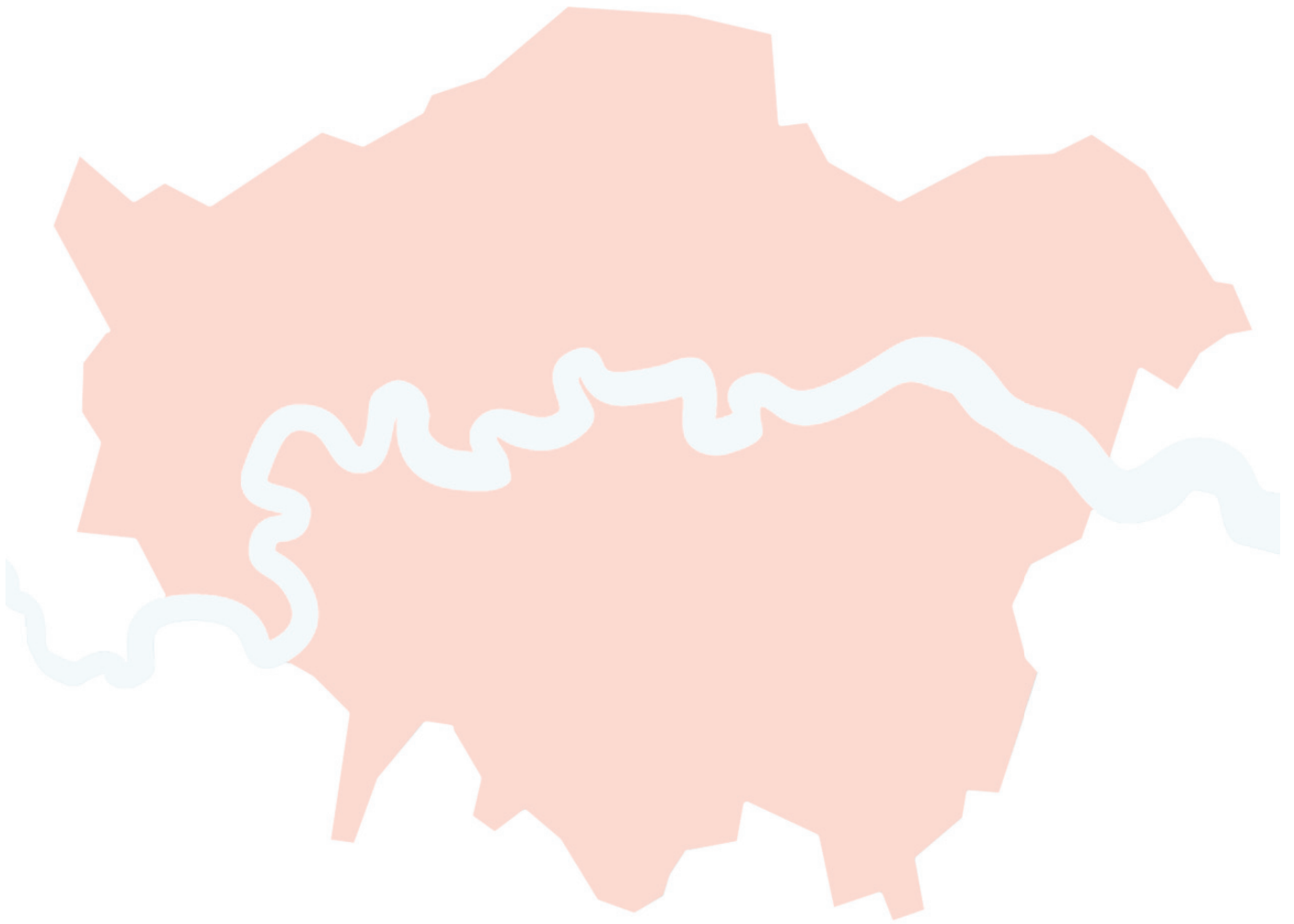




The **London**
Challenge
For world class education



London's Key Issues

London's Key Issues



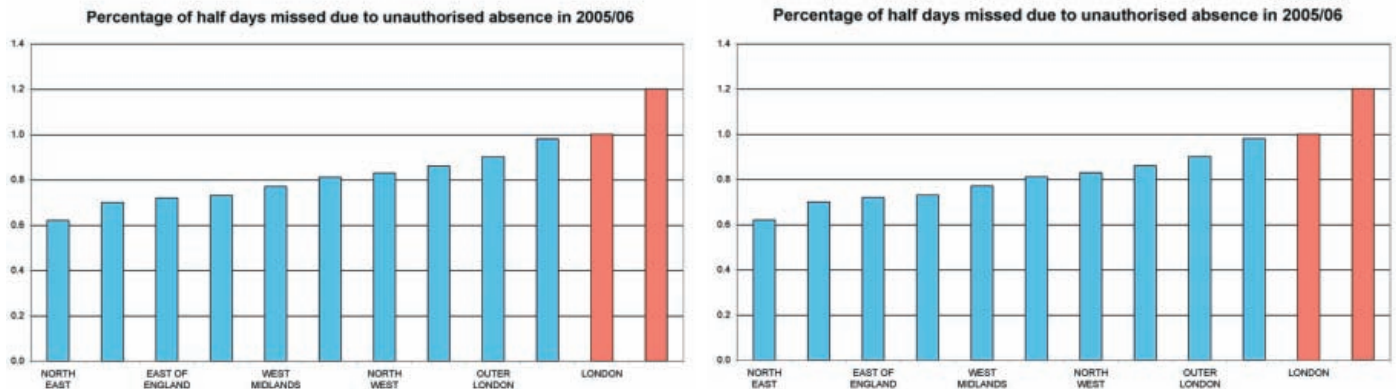
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Attendance

