



## Children & Young People's Select Committee

### Tackling Race Inequality in Lewisham Schools

**Date:** December 2022

**Key decision:** No.

**Ward(s) affected:** all

**Contributors:** Sandra Roberts, Director Lewisham Learning

### Outline and recommendations

This report seeks to provide an update on the work schools and the Council is currently doing to address race inequality and to improve educational outcomes for Black Caribbean Heritage pupils.

## 1. Summary

- 1.1. There is a Council-wide commitment to tackling race inequalities, which includes work in various services across the Council and a key piece of this work is actively tackling race inequality in our schools. A steering group of Head Teachers, stakeholders and local authority officers has been working to drive this work forward. Tackling race inequality is a three year approach, funded by Lewisham Learning involving all Lewisham schools and the college. It started in September 2021.
- 1.2. The approach is based on the recommendations of national and local research and focuses on Black Caribbean pupils. The main aims are to:
  - Close the historic attainment gap which was 7-10% at the start of the programme and improve life chances;
  - Tackle systemic bias and racism;
  - Address and reduce disproportionately high rates of exclusions.
  - Support parents and communities;
- 1.3. Following initial research recommendations emerged which led to the development of a three year action plan which is now in its second year.
- 1.4. In June 2022 the steering group commissioned an expert consultant, Michael Keating, to undertake a midterm review of the programme. (Appendix 2 for a summary).
- 1.5. We are seeking to evaluate the evidenced-based activity that research tells us will secure long term improved outcomes for Black pupils. We recognise that this work is part of a long term commitment to a programme of improvement. Measuring impact, particularly in the context of the pandemic is a challenge and it must be noted that data included here is still unvalidated.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Members are asked to note the information contained in the report

## 3. Background

- 3.1. Nationally certain groups identified by ethnicity underachieve at school and one of the groups which have been impacted by this across London and indeed across the country are children and young people with a Black Caribbean heritage. This has been recognised in many reviews and reports over the years. This issue has also been recognised previously by the CYP Select Committee.
- 3.2. Young people with a Black Caribbean heritage, including those with a mixed heritage background constitute nearly a quarter of the school population in Lewisham.
- 3.3. Over the last few years the Council, through Lewisham Learning have been working with schools across the borough to address concerns about race equality and in particular the educational outcomes of pupils with a Black Caribbean heritage. As part of this work recent research in this area has been considered in addition to good practice in other Local Authority areas and specific research in Lewisham was carried out for Lewisham.
- 3.4. Lewisham is an open borough that celebrates diversity, and has a history of standing up to racism and inequalities, from the Battle of Lewisham in 1977 to more recently becoming a Borough of Sanctuary.
- 3.5. There is a Council-wide commitment to tackling race inequalities, which includes work in various services across the Council and a key piece of this work is actively tackling race inequality in our schools, bringing new energy, expertise and a fresh collaborative approach.
- 3.6. This project is linking with “Birmingham and Lewisham African and Caribbean Health Inequalities Review “

## 4. Overview of the work to Tackle Race Inequality in Lewisham Schools and Colleges

- 4.1. The starting point for the initiative was an Executive Directors’ meeting for school leaders in July 2020.
- 4.2. Following the meeting a steering group of headteachers and officers was formed and agreed to commission an eminent academic, to carry out research in Lewisham that led to the report “Embedding Race Equality in Lewisham Schools” published in September 2020.
- 4.3. The main findings of the report were used by the steering group to shape the development of a three year action plan which included the following initial 3 actions that were implemented in year 1.
  1. To appoint a part time project manager.
  2. To develop a “Pledge” setting out the commitment to change. This has been signed and adopted by all Lewisham schools and colleges [Race Equality Pledge A3.pdf](#)
  3. To ask all schools to send a letter (signed by the mayor, lead member, executive director and chair of Lewisham Learning) to all parents, setting out the case for change. The letter was sent on 22 June 2021, Windrush Day, [Race Equality Letter.pdf](#)
- 4.4. In June 2022 the steering group commissioned an expert consultant, Michael Keating, to undertake a midterm review of the programme. (Appendix 2 for a summary). The report is based predominately on a series of interviews with a range of the key local

players. It says-

*“The vision set out for ‘Tackling Race Inequality in Education’ (TRIIE) is an ambitious one, articulating as it does that ‘we need to lead the way and be in the vanguard of driving change.’ The aim of the evaluation has been to understand and agree:*

