher expectations?

2b. How much time is allocated to this role and how much time do you actually spend fulfilling this role? Are you combining your consultant role with other responsibilities (e.g. EMA manager, subject specialist, consultant for another Strategy programme, school improvement)?

2c. How many schools do you work with / are responsible for?

3. How would you describe the culture and ethos of the school(s) you are working with (e.g. recognition and valuing of diversity)?

4a. Diagnostic visit and school audit - Did you conduct a diagnostic visit of the school(s)? If yes, what did this reveal?

4b. Did you help the school(s) to conduct an audit of the school learning environment? If no, why not? If yes, what it did it highlight? What were the main outcomes of the audit?

Prompt: led to Raising Achievement Plans - explore how helped head/leadership team to develop this and own role in writing it, and what the main priority areas are)?

5. Partnership with Local Authority - How do you work with other LA specialists (e.g. EMA / inclusion managers, SIPs, other PNS consultants, School Improvement Officers)?

6. Knowledge of the achievement(s) of Black children in the LA and school in relation to specific groups?

Prompts: successes, particular challenges and areas for further development

7.   What is your perception of the LA and school commitment to improving Black children's achievement?

       Prompts: positive points and concerns

8.   What type of training / support have you received to help you fulfil your BCA role (e.g. 1 day training twice a term etc.)? How effective has this been? In what ways? How do you know?

9.   In what ways are you supported in your role (e.g. through LA structures, working with or support from other consultants / subject leaders etc.)? Do you need any further support?

10.   What changes have you seen in school / classroom attitude / practice re. raising Black children's achievement since you became a consultant for the BCA programme?

       Probe for changes in school or classroom culture / teaching styles / pupil's attitudes, collection / use of performance data etc.)?

11.   What do you think about the BCA programme, generally? Are there any aspects that are particularly good? Any aspects that you think do not work well or should be done differently?

       Probe for aspects that work well / do not work in relation to the schools s/he is working with, and for aspects that might work / not work in schools in general?

12.   Overall, how effective do you think you can be in your role as a BCA consultant?
       If there were one thing that you could change to improve your role what would it be?

13.   Is there anything else that you would like to add about:

       xiii)   the BCA Programme
       xiv)   the achievement of Black pupils in the LA or schools you are working with
       xv)   anything else?

Thank you - remind the interviewee about how the interview will be used in the evaluation. Do you have any questions?

Introduction

- Thank the respondent for agreeing to be interviewed and reiterate aims of the evaluation

- Explain issues re. anonymity and confidentiality

- Obtain respondent's permission to tape record the interview

Background information

1   Would you start off by telling me a bit about your role and responsibilities as a governor at this school?

2   What made you decide to become a governor here and how do you find it (i.e. enjoyable, stressful etc.)? and how long have you been in the role?

3   How long have you been in the role?

School background

4   How would describe this school to someone who does not know it?

     Prompts: size of school, school ethos and culture, catchment area, ethnicity of children and their achievement?

Which one thing would you change about the school if you had the choice and remit?

Achievement

5   Does the school have any concerns about the achievement of any particular group of pupils?

6   I want to go on now to ask you a bit about the experiences of Black pupils. Before we go on can you first tell me when you use the term 'Black' which pupils are you generally referring to (e.g. dual or mixed heritage, Black Caribbean, Black African)?

7   What are the school's concerns about the achievement of Black pupils?

Prompts: Specific subject areas? A particular key stage? Gender?

8   What do you consider to be the main reasons why some Black pupils are not doing well enough? Would you say that the <u>headteacher</u> shares this view? What would the headteacher say are the main reasons for this?

9   Have the governors received any particular support and information regarding the achievement of Black children in the school?

10   What kind of programmes or initiatives has the school introduced to address any concern about Black children's achievement - i.e. trying to get overview of current or recent related projects?

11   What do you know about the BCAP programme? [If this wasn't mentioned in no.10]
      Prompt: When and how first heard about it?

12   What kind of initiatives has the school introduced as part of the BCA programme? Do
      you know what the key priorities are of the Raising Achievement Plan?

13   Is there anything that could be done to support the headteacher to deliver the BCA
      programme? By whom?

14   What has been the Local Authority's role in helping the school implement and develop
      the BCA programme? Have you had any involvement with the Local Authority to help
      implement the BCA programme?

15   Can you give any examples of initiatives to involve parents of Black children in the
      schooling of their children? Are there any particular initiatives which have been started
      as a result of the BCA programme? Are they successful?

16   What could be done generally to broaden school governors' understanding of the
      achievements of Black children in school?

17   Is there anything you would like to add about the:

      xvi)   the BCA programme
      xvii)   the achievement of Black pupils in this school
      xviii) anything else?