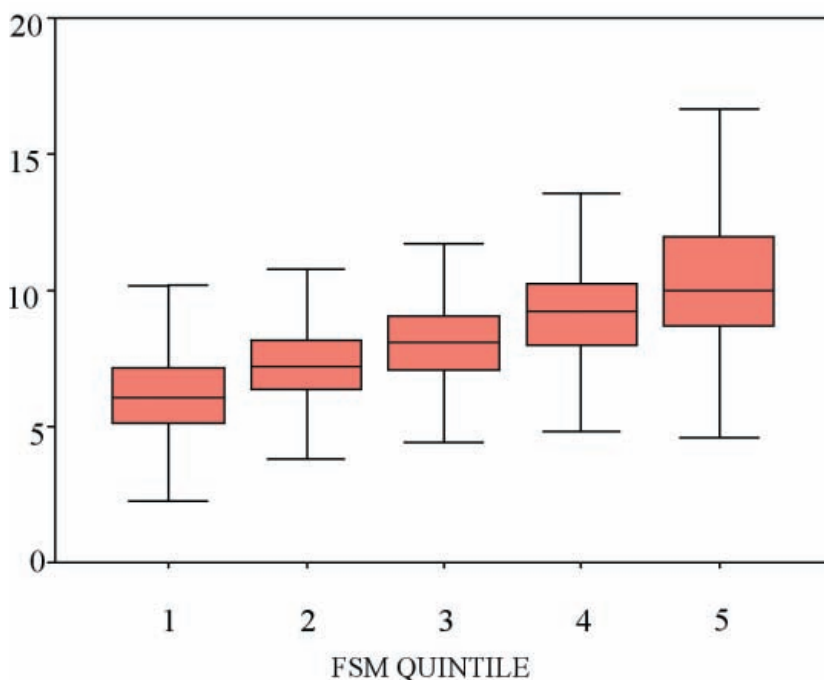
Why is this a Key Issue?

- Although London has the lowest rate of authorised absence of all regions, it is amongst the worst region of all for unauthorised absences, with Inner London the absolute worst.



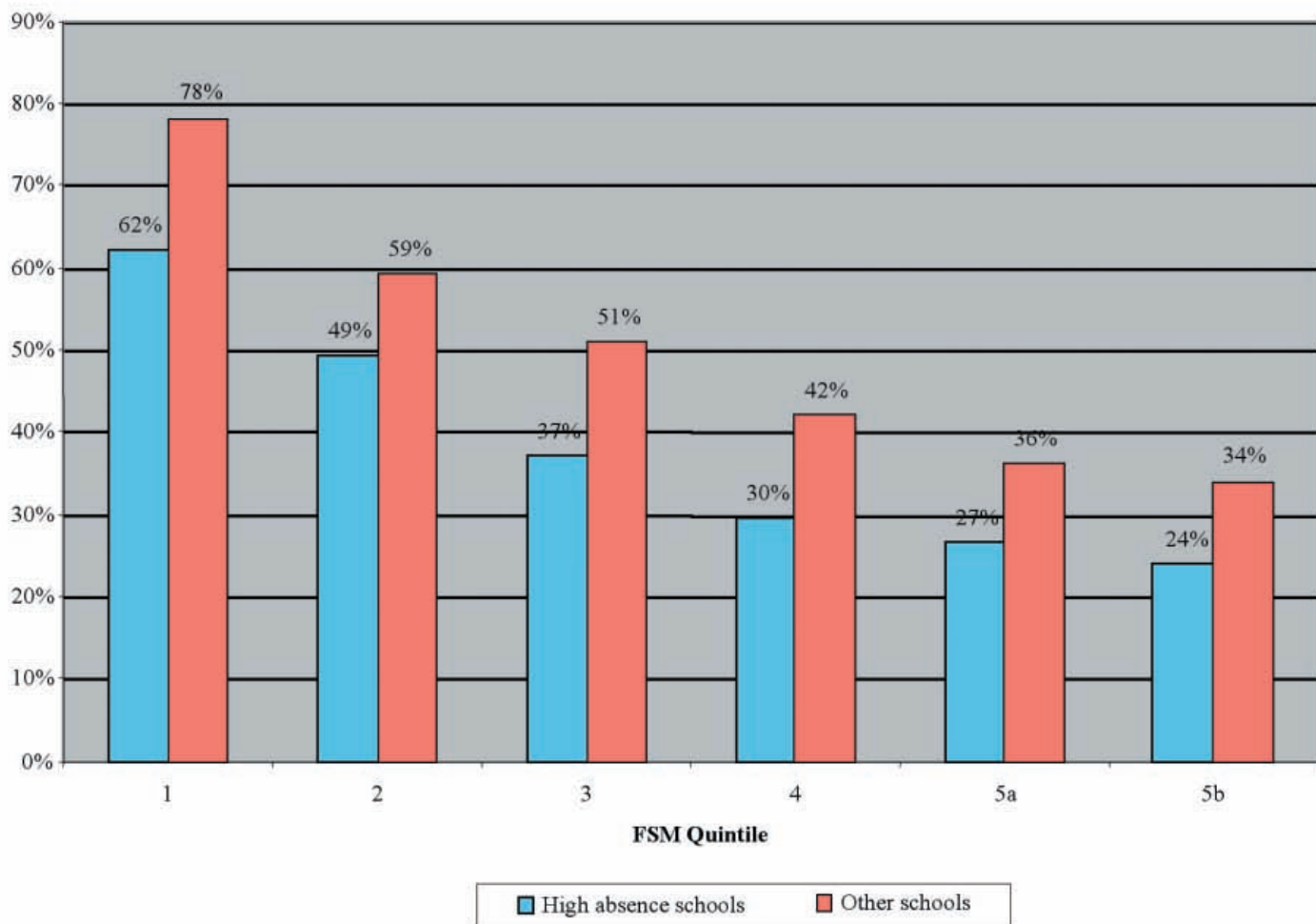
- Data collected from schools in Excellence in Cities areas, shows a **strong correlation between absence and attainment for individual students**, even after other significant factors have been taken into account.
- There is a **strong correlation at school and student level between free school meals and rates of absence**.
- Within each free school meal band, there is wide variation between absence rates in schools**, suggesting that some schools are significantly more successful than other similar schools in the way that they manage attendance.