- What’s been happening?*
- What’s been working and what hasn’t? Why?*
- What should the next steps be for the second half of the project?*

*It should not be forgotten that the TRIIE work has been initiated and developed over the last two years of the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdowns. The following conclusions are offered:*

- The Pledge signed by 100% of schools provides a strong foundation and should not be underestimated as both an important symbol and a spur to action.*
- The understanding and debates about equality and race at the heart of TRIIE are difficult shaped as they are by community and personal experiences (both bad and good) but the Steering Group should not be afraid of exploring their complexity.*
- The Steering Group is Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic led and this is itself an important symbol and spur to new ways of working and thinking.*
- It feels too early to make grand claims about the impact, but enough work has already taken place or is planned to allow greater clarity over the coming year.*
- This will require further reflection by the Steering Group about how it operates, the measures it wishes to use and the outcomes desired.*
- Even in a difficult national policy and service context for local government, the local authority has a key role*
- There is (always) more to do in strengthening trust and relationships – among the Steering Group itself, with all Heads and schools, the breadth of local authority services and the community itself – and continually teasing out the tensions is vital.*
- While ‘education’ and ‘race’ are the starting points these are not discrete entities (either conceptually or practically) so seeking to make the right connections with ideas, policies, organisations and people both within and outside Lewisham can only enhance the work.*
- The needs of Black children and young people are at the heart of TRIIE but getting the policy and delivery of this work right (and indeed being honest about what might go wrong) must benefit the needs of children and young people from all backgrounds in the borough”.*

## **5. Strand updates**

- 5.1. The steering group acknowledge that no single initiative will bring about the change needed. Work has focused around **4 strands**.
- 5.2. Each strand is led by school leaders and has a full programme of actions planned and underway. They include:

**Curriculum** - How can we make sure that the curriculum better reflects our communities here in Lewisham?

### **Actions**

- A “Race Equality Audit Tool” has been created for schools to use to evaluate their curriculum
- A training Package for Curriculum Leads is being delivered by Dr Muna Abdi
- Peoplescape Theatre has developed a drama piece based on reminiscences of Black African Caribbean elders which has been used in 20 schools.

Peoplescape were successful in securing funding from the Borough of Culture to allow us to present a public performance of *A Place For Me* – the professional performance element of the Migration Stories project at the Migration Museum in December. There were also performances from two primary schools and one secondary school who have taken part in the project;

- Two high profile “Decolonising the Curriculum Conferences” have taken place with nationally renowned speakers. Both conferences were attended by over 100 school leaders, staff, governors, key stakeholders and councillors.

**Relationships** - How can we make sure that the relationships between teachers and students are positive and productive and backed up by the right school policies?  
<https://schoolsservices.lewisham.gov.uk/Page/21670>

**Actions to date**

- Inclusion Leads and LA officers are developing principles and guidance for schools on creating and implementing effective behaviour policies
- A training package for Inclusion Leads is being delivered to teachers
- A Pupil and staff survey was carried out during June/July 2021 and again in July 2022 to provide a baseline to measure progress against.(see appendix 1)
- The Young Mayors Team has produced a video to support pupil voice and provide teachers with a valuable teaching resource. This will be launched in the new year
- The Young Mayors Team have also been working with groups of pupils in Lewisham secondary schools to explore and discuss issues of race and inequality.
- Racial Literacy training is planned to run alongside the launch of the Pupil voice film and Teacher’s pack at the Migration Museum in January 2023