Thank you - remind the interviewee about how the interview will be used in the evaluation.
Do you have any questions?

BCAP evaluation - PUPIL FOCUS GROUP   **Year 2**

Researcher:

- Summary of why they have been asked to speak with Pupil names / pseudonyms
- Permission to tape record
- Confidentiality (unless its something where feel pupil or someone they know will be in danger, then have to tell teacher)
- No right or wrong answers, just interested in what they think
- Explain going to first look at some pictures about feelings and then talk a bit about what they feel about school

_____

Subject focus: attitudes to school; attitudes to teaching & learning; awareness of programme; awareness of targets

WARM-UP ACTIVITY - Year 2 pupils (5-10 mins)

Researcher:

- We are going to start off by looking at some pictures about different feelings. Some of the pictures might be about things you know about and some might be about things you don't know about.
- Show 1st set of pictures (belong / left out). What do you think is happening in this picture (point)?

Prompts: What are the children doing? How do you think the boy feels? Have you ever felt like that?

- Read sentence
- Repeat for shy / showing off; pleased / feeling not lasting
- Show & read "people have all kinds of feelings" picture: "We are now going to talk about some of your feelings about school".

MAIN QUESTIONS (20-25mins)

Teaching & Learning

1   What do you like best about school? Why?

2   What do you like least about school? Why?

3   Which is your favourite subject at school? Why?

4   Which is your least favourite subject? Why?

5   What about homework? Do you get homework at this school? How much?
     [e.g. everyday, weekend]. Do you like getting homework?]

6   Are you in particular groups for any of your lessons?
     [Ask if they know why - Why does your teacher say you are in these groups?
     How do they feel about being in these groups?]

7   How do you know when you have done your work well at school?
     [Prompt: Does your teacher tell you when you have done your work well?]

8   Does your teacher talk about what you have to do to make your work better? What kind
     of things does he / she say?

9   Aside from your classroom teacher, does anyone help you with your work at school?
     [Prompt for if adult, if so who (e.g. EMA, TA, Learning Mentor) and help with
     which subject / how they help; if pupil, if so in what way (e.g. peer mentor)].

10   Before today, had you heard about the Black Children's Achievement Project?
     [If yes: When did you first hear about it? What do you know about it? Does anyone at
     home know about it?]

11   Where do your parents come from? Have you learnt about [name of country] at school?
     What did you learn? [What did you think about those lessons? Did you like them or not?]

12   Do you learn about any other countries at school? What have you learnt?

Relationships at school

Researcher: We're going to talk a little bit now about how people get on together in your
class…

     Does everyone in your class get treated the same? [Probe: If not, why not? Who gets
     treated differently? How do they feel about that?]

     Which pupils are most/least popular (with other pupils) in your class? Why?

     If something is bothering you when your at school, who do you tell? [Probe: for why they
     might not speak to anyone or why they speak to the person they name].

Future aspirations / closing question

     Do you think it is important to go to school? Why?

     Have you thought about what you would like to be when you grow up?
     [Why? Do you know someone who is a …….?]

CLOSE
Come to end of our chat. Is there anything they would like to ask researcher? Thanks for
their time.

BCAP evaluation - PUPIL FOCUS GROUP   **Year 5**

Researcher:

- Summary of why they have been asked to speak with us Pupil names / pseudonyms
- Permission to tape record
- Confidentiality (unless its something where feel pupil or someone they know will be in danger, then have to tell teacher)
- No right or wrong answers, just interested in what they think
- Explain going to first look at some pictures and then talk a bit about what they feel about school

_____

Subject focus: attitudes to school; attitudes to teaching & learning; awareness of programme; awareness of targets

WARM-UP ACTIVITY - Year 5 pupils (5-10 mins)

Researcher:

- We are going to start off by looking at some pictures about different feelings. You may or may not be familiar with some of the things in the pictures.
- Show 1st set of pictures (belong / left out). "In this picture you can see that the boy feels left out; in this one everyone feels like they belong".
- Repeat for remaining pictures. Give brief statements about each / paraphrase sentence provided with picture.
- Show & read "people have all kinds of feelings" picture: "We are now going to talk a bit about what you feel about school".

MAIN QUESTIONS (20-25mins)

Teaching & Learning

What do you like best about school? Why?

What do you like least about school? Why?

Which is your favourite subject at school? Why?

Which is your least favourite subject? Why?

What about homework? Do you get homework at this school? How much?
[E.g. everyday, weekend]. Do you like getting homework?

Are you in particular groups for i) Numeracy ii) Literacy? Which ones? Which groups are their friends in?
[Ask if they know why - Why does your teacher say you are in these groups?
How do they feel about being in these groups?]