SECONDARY SCHOOL ABSENCE 2002-3 BY FSM



- There are very significant variations between the 5 A*-C GCSE performance of secondary schools with relatively high rates of absence and all other schools in the same free school meal band.

Comparison of students' GCSE Performance 2002-03: high absence schools compared with all other schools



What should I look for?

- 1 How well does the school rate its consistency of practice on attendance?
- 2 Are particular groups of students consistently absent; has the absence been condoned by parents or is the problem truancy? Either way, is the school effectively communicating with parents on this issue and engaging them in the strategy?
- 3 How fast are the school's response systems and access for difficult students to help?

What can I do?

Some suggested useful approaches include;

- 1 demonstrating a strong attendance ethos;
- 2 a clear policy on absence;
- 3 effective, non-bureaucratic systems for monitoring attendance;
- 4 using attendance data and other information to improve school and student performance;
- 5 promoting the importance and legal requirements of good attendance to students and their parents/carers;
- 6 intervening early when individual student absence gives cause for concern;
- 7 support systems in place for vulnerable students;
- 8 rewarding and celebrating good and improved attendance; and making best use of additional support for students and parents with greatest need.

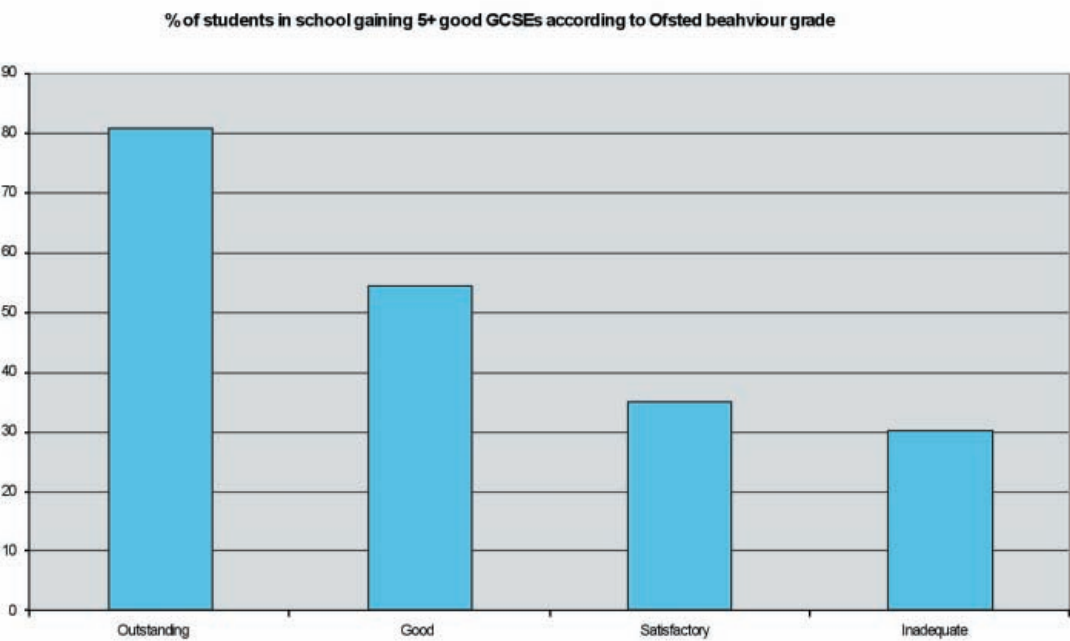
Resources

- National Strategies behaviour and attendance consultants: There are 9 regional B & A consultants with the National Strategies, make sure your schools is in touch with theirs.
- The Audit Commission's Improving School Attendance and Behaviour website examines the problem mainly in terms of the responsibilities of LEAs, but is a useful resource for school managers and governors.
<http://ww2.audit-commission.gov.uk/itc/attendance.shtml>
- An overview of strategies to beat truancy can be found on TeacherNet.
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/truancy/>
- Information on truancy sweeps is available from the DfES school attendance site.
<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/schoolattendance/truancysweeps/index.cfm>
- Case studies on improving attendance and tackling truancy can be found on TeacherNet.
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/CaseStudies/CatHome.cfm?id=21>
- Case studies aimed at managers devising a whole-school approach may be of help.
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/CaseStudies/casestudy.cfm?id=135&subcatid=9&catid=4>
- Ensuring Regular School Attendance: Guidance on the Legal Measures Available to Secure Regular School Attendance is available from Online Publications.
<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DfES+0432+2003>

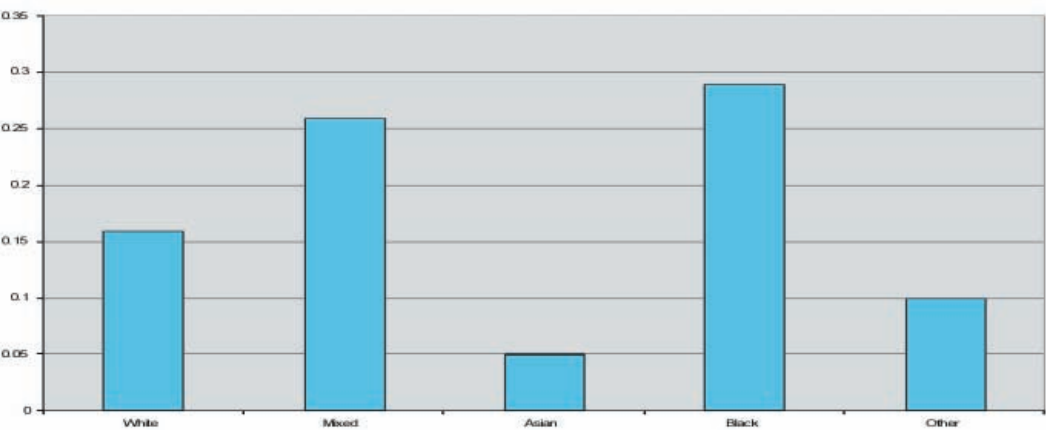
Behaviour

Why is this a key issue?