**Parents and Community** - How can we make sure that our schools are linked up with parents and the community?  
<https://schoolsservices.lewisham.gov.uk/Page/21672>

**Actions to date**

- A “community conversation spaces framework” has been developed to enable important regular communication between school leaders and communities to take place.
- Training for the “community conversations” took place and a pilot ran in 5 schools in January 2022.
- The successful pilot is now being extended to a further 5 schools
- Community leaders are being kept abreast of developments. The project manager and others are attending meetings arranged by Lewisham Black parents Forum, Ubuntu and others.
- A ground breaking new partnership aimed at supporting Black Caribbean and dual heritage (Black Caribbean/White) pupils in Lewisham was launched in September 2021 called the Lewisham Young Leaders Academy.

**Leadership** - How can we make sure that more of our black staff progress to senior leadership jobs; there are more black parents and community members on governing boards; that school leaders have engaged with racial literacy and bias

training; that we know and understand any barriers to tackling race inequality, at school level, and provide appropriate bespoke support to school leaders and governors where it is needed <https://schoolsservices.lewisham.gov.uk/Page/21668>

### **Actions to date**

- The Pledge has been developed and endorsed by all schools and governing bodies
- The letter to parents/carers was sent out on Windrush Day, 22<sup>nd</sup> June.
- Race Equality Training for more than 100 governors has been delivered
- A two year intensive Leadership Programme has been commissioned and is being delivered to all schools. So far 50 schools have engaged in one of two cohorts.
- A universal programme is offered to all schools comprising three two hour sessions. All schools are expected to engage with this over the life of the programme. So far at least 1 member of the senior leadership team from 85% of schools have or are attending. The remaining schools will attend in 2022-23.
- Members of the Lewisham Steering Group are founder members of a Pan London Group formed to tackle race inequality.
- Lewisham Learnings team of School Improvement Partners have all engaged with the leadership training programme
- Finding out what each school is doing to implement the “tackling race inequality pledge” is on the agenda for each school improvement visit and reports on these actions are provided for the steering group so that they know and understand what barriers to tackling race inequality, at school level, are and can provide appropriate bespoke support to school leaders and governors where it is needed
- A governors toolkit has been developed. This toolkit was created by a group of very committed governors who sought to ensure that every governor, new or experienced, has the use of the toolkit as a beginning to support their understanding of their school’s journey to meeting the Lewisham Race Equality In Schools Pledge
- Eight aspirant young leaders are attending a London South “Stepping into leadership programme” to equip them with the leadership skills, personal confidence and professional networks they need to make a successful application for promotion into school leadership roles and beyond.

## **6. Impact so far**

### **6.1. Close the historic attainment gap of 7-10% and improve life chances;**

- 6.1.1. A full analysis will be carried out when validated data is available in February 2023. Table 1 below shows only headline data from the provisional data available now. This data reflects the effects of the pandemic and, as elsewhere in the country, these effects are not uniform but usually have had a larger impact on disadvantaged students than those that are not disadvantaged. They vary greatly from ward to ward and school to school. When the full data set is available we hope we will be able shed more light on the outcomes in Lewisham.
- 6.1.2. The data available shows that on average across all schools gaps to national for black Caribbean pupils have increased, except at Key Stage 4, where pupil attainment maintained the same gap (-0.9) and progress narrowed to -0.29 from -0.63 in 2019. At present we do not know how this compares with black Caribbean pupils in London or

nationally. We do know that within the averages there is significant variation between schools. For example, in some Lewisham schools black Caribbean pupils achieve well in comparison with their peers and national expectations. In one secondary school the black Caribbean cohort achieved grades of up to +0.41 for progress 8 and +5.25 for attainment 8. When the full data set is available we need to investigate why this variation exists and try to find ways to replicate the highest achievement in all our schools.

Table 1

Lewisham Outcomes 2019 and 2022								
Attainment	Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Good Level of Development (GLD)		KS1 Reading, writing, maths @ expected level		KS2 Reading, writing, maths @ expected level		KS4 Attainment 8 Each grade a pupil gets is assigned a point score from 9 (highest) to 1 (lowest). Each pupil's Attainment 8 score is calculated by adding up and averaging the points for their 8 subjects, with English and maths counted twice	
	2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022
<b>National</b>		65	65	53	65	58	4.6	4.9
<b>Lewisham</b>		70	66	54	68	58	4.4	4.8
<b>Black Caribbean</b>		60	59	42	58	47	3.7	4
<b>Difference to National</b>		-5	-6	-11	-7	-11	-0.9	-0.9
Progress					KS2 Reading, writing, maths @ expected level		KS4 Progress 8 (Progress 8 is calculated by comparing each student's Attainment 8 score to those nationally of other students who had the same KS2 SATs results. This is designed to measure how much progress each student has made from Year 6 to Year 11.)	
	2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022
<b>National</b>					0	0	0	0
<b>Lewisham</b>					0	-2	-0.27	0.08
<b>Black Caribbean</b>					-5	-7	-0.63	-0.29
<b>Difference to National</b>					-5	-7	-0.63	-0.29

## 6.2. Tackle systemic bias and racism

- 6.2.1. The staff and governor training and pupil activities that have taken place and are ongoing are providing increased opportunities to raise awareness and reflect on attitudes, systems and beliefs but no hard evidence is available yet to show the changes we need to see. The 2022 pupil outcomes, (Table 1), midterm evaluation (Appendix 2) and 2021 exclusion data (Appendix 3) indicates we are on the right lines with significant more work to do.

### 6.3. Address and reduce disproportionately high rates of exclusions – Based on National data from 2020 and local data for 2021;

#### 6.3.1. Primary exclusions (per 1,000) 2020/21

- The permanent exclusion rate for Lewisham primary schools remained at **zero per cent** which was better than England at **0.01 per cent** and on par London and Inner London at **zero per cent**.
- The suspension rate for Lewisham primary schools was **0.88 per cent** which is better than England at **0.99 per cent** but worse than London at **0.57 per cent** and Inner London at **0.61 per cent**.
- **Primary exclusions by ethnicity (per 1,000) 2020/21**
- The data shows **disproportionality** in Lewisham Primary schools for ‘Black African’, ‘Black Caribbean’, ‘White and Black African’, and ‘White and Black Caribbean’ background with suspensions (**see Appendix 3**).

#### 6.3.2. Secondary exclusions (per 1,000) 2020/21

- The permanent exclusion rate for Lewisham secondary schools continued to improve at **0.07 per cent** better than England at **0.10 per cent**, on par with London. (**See Appendix 3**)
- The suspension rate for Lewisham secondary schools improved to **8.13 per cent** which was better than England at **8.48 per cent** but worse than London at **5.76 per cent** and Inner London at **6.42 per cent**.
- **Secondary exclusions by ethnicity (per 1,000) 2020/21**
- The data shows disproportionality in Lewisham Secondary schools for ‘Any other Mixed Black’, ‘Any other Black’, ‘Black African’, ‘Black Caribbean’ and ‘White and Black African’ with suspensions; also for ‘Black African’, ‘Black Caribbean’ and ‘White and Black Caribbean’ with permanent exclusions
- No student with an EHCP has been excluded in Lewisham in 2021 but there have been students with, or who have previously had, SEND support excluded or on a managed transfer.
- The main reason for exclusion appears to be consistent disruptive behaviour, with exclusions for possession of weapons or physically violent behaviour reduced.

6.3.3. We recognise that some schools have better outcomes in terms of exclusions and managed transfers. We are linking this to discussing and sharing behaviour principles, policies and practices to try to bring about more consistency across the borough. This will be a key focus of the TRIE steering group in 2023.

6.3.4. We recognise external issues such as housing, cost of living crisis and mental health needs all contribute to exclusions. We are using a new program- “Study Bugs” as well as including a well-rounded approach within the Early Help Strategy to tackle the family wide factors that contribute to a child being excluded.