How do you know when you have done your work well at school?
[Prompt: Does your teacher tell you when you have done your work well? What kind of things does he / she say?]

How do you know when you haven't done your work well?
[Prompt: Does your teacher talk about what you have to improve your work?

What kind of things does he / she say? Do you know what your targets are?]

Aside from your classroom teacher, does anyone help you with your work at school?
[Prompt for if adult, if so who (e.g. EMA, TA, Learning Mentor) and help with
which subject / how they help; if pupil, if so in what way (e.g. peer mentor)].

Do you help anyone with their work? Who and with what? Did you volunteer to help or did
someone ask you? How do you feel about helping?

Before today, had you heard about the Black Children's Achievement Project?
[If yes: When did you first hear about it? What do you know about it? Who knows about it
at home? What do they (person at home) think about it?]

Do you ever learn about people's cultures in class? (e.g. about their religions / faiths;
countries where they are from; languages they speak?)

What do you think about these lessons? (Are they interesting/not interesting? Do you like
them/not like them? Probe for why in each instance)

Do any of you speak a language other than English?
[If yes, are you able to speak it in school? With whom (e.g. a teacher, 'helper', other
children in your class, friends at school, at language club etc.)? How does this make you
feel (e.g. happy if allowed, sad if not - why)?]

What do you learn about your own culture in class? (e.g. about their religions / faiths;
countries where they are from; languages they speak?)

What do you think about these lessons? (Are they interesting / not interesting? Do you
like them / not like them? Probe for why in each instance)

Relationships at school

Researcher: We're going to talk a bit now about how people in your class get on with each
other…

Does everyone in your class get treated the same? [Probe: If not, why not? Who gets
treated differently? How do they feel about that?]

Which pupils are most / least popular (with other pupils) in your class? Why?

If something is bothering you when you're at school, who do you tell? [Probe: for why
they might not speak to anyone or why they speak to the person they name].

Future aspirations/closing question

Is it important to go to school? Why?

Have you thought about what you would like to be when you grow up?
[Why? Do you know someone who is a …….?]

CLOSE

Come to end. Is there anything they would like to ask researcher? Thanks for their time.

Year 2 and 5 Pupil questionnaires

Me and My School   **Name**   _____   **Year 5**   _____

	Very happy	A bit happy	A bit sad	Very sad
When I think about **my school** I feel ……				
When I think about **my teachers** I feel ……				
When I think about **literacy** I feel ……				
When I think about **numeracy** I feel ……				
When I think about **science** I feel ……				
When I think about **my behaviour at school** I feel ……				
When I think about **my homework** I feel ……				
When I think about **my friends at school** I feel ….				

Me and My School Name _____ Year 2 _____

	Very happy	A bit happy	A bit sad	Very sad
When I think about **my school** I feel ……	😊	🙂	🙁	☹️
When I think about **my teachers** I feel ……	😊	🙂	🙁	☹️
When I think about **reading** I feel ……	😊	🙂	🙁	☹️
When I think about **numbers** I feel ……	😊	🙂	🙁	☹️
When I think about **writing** I feel ……	😊	🙂	🙁	☹️
When I think about **my behaviour at school** I feel ……	😊	🙂	🙁	☹️
When I think about **my homework** I feel ……	😊	🙂	🙁	☹️
When I think about **my friends at school** I feel ….	😊	🙂	🙁	☹️

Questions for Local Authorities

Local authority involvement

- How, why and when did the local authority become involved in the BCA Programme?

- Previous experience in relation to addressing / supporting Black Achievement

- Overview of LA policy and practice in the area (primary and secondary)

- LA role re. BCA Programme (e.g. EMA staff working with schools)

- LA capacity to support schools i.e. develop leadership/whole school approach/raising achievement plans (any internal / external - e.g. professional network -support received)

School selection

- How many schools are you working with?

- Criteria used for school inclusion in the programme?

- What is the basis for working with schools?

- Do all schools within the BCA Programme have the same focus?

Management of partnership with schools

- How is the partnership managed?

- How do you work with your Regional Adviser to support schools to deliver key milestones?

- Type of support/training provided to enable schools to carry out the whole school audit and developing raising achievement plans?

- How often do you meet with schools?

- How often do you have networking meetings?

Knowledge / understanding, culture and ethos of schools

- Perceptions of school (leadership and teachers) understanding of Black achievement and steps that need to be taken to raise attainment

- Perceptions of the culture and ethos of the schools involved in the BCA Programme with regard to Black achievement

- Perceived changes / difficulties

Any specific school / authority concerns

department for
children, schools and families