- Persistent, low-level disruption of lessons is common; a third of London students say they experience bullying; acts of violence are rare. All these affect the climate of the school as a learning community and disrupt students' progress.
- There is a clear and strong correlation between the behaviour grade awarded by Ofsted to a school and the success of its students at GCSE.

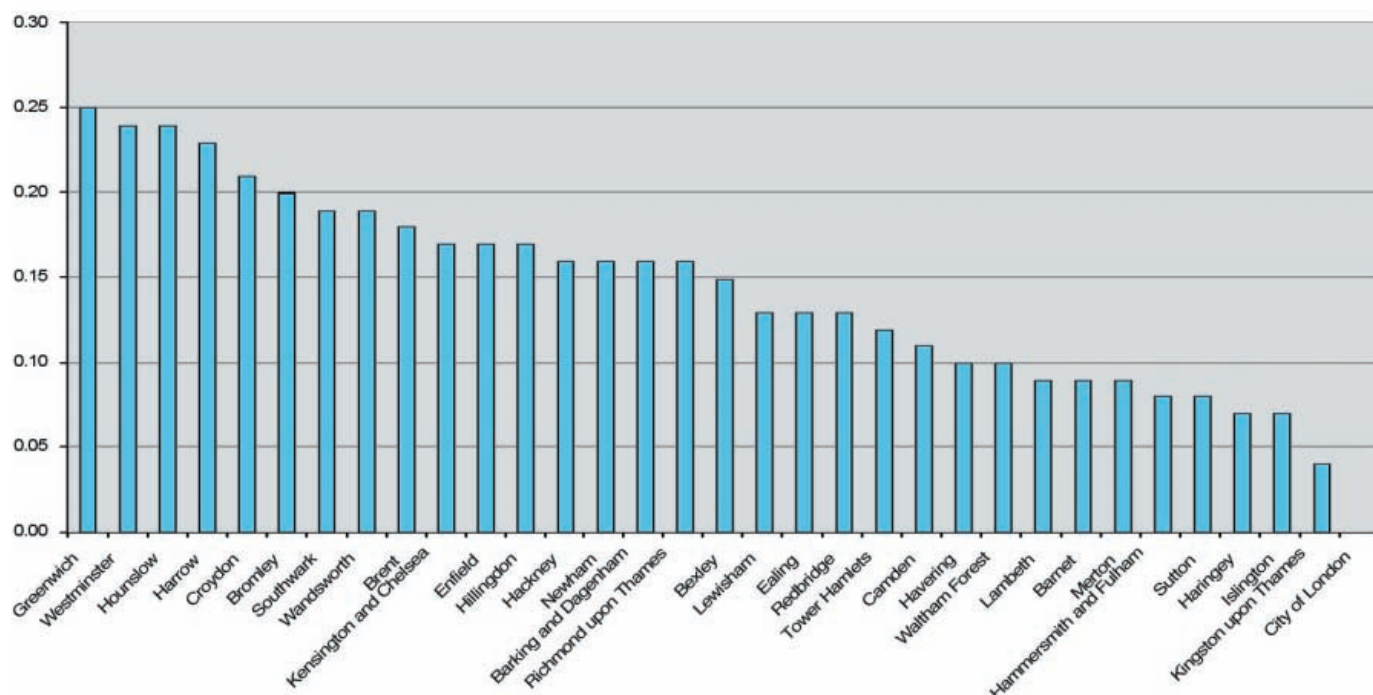


- In surveys of London parents, students and teachers behaviour is consistently rated as one of the key barriers to learning
- **Exclusions:** Black Caribbean and White and Black Caribbean students are more likely to be excluded in London than any other racial group.



How does this issue break down across London?

- Whilst the overall number of exclusions in every borough remains low, there is still significant variation between the percentages of students excluded in each borough.



What should I look for?

- How well does the school rate its consistency of practice on behaviour?
- Has the school completed its behaviour audit http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/keystage3/respub/ba_indepthaudit
- How does the school rate itself on behaviour on their School Evaluation Form (SEF)?
- Does the school have a well developed effective behaviour strategy?
- How fast are the school's response systems and access for difficult students to help?
- Is the school paying attention to the issues for particular groups of students most at risk of trouble?

What can I do?

- Focus on improving the quality of teaching and the provision of an appropriate curriculum that engages the more difficult students;
- Do more to improve the literacy and other communication skills of students with difficult behaviour;
- Improve systems for tracking academic and social development, and make better use of this information to help students improve and manage their behaviour;
- Provide more systematic training for senior managers, teachers and assistants in behaviour management and in student and adolescent development;
- Review the way staff link with parents;
- Underline the need for consistency among staff in the way expectations of behaviour are set and maintained.

Resources

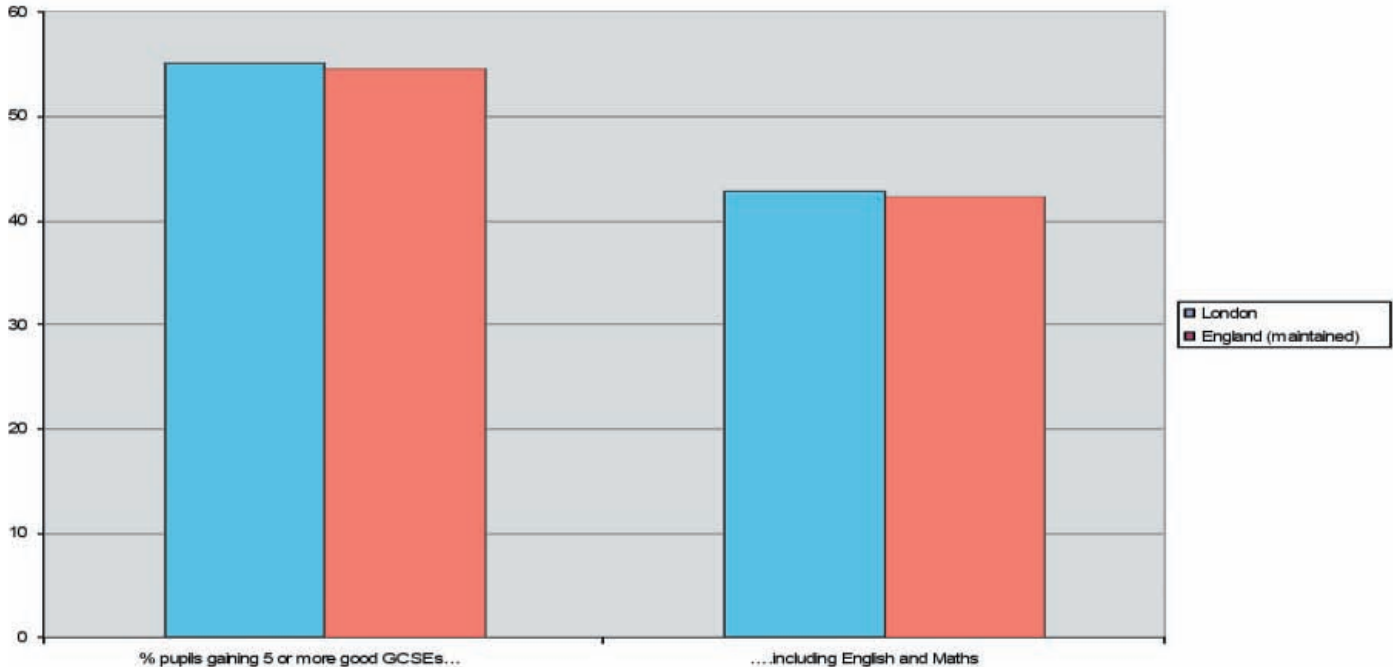
- National Strategies behaviour and attendance consultants: There are 9 regional B & A consultants with the National Strategies, make sure your school is in touch with theirs.
- SEAL: Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning offers a whole-curriculum framework for teaching social, emotional and behavioural skills to all students and is organised into seven themes which can be covered within a school year: <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/socialandpastoral/sebs1/seal>

- Details of a behaviour and attendance pilot which aims to provide personal development opportunities for staff in primary schools are outlined here. http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/literacy/about/news_and_events_archive/873235
- These key messages leaflets can help secondary-school staff to develop a whole-school approach to behaviour and attendance. http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/keystage3/respub/ba_km
- There is a series of articles on TeacherNet which help to nurture good behaviour in class. <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/professionaldevelopment/nqt/behaviourmanagement/>

Core Subjects

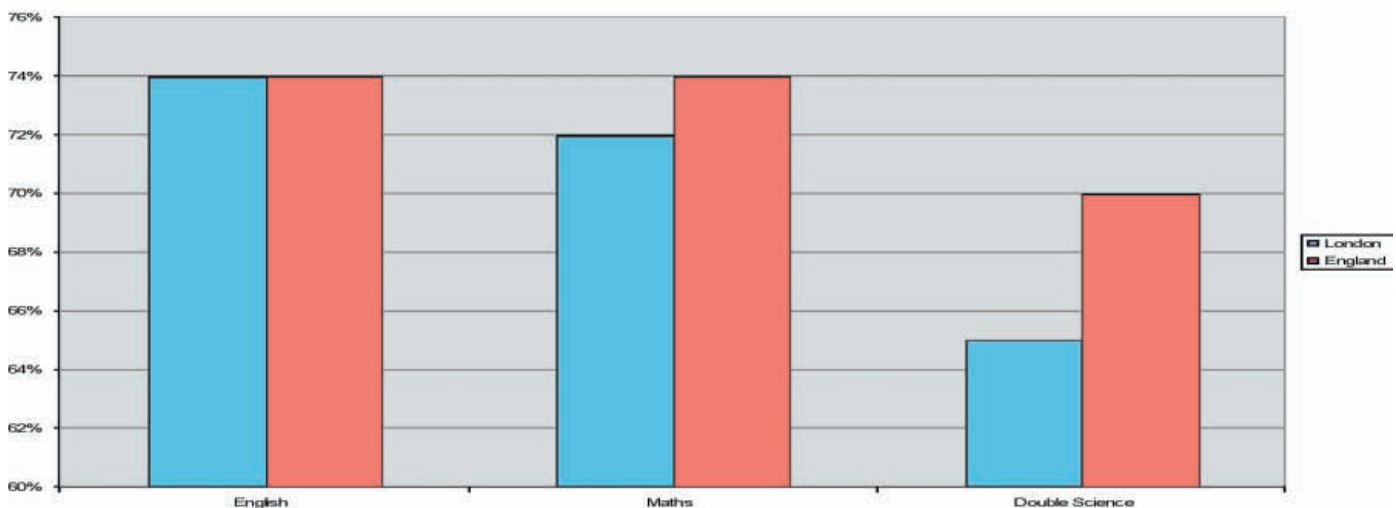
Why is this a key issue?

- London schools just outperform other schools on a measure of 5 good GCSEs including English and Maths, but their performance needs to rise. In 2005 only 43% of London students gained 5 good GCSEs with English and maths.



- At KS3, London schools on average are below targets for core subjects, most markedly in maths and science

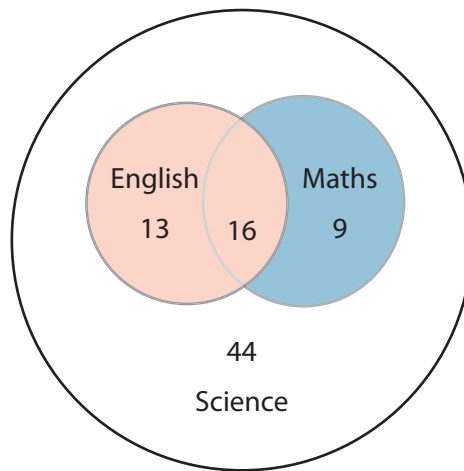
Key Stage Three - % of students reaching the expected level



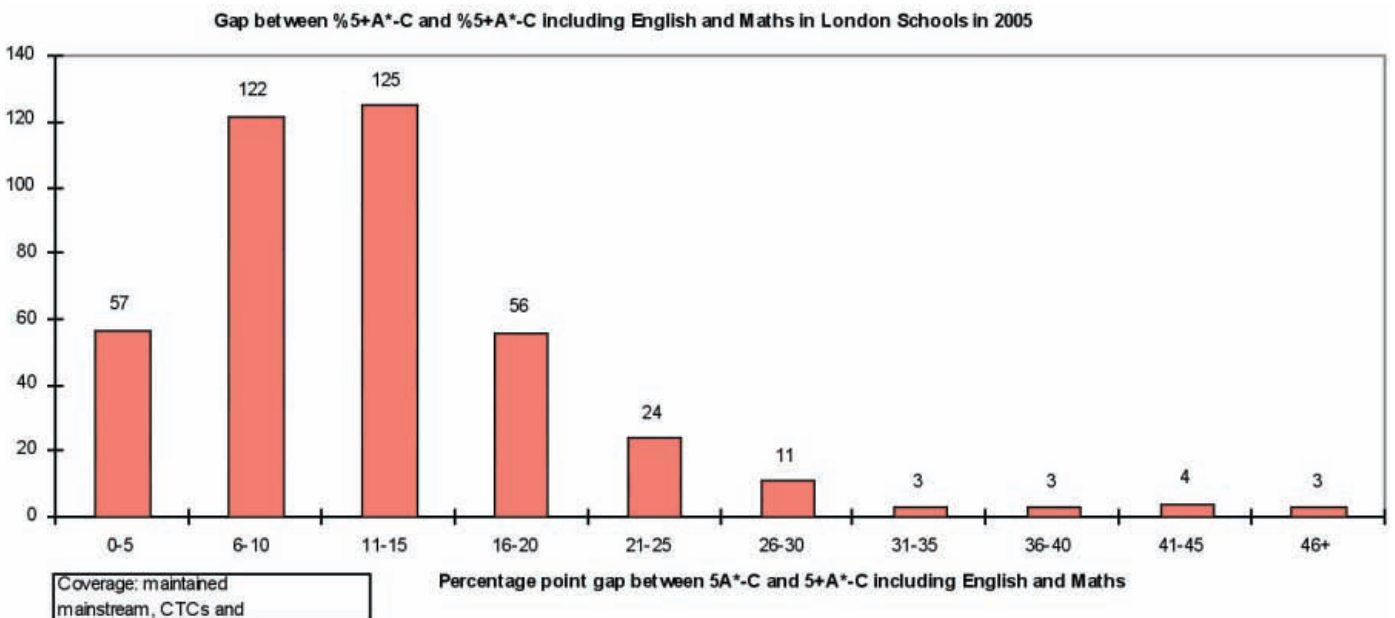
- Four out of five secondary schools have significant variation in value-added between core departments, suggesting that even high performing schools need to attend to in-school variation

How does this issue break down across London?

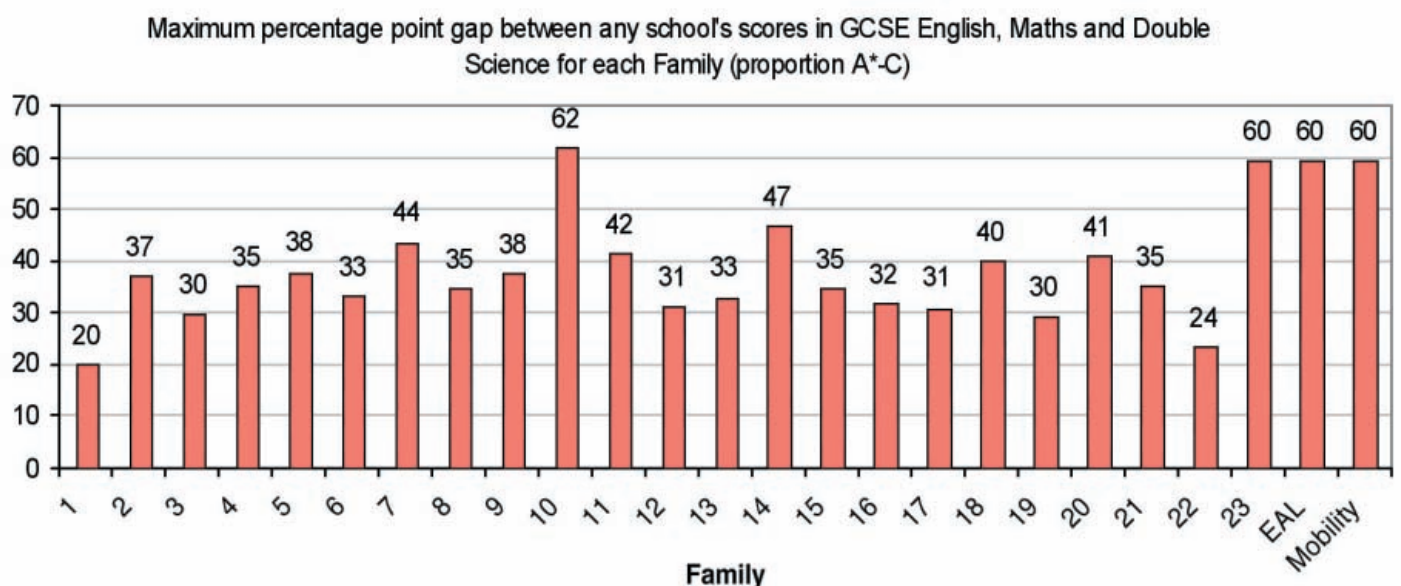
- There are 16 London schools where at least 50% of students are below the KS3 floor targets in all core subjects. All the subjects below the floor targets in either English or Maths are also below for Science.



- Many London schools are over-reliant on GNVQs to secure good outcomes at GCSE, and need to improve their students' attainment in English and maths; over half of London's schools have a gap of at least 11 percentage points between their 5+A*-C GCSE or equivalent rate and the 5+A*-C rate including English and maths



- In almost all of the Families of London Schools there is significant variation in performance in core subjects, suggesting that schools can benefit from benchmarking their practice against others in London



What should I look for?

- School data will easily reveal if performance in a particular subject is weak, and the Families of Schools publication can also help you to assess how your school is performing in the core subjects compared with others facing similar challenges.
- Check which aspects of learning in core subjects and which years students are falling behind
- Check how different groups - boys/girls, different ethnic backgrounds, children from more deprived backgrounds etc, are performing in the different subjects, and whether perhaps certain groups are being left behind more than others.

What can I do?

- Student tracking and target setting
- Subject-specific interventions at key points
- Study support in the run-up to tests and exams
- Review of weak departments
- Use of partnerships with other schools, esp specialist schools, to bolster weak departments

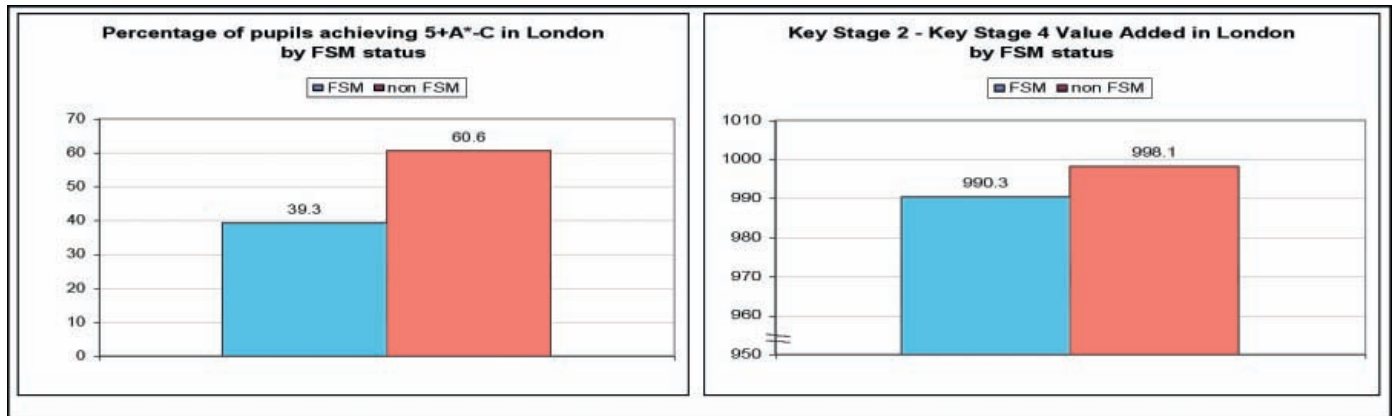
Resources

- The **National Strategies** have a range of programmes on offer for the core subjects as well as ICT. Ensure your school is in touch with the local national Strategy Consultant
- The **SSAT** also have a range of subject specific resources such as lead practitioners on offer through their networks available to both specialist and non specialist schools; <http://www.specialistschools.org.uk/>

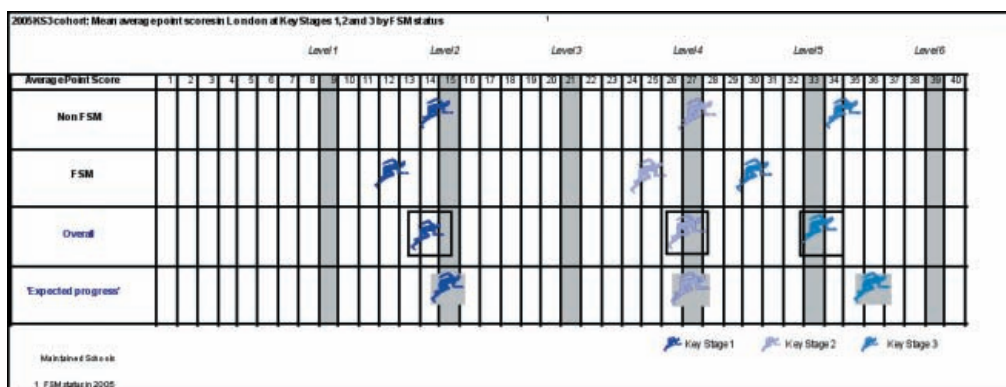
Deprivation

Why is this a key issue?

- Students from disadvantaged backgrounds tend to make less progress in KS3 and KS4 than their peers, and to do worse at GCSE. In London 39.3% of students eligible for FSM in maintained schools gained 5 or more good GCSEs, compared to 60.6% of non FSM students.



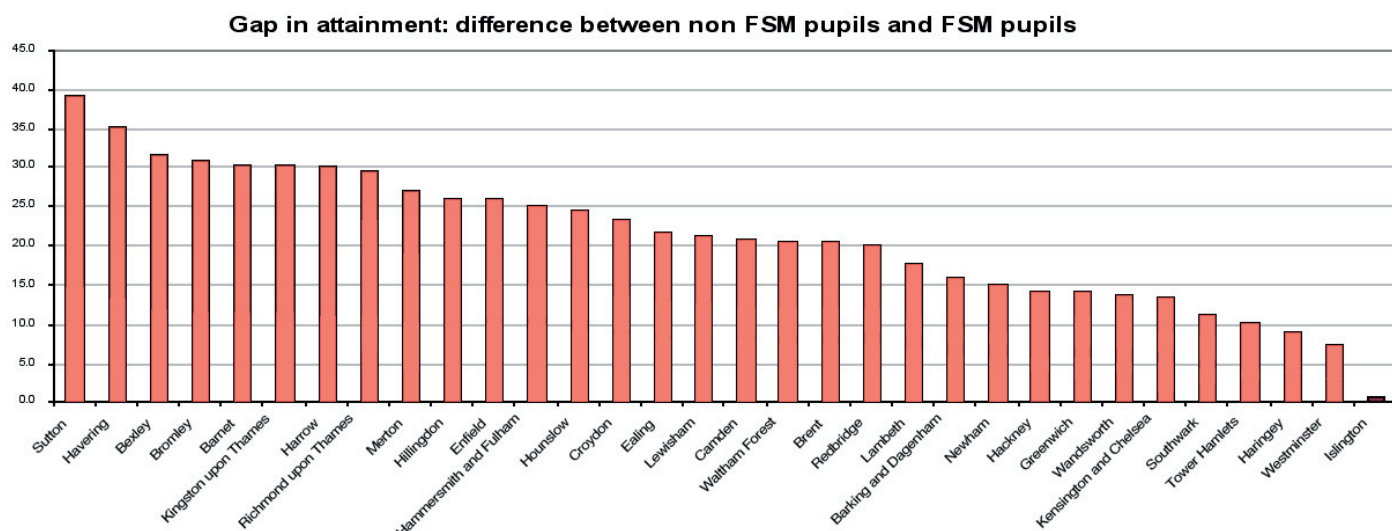
- London has a higher proportion of FSM students. Nationally 14% of students in maintained secondary schools are eligible for FSM compared to 23.9% of students in London (38.7% in Inner London & 17.5% in Outer London).



- FSM students lag behind their peers at every Key Stage from KS1 on, with the gap widening most at KS3.

How does this issue break down across London?

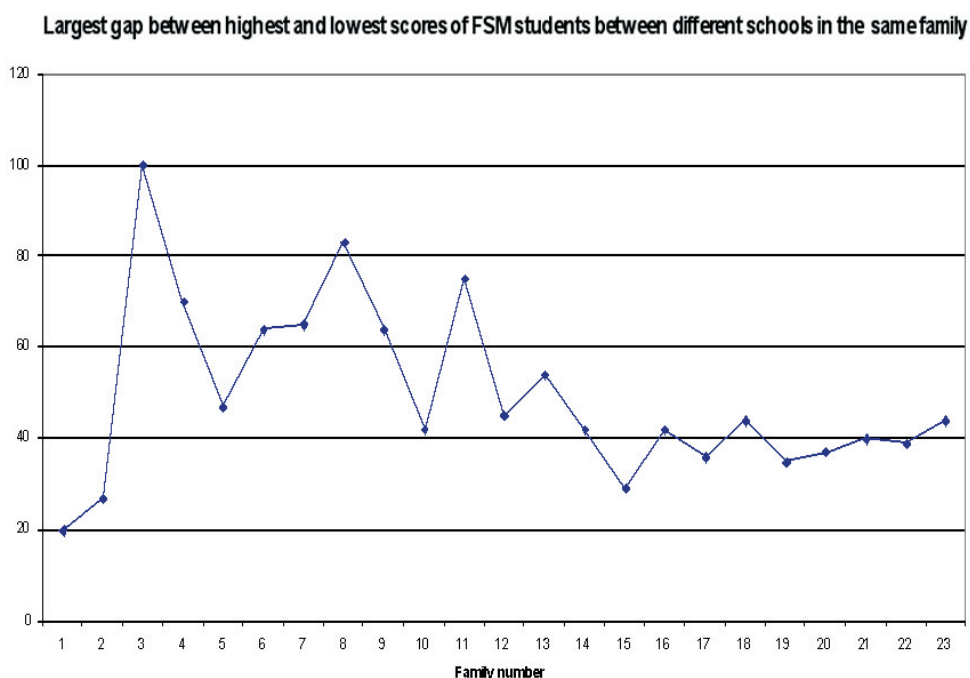
- The proportions of students eligible for FSM varies across London from a low of 8% in Sutton to a high of 62% in Tower Hamlets.



- **The gap in attainment between FSM and non-FSM students varies sharply across London**
- **The gap between FSM and non-FSM students varies between different Families of London Schools.** There are lessons here particularly for schools with low proportions of FSM students about how well they serve their more deprived students.

- **Even within each family, some schools are markedly better at securing good outcomes for their FSM students.**

There is a gap of at least 20% between the achievements of the FSM students in the school which is most successful with such intakes, and those in the school which is least successful.



How can I tell if my school has a problem?

The school's SISR will show the proportions of FSM students and their progress in core subjects, compared to national progress by similar students. The Families of Schools document allows comparison with other London schools with similar intakes.

What should I look for?

Does the school's approach mean that no student is left behind, or is effort concentrated on the students most likely to make the grade? Is the school organised to make up the deficiencies in literacy and numeracy that students may start secondary school with? In what subjects and at what points are the FSM students falling behind? Is it all FSM students, or only one gender or a particular ethnic group that are struggling? Is the school offering the boost to self esteem and opportunities out of school that these students may need?

What can I do?

- As with any underachieving group ensure good students tracking systems are in place, with progress routinely reviewed regularly and students fully aware of their targets in every subject, and also ensure that expectations are kept high; be careful that the school does not have lower expectations of those pupils from deprived backgrounds.
- Make sure the school is making full use Learning Mentors and also involving parents as much as possible to ensure that they are supportive of their child's learning and aware of the school's high expectations of their child.
- Check that all extended service and out of school opportunities on offer are being taken up by the most vulnerable and deprived children who are significantly less likely to have the opportunity to use such facilities as ICT at home.

Resources

- Youth at Risk - Coaching for Success: designed to improve both the academic and non-academic achievement of 14-16 year olds <http://www.youthatrisk.org.uk/ourprogrammes.htm>
- Tribal and Education London Key Stage 4 Projects
- Tribal Students' Champions! aims to raise standards for underperforming students, concentrating on helping educational establishments to help students improve their behaviour, attitude and skills development. <http://www.tribalgroup.co.uk/?id=306&ob=1>
- <http://www.educationlondon.org.uk/>
- QiSS Study Support Development Programme: the aim of QiSS is to support schools, local authorities and other educational organisations in raising students' achievement, motivation and self esteem.
- NRIF: www.nrif.org.uk/Education/index.asp - consult the section on achieving full potential