

EMBED PBrush  
birmingham race action partnership

# **System or Stereotype?**

**What can we do to close the educational  
'attainment gap' for black and minority  
ethnic pupils in Birmingham**

May 2004

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## ■ Foreword

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lack and minority ethnic (BME) under-achievement in schools – and the longer-term social, economic and labour market disadvantage whose roots are struck in this same soil – is neither a new debate nor a new phenomenon. However, there will always be controversy about the precise factors affecting pupils' attainment.

Although there has been some progress in Birmingham, this serves to disguise the stark differences that still exist across ethnic groups and *within* ethnic groups by gender. The greatest inequality in achievement exists for African Caribbean boys. 20% fewer achieve 5 A\* – C grade GCSE passes in core subjects (English, Maths, Science) than white boys and 23% fewer than White girls. Almost 40% fewer achieve 5 A\* – C grade GCSE passes than Indian boys and over 40% fewer when compared to Indian girls [see **Table 1**, p.14, 2003 figures; source: LEA averages].

There has been a tendency in recent research and policy to locate the solutions and hence the responsibility for closing the attainment gaps **with pupils themselves, their parents, or the 'community'**. This research directs a critical gaze within schools and identifies barriers to closing the attainment gap that might be addressed through initial teacher training (ITT) and professional development.

It is not the purpose or the intention of this report to lay the blame for educational inequality at teachers' doorsteps. Teachers are themselves part of a system that has neither eliminated discriminatory practice nor formed a coherent view regarding the reasons for under-achievement and the most effective actions to address it. If as much energy was invested in recognising and understanding the *systemic* problem of racism and discrimination as goes into refuting the findings of research, then the potential for change and improvement would be infinitely greater. We have applied very little sugar-coating to our discussion of these issues and believe that this kind of frank and open discussion should be replicated at all levels of the educational system. In order for anti-discriminatory practice to become part of *mainstream* practice the system requires educational professionals who understand and feel confident about dealing with the complex issues of 'race'.

While readers are encouraged to read the report in its entirety, the key findings and key recommendations are summarised in the two sections that follow.

Joy Warmington  
Director, b:RAP  
May 2004

## ■ Key findings

With the advent of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) resources, there has been an emphasis on strategies that will close the equality gap in educational outcomes for students from black and minority ethnic backgrounds. Our research – involving over 50 structured interviews with teachers, pupils, educational practitioners and policy-makers – has identified a number of major obstacles *at all levels of the educational system* that compromise not just what might be achieved with NRF resources but which also, in a broader sense, significantly limit the vision with which inequality in education is addressed.

The research focused on two specific areas of enquiry: the wider understanding of ‘race’, racism and ‘race’ equality that exists in the education system; and the role teacher training can play in building the confidence and competence of teachers to address the equality agenda in schools.

We found that:

Action to address the ‘attainment gap’ in schools – and the wider equalities agenda – requires a level of strategic direction and leadership from the LEA that is currently lacking.

There is little if any attempt to capture good practice and competence in ‘race’ equality issues in such a way that would enable ‘race’ equality – like, say, child protection or literacy strategies – to be *taught* and its practice consequently improved and strengthened. In the absence of this more structured thinking, many teachers lack confidence regarding ‘race’ equality issues. Unclear of their schools’ institutional views and priorities on ‘race’ and especially on anti-racism they are left with only a probing of their own attitudes, experience or ‘conscience’ to guide them, thus reinforcing the view that ‘race’ equality is a personal, attitudinal issue rather than an institutional one calling for coherent, collective, *institutional* action.

In addition, many teachers feel uncomfortable even thinking about ‘race’ equality and discrimination, fearful that a ‘blame culture’ exists in which it is impossible to discuss these issues without repercussions and even stigmatisation. An intellectual climate in which constructive and more sophisticated thinking on ‘race’ equality issues can thrive is a prerequisite for real progress on equality.