6.4. **Support parents and communities:** While several initiatives have started to take place there is no hard evidence collected yet that parents and the community feel more supported. The 2022 midterm evaluation (Appendix 2) and 2021 exclusion data (Appendix 3) indicates we are on the right lines with significant more work to do.

## 7. Financial implications

- 7.1. This three year project has been allocated £300,000 over its term, to support its work. 2023-24 is the final year.

## 8. Legal implications

- 8.1. There are no legal implications

## 9. Equalities implications

- 9.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities are required to have due regard to equality impacts when making decisions in the exercise of their functions (Public Sector Equality Duty, PSED). In particular, public authorities are required to have due regard to the need to:
- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following as protected characteristics for the purpose of the PSED:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (including ethnicity)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

- 9.2. Lewisham Education strategy 2022-2027 reflects the Council's commitment to reducing achievement gaps and negative disproportionality in educational outcomes for specific groups of children and young people. This involves recording and reporting on data around protected characteristics by groups, as presented in this report. This data informs both how we deliver our business as usual functions and the development of strategies and programmes to tackle these inequalities.
- 9.3. The work of the schools' Tackling Race Inequality Steering Group is specifically focussed on addressing the poorer education outcomes achieved by young people from a Black background and in particular with a Black Caribbean heritage.

## 10. Background papers

- 10.1. ***Appendix 1 Summary of the 2022 Lewisham schools tackling race inequality survey***
- 10.2. ***Appendix 2 Summary of the 2022 Lewisham schools tackling race inequality midterm evaluation***

## 11. Glossary

Term	Explanation
<b>AP</b>	<b>Alternative provision:</b> places that provide education for children who are unable to go to a mainstream school.
<b>Attainment 8</b>	Accountability measure introduced in 2016. This calculates how well each pupil did across 4 elements (or 'buckets'): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English – double weighted and best result of English Language or English Literature;</li> <li>• Mathematics – double-weighted;</li> <li>• English Baccalaureate (EBacc) – three EBacc GCSEs (best results in science, humanities (history / geography) and languages);</li> <li>• Other best results in 3 other subjects</li> </ul>
<b>DfE</b>	<b>Department for Education:</b> a department of the UK Government responsible for child protection, education (compulsory, further and higher education), apprenticeships and wider skills in England
<b>EHCP</b>	<b>Education, Health and Care Plan:</b> a document setting out the education, health and social care needs of a child or young person for whom extra support is needed in school
<b>EYFS</b>	<b>Early Years Foundation Stage-</b> learning, development and care of children from birth to 5 years
<b>GCSE</b>	<b>General Certificate of Secondary Education:</b> main qualification at year 11 (age 16)
<b>GLD</b>	<b>Good level of development:</b> as assessed at the end of early years foundation stage
<b>KS1</b>	<b>Key Stage 1:</b> school years 1 and 2 (infants) (ages 5 to 7)
<b>KS2</b>	<b>Key Stage 2:</b> school years 3 to 6 (juniors) (ages 8 to 11)
<b>KS4</b>	<b>Key Stage 4:</b> school years 10 and 11 (ages 15 to 16)
<b>Lewisham Learning</b>	Partnership established by school leaders and the local authority to deliver high quality school improvement to all Lewisham schools.
<b>Progress 8</b>	Progress 8 is calculated by comparing each student's Attainment 8 score to those nationally of other students who had the same KS2 SATs results. This is designed to measure how much progress each student has made from Year 6 to Year 11.
<b>PRU</b>	<b>Pupil referral unit:</b> provision for children excluded from mainstream school or in need of specialist provision because unable to attend school
<b>SATs</b>	<b>Standard Assessment Tests</b> measure children's educational achievement in years 2 and 6
<b>SEND</b>	<b>Special Educational Needs and Disability</b>

## 12. Report author and contact

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