There is a tendency to locate educational failure as part of the ‘ethnic’ or ‘cultural’ identity of particular kinds of pupils, or to locate failure out of the classroom and into pupils’ families or communities. The causes of – and

potential remedies for – under-achievement are *externalised*, suggesting that the answer lies not in **mainstream teaching and learning practice**, but in the addition of frequently non-academic, extra-curricular activities aimed at specific ethnic groups, or new-found ‘remedies’ such as mentoring. As far as Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) guidance is concerned, such an approach flies in the face of its stated core purpose of improving and strengthening *mainstream* provision.

There is a tendency within local education authorities to emphasise schools that are ‘bucking the trend’, holding these up as a benchmark of what can be achieved. While exceptional schools – and perhaps exceptional circumstances – can offer valuable insights, they remain exceptions and are therefore of dubious use in attempting to set benchmarks that will enable good practice to be ‘mainstreamed’ for the benefit of *all* schools and *all* pupils.

The LEA’s favoured approach to closing the equality gap is strongly ‘multicultural’ in emphasis, with separate action plans for pupils from different ethnic groups. Whilst this at first glance might seem a sensitive response to the needs of BME communities, it can actually serve to reinforce difference at the expense of inclusion and justice, addressing *ethnicity* rather than *inequality* and *discrimination* as the root cause of under-achievement.

Few if any teachers look to teacher training for a critical contribution to their understanding of ‘race’ equality practice. Significant work needs to be done to determine whether existing QTS standards offer a framework within which ‘race’ equality practice can be ‘taught’, tested and developed. Trainee teachers are felt to lack a sufficient command of the ‘vocabulary’ of ‘race’ equality, reinforcing the need for specific, structured ‘race’ equality modules in teacher training. BASS link advisers have a central role to play in this, but many feel their potential contribution is under-recognised.

LEA data collection in schools to map the ‘attainment gap’ tends to reinforce the view that provision to address inequality necessarily comprises additional, ‘bolt-on’ measures rather than key components of mainstream teaching provision. There is little effort at present to utilise the Race Relations (Amendment) Act as a key framework for promoting equality; indeed, compliance with the Act is frequently reduced to little more than a ‘tick box’ activity.

Even OFSTED guidance on promoting equality is weak, with little if any exploration of teaching strategies that *actively promote equality through the mainstream of schools’ provision*. OFSTED is neither seen nor used as a central tool in assessing the ability of schools to meet the RRAA.

NRF guidelines do not put sufficient emphasis on *anti-discriminatory*

*practice*, nor do they offer a coherent rationale for guiding NRF spend in relation to educational attainment. They are in addition too 'project-driven' – with a tendency to non-mainstream, 'bolt-on' provision as a consequence – rather than 'commissioning-led'.

## ■ Key recommendations

The report emphasises the need for developmental work with education staff to assist their better understanding of equalities practice and broad 'race' equality issues. It also underlines the importance of funding initiatives that move away from 'add-on' and often 'activity-based' measures to those that **clearly show an impact in improving mainstream teaching and learning practice.**

It also highlights the need for a more consistent, structured and competency-based approach to developing equalities practice and skills. A clear intention must be signaled at all levels of the education system to move equalities onto a structured **professional development** footing and away from the 'personal' and 'attitudinal' emphasis it currently has amongst teachers and ITT trainers.

However more than this, the research signals a clear need **for much greater strategic leadership across the system and at all levels in matters of equality, anti-discrimination and duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act.** These are not, as things currently stand, securely embedded in the mainstream of educational provision.

Our recommendations are made in three categories: overall leadership and strategic direction; measures that might appropriately be resourced from central funding; and those that might appropriately be resourced via ward-based funding. They can be read in full on page 42, but the key recommendations are as follows:

### ***Overall leadership & strategic direction***

- 1) In order to address the clear need for greater and more effective leadership on 'race' equality and anti-discriminatory practice in Birmingham's education system, the LEA should establish a clear, well publicised and high profile strategic plan designed for pupils from **all ethnic groups** for driving equalities **and especially duties under the RRAA** into the mainstream of school provision. It should also as a matter of urgency - liaise with ITT providers to establish the importance of, and clear strategic direction for, incorporating 'race' equality into mainstream teacher training.
- 2) Clear guidelines should be published to improve how 'race' equality information/intelligence is shared within and between schools and the role that the LEA plays in facilitating this flow of information.

### ***Central funding***

- 1) Clear 'information packages' for wards and districts to use in the process of commissioning NRF activities should be developed. These 'information packages' should include local data about attainment statistics and a city-wide 'best buys' guide that identifies mainstream anti-discriminatory approaches to closing the equality gap.
- 2) BASS link advisers should be supported to develop their confidence and to improve their knowledge and competence in progressing and evaluating the **mainstreaming** of 'race' equality practice in schools.
- 3) An audit tool should be developed by BASS, OFSTED, and other people with relevant expertise, that can assist in mapping formal and informal approaches to closing the equality gap and measuring progress in schools.
- 4) NRF should consider contributing funding towards an ITT pilot course aimed at building the competence of trainees in dealing with equalities in schools.
- 5) The LEA should commission a detailed study to examine whether existing QTS standards can be used to measure competence in 'race' equality in initial teacher training establishments. This work would build on the work of the Teacher Training Agency Professional Resource Network.

### ***Ward Funding***

- 1) Cross-theme initiatives that relate not only to education but also to other key outcomes such as employment or the environment should be developed and resourced, with particular attention paid to linkages between 'socially patterned' core subject attainment by pupils and the wider issues of basic skills and employment.
- 2) Provision should be made for the training and development of Ward Support Officers, District Support Officers and other relevant stakeholders in 'race' equality and the use and analysis of educational attainment information.
- 3) There should be targeted resources for voluntary organisations supporting pupils in **academic** areas of school development in core subjects in years 8, 9 and 10 of secondary.
- 4) Resources should be made available to enable development of guidelines that will help parents understand information about: the examination process; which exams their children will be taking; the differences between course work/ examination work.

- 5) Creation of 'Teaching Awards' at a ward-level that recognise good practice in schools, **as voted for by pupils**. Lessons about exemplary practice of particular teachers can be shared within and between schools.

# **System or Stereotype?**

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Background

This report is the result of collaboration between a number of partners working together to improve the lives of those that have benefited less than others from Birmingham's education system.

The project will provide initial guidance to be used by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) Education theme panel. This guidance will inform the panel's work with regard to raising the attainment of all pupils in the city by closing the attainment gap that exists between pupils from different ethnic groups.

The project was carried out by b:RAP, a strategic partnership that works to promote anti-discriminatory practice and critical thinking on the 'race' equality agenda.

Birmingham LEA offered welcome support and access to education practitioners. The work was made possible by the financial support of Birmingham LEA and Birmingham City Strategic Partnership (CSP), who also offered advice and guidance on the course of the research.

The project would not have been possible were it not for the support of the teachers, pupils and teacher trainers who offered their opinions and valuable time, often at very short notice and frequently when time was at a premium. We wish to extend our thanks to all of these participants.

### 1.2 Defining the Problem

Birmingham has extensive data highlighting the attainment gap between groups of black and minority ethnic (BME) pupils and in relation to other white ethnic majority pupils. This data also displays the much-acclaimed improvement in attainment, which justifies Birmingham's reputation as a vanguard in this area. However, there is a less information available about 'what works' in reducing the attainment gap (despite a number of useful attempts to collate and implement examples of good practice). Knowing about examination results and educational outputs may not always help us to identify the **impact** specific initiatives are having or to understand the **implementation** and **coordination** of those initiatives across the city.

Birmingham's BME population is a particularly young one, and the LEA

estimates that by 2008 there will be no ethnic *majority* groups across the Birmingham under-16 school population. We need to challenge our understanding of 'race' and racism in our education system **now**. If anti-discriminatory practice is to become part of mainstream practice, we need to have educational professionals who understand and feel confident in dealing with complex issues like 'race'.

This project focuses broadly on two aspects of life in educational establishments that have received less attention and are critical elements of teachers' ability to deliver when closing the equality gap:

**Understanding of 'race' equality** - Ways in which 'race' and racism are defined and understood in schools and the LEA can have a big impact on the questions we ask when trying to close the equality gap. With a limited awareness of those two terms comes a limited field of vision to search for solutions to the problem. This report argues that our field of vision needs to be focused more closely on what is happening in mainstream teaching and learning in schools. The problems may lie closer to home than the LEA and schools sometimes believe.

**Teacher training** - An understanding of the causes and effects of 'race' and racism is not something that we are born with. It is something that we learn. This report explores the role teacher training plays in building the confidence and competence of teachers to address the equality agenda in schools.

Our focus on teacher training is also a response to a raft of research and policy documents that have tended to locate the solutions and hence the responsibility for closing the attainment gaps **within the pupils themselves, their parents, or their 'community'**. This project directs a critical gaze within schools and identifies barriers to closing the attainment gap that might be addressed through initial teacher training (ITT) and professional development.

In order to focus discussion, we asked interviewees questions about a number of everyday educational practices. We asked them to comment on:

Factors that contribute to the attainment gap

Constituent elements of 'good practice'

Barriers and innovative approaches to the implementation of good practice initiatives in schools

Sources of competence and confidence for education professionals in closing the attainment gap

Evaluation of attempts to close the attainment gap

This report cannot take account of all the good practice that does exist in the city and in any case, individual schools can blow their own trumpets far more effectively than we can hope to do. Rather, it is our intention to identify **anti-discriminatory practice** that will prevent **systemic** and **institutional** discrimination. Similarly, we do not lay the 'blame' for an equality gap in the city on teachers themselves. This project identifies that teachers are part of a system that has not successfully eliminated discriminatory practice.

### ***A word about 'race'***

Different 'races' do not exist in this world in a biological sense. Human beings are made of the same stuff. 'Race' has been used as a way to think about and describe difference between people. It has also come to represent differences in relation to power, resources and educational attainment in society. It is a **socially constructed** definition and it is therefore b:RAP's practice – and that of many other commentators – to enclose 'race' in inverted commas as a way of signifying the qualifying context in which it is used. We shall do so throughout this report. However, it should also be noted that interviewees use the term in a number of different ways – those working in the education service and those making decisions about the funding of education projects use the term interchangeably. Understanding 'race' as a social construct can help us to locate and identify anti-discriminatory practice.

## **1.3 Methodology and Interviewees**

We interviewed 20 teachers from 4 schools, 21 pupils from 3 schools, three teacher trainers from two ITT establishments, 4 LEA and Teacher Training Agency (TTA) officials. The teachers we spoke to work in schools located in Nechells, Moseley, Sandwell and Chelmsley Wood. All of these wards receive a certain amount of NRF money, but issues that were raised by teachers in these schools are pertinent across the city, irrespective of the proportion of NRF spending they receive. Indeed the recommendations from this report apply just as equally to ward-based funding as they do to central NRF funding.

Given the high demand placed on school staff and pupils' time we found it difficult to conduct interviews in a wide cross-section of schools. Reluctance on the part of schools to commit what little spare time teachers had to more research was unfortunately compounded by an unwillingness on the part of the LEA to facilitate access to schools that they saw as already overburdened by LEA research projects. Mindful of the sensitive nature of the relationship between the LEA and those schools, we drew upon informal links that b:RAP has established with teachers and schools in the city.

## **1.4 Structure of the Report**

**Section 2** of this report locates the research we have carried out within the broad equality landscape of Birmingham and maps the LEA's strategy for closing the equality gap.

**Section 3** explores in detail the views of interviewees in relation to three key issues that were seen to be important in closing the equality gap – i.e. good practice, teacher training and evaluation. The last part of this section examines the role of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) initiatives in closing the equality gap.

**Section 4** makes recommendations that can be used to improve the effectiveness of NRF spend in progressing anti-discriminatory practice in the education system.

## 2.0 Birmingham and Inequality

The number of Birmingham pupils attaining 5 or more GCSEs, A\*-C grades, has generally risen every year since the 1980s, in line with the national trend. However, this overall trend disguises significant variations *between* ethnic groups and also *within* ethnic groups, in relation to gender. While statistics mapping GCSE attainment in relation to ethnicity published by the LEA do exhibit these variations, if we focus on GCSE attainment in relation to 'core subjects' – English, Mathematics and Science, statistics not published by the LEA in its annual report – the pattern of inequality and disadvantage, of the 'attainment gap', is even more defined.

Some pupils from BME backgrounds perform extremely well in non-core subject GCSEs – such as Urdu and Bangladeshi for example – and these results have a tendency to bolster overall attainment levels in some schools. However, it is core subjects that hold most value in the labour market and higher education. Given that the school-age BME population is soon to become the majority age group in Birmingham, Table 1 below raises serious concerns about the rate of progress in closing the attainment gap in our LEA area. This has serious implications not just for educational attainment and equality but also for equality in the labour market too.

**LEA AVERAGE OF GCSE PUPILS ACHIEVING 5 GCSEs A\*- C IN CORE SUBJECTS (ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE)**

<b><i>African Caribbean Boys</i></b>	22%	26%	26%
<b><i>African Caribbean Girls</i></b>	35%	36%	38%
<b><i>Bangladeshi Boys</i></b>	30%	41%	36%
<b><i>Bangladeshi Girls</i></b>	40%	38%	45%
<b><i>Indian Boys</i></b>	50%	55%	64%
<b><i>Indian Girls</i></b>	58%	62%	67%
<b><i>Mixed Race Boys</i></b>	Not available	33%	37%
<b><i>Mixed Race Girls</i></b>	Not available	46%	44%
<b><i>Pakistani Boys</i></b>	29%	32%	33%
<b><i>Pakistani Girls</i></b>	34%	37%	39%
<b><i>White Boys</i></b>	41%	43%	44%
<b><i>White Girls</i></b>	49%	50%	49%
<b><i>Average for all groups Boys</i></b>	38%	41%	42%
<b><i>Average for all groups Girls</i></b>	45%	47%	48%

Table 1

Source: LEA

Thus it can be seen that attainment in Birmingham schools is 'socially patterned', and in the same way, a similar dynamic is reflected in wider society and the labour market, where success is also socially patterned in relation to gender, ethnicity and a number of other factors.

Although potential is shared equally amongst pupils from all ethnic groups, at some point of their journey through the education system, their ethnicity has affected their ability to benefit from that system. Addressing this attainment gap in schools, however, as this research shows, **is not approached as an issue of mainstream teaching and learning – as an issue of inequality**. The tendency is to address this gap by add-on, non-mainstream provision, often extra-curricular, frequently 'cultural': the tendency is to address *ethnicity* rather than *inequality*. Meeting NRF targets in relation to the educational equality gap will need to be focused in a way that addresses head-on **a system** that socially patterns attainment and concomitant progress in the labour market. Dealing with the problems of 'minorities' must become a coherently structured **mainstream** response to educational disadvantage.

## 2.1 LEA Strategy

Compared to other LEAs in the country, Birmingham has a well defined, albeit complex strategy that aims to close the educational attainment gap. The LEA's strategic approach to this is outlined elsewhere. Birmingham's education plan 2004-2009 indicates that the LEA's main functions in Birmingham remain similar to those identified by Gillborn and Warren, namely:

- 'supporting school-based improvement'
- 'developing effective partnerships'
- 'identifying, supporting and disseminating good practice'

With respect to 'race' equality, other significant policy documents have also placed the LEA's role firmly within this remit.

Particular emphasis is placed on monitoring and advice in a relationship of partnership between schools, LEA and other stakeholders. However in some respects 'powers of direct intervention and support are limited'.

Additional and specialist funds are distributed to schools themselves and they are directly responsible for the delivery and implementation of initiatives to close the attainment gap. Warren and Gillborn have noted the existence of an 'implementation gap' in terms of the targets schools need to meet in order to close the attainment gap and their ability to implement initiatives that will

achieve this necessary change.

To address this implementation gap, the LEA has undertaken research to analyse how teachers and pupils understand what they are doing to close the attainment gap. By identifying barriers to the delivery of initiatives to close the attainment gap, and by exploring good practice in schools that are 'bucking' the trend, the LEA hopes to identify schools' developmental needs. The LEA's ability to respond to those developmental needs will be conditioned by what the LEA views those needs to be and the 'tools' at their disposal to meet them.

Although schools that are 'bucking the trend' can offer an insight into what constitutes effective action and should be commended, we do not believe that 'exceptional' schools – or indeed those in exceptional circumstances – should be held up as the 'benchmark' for other schools that are performing below the NRF floor targets. Benchmarks should correspond to best-performing schools in the LEA where effective teaching and learning is **mainstreamed** for all pupils.

The following section identifies some of the barriers schools are facing in closing the attainment gap. It offers a critical insight into the challenges schools face and the developmental needs that may have to be met in order to further the equalities agenda. It discusses educational institutions' understanding of these developmental needs and reflects upon the tools and strategies used to meet them.

## **3.0 The Gap between Theory & Practice**

### **3.1 Introduction and Context**

Most of the voices in this section are those of teachers and other education professionals. This is partly due to the project's focus on educational practitioners' understanding of 'race' equality and teacher training, but this emphasis on teachers' experiences – expressed in their own words – is also an attempt to redress an imbalance that has sometimes been evident in public dialogue about the equality gap in Birmingham.

Often responsibility for – and hence solutions to – closing the attainment gap is laid squarely within the realms of pupils' own behaviour and attitudes, parental support or lack of it, and community action. By focusing on teachers, this project does not seek to 'blame' teachers for the equality gap in schools. Instead it seeks to locate teachers within a system that discriminates against pupils from certain groups, a system that has not clearly identified anti-discriminatory practice in mainstream teaching and learning as a priority for strategic action and NRF funding.

This section is split into 3 parts that reflect the key themes respondents identified as important in the implementation of initiatives to close the attainment gap.

### **3.2 The Limits of Good Practice**

Birmingham is developing an evidence base to obtain a clearer idea of 'what works' in closing the attainment gap. The evidence includes case studies provided by schools, monitoring visits by advisers, and external evaluations by University Departments. Quantitative analysis provided by the LEA's formidable research department can amongst other things help to identify schools that are excelling in relation to others. An interest in more primary, qualitative data by the LEA can help to discern more of the intricacies of what is happening 'on the ground' and what is effecting change. Measuring the impact of equality policies in Birmingham has been something that the city has been grappling with for some time.

Policies are developed by the LEA and schools as a reaction to problems that are learnt about through evidence, such as differential educational outcomes evidenced by exam results for example. A judgement is also made about the 'cause' of these problems based on evidence, views of stakeholders and prevailing academic opinion. The LEA's or a school's decision to adopt a certain approach to closing the attainment gap will not be based only on the fact that it works somewhere else; it will often be evidence based and based, to

some degree, on the understanding of various stakeholders in the education process as to what the problems are and **what problems they are trying to solve**.

If the LEA and schools adopt a problem-solving approach to equality strategies, looking at the 'problems' may shed some light on what we *mean* by 'good practice'. In order to understand what 'good practice' is, one needs to understand first and foremost the problems and **understanding of the causes of those problems** that the 'good practice' is trying to solve.

To gain an insight into the way education professionals understand the causes of the equality gap and the problems to be tackled in Birmingham, we asked our interviewees, 'Do you understand the reasons behind pupils' differential attainment?' This section draws upon their responses.

The LEA's approach is outlined in a number of policy documents delineating various 'risk factors' that could contribute to under-attainment. A mass of reports both national and local have also cited an interaction of similar factors that might contribute to the equality gap, with differing emphasis on factors such as socio-economic position, discrimination and racism. This work has helped to guide policy development and it is not the purpose of this report to advocate an alternative list of factors that may or may not 'cause' the attainment gap. Rather, it will explore the gap between the 'institutional' overview of these factors and the views of those working 'in the field'. It will also discuss the possible impact that the understanding of those causal factors amongst education professional may have on strategies that are actually used in schools to solve those problems.

### ***Views of respondents***

The following is a selection of the views expressed by education professionals, teachers and LEA workers. We have organised these responses into a 'quadrant' diagram that locates the causes in their proximity – either inside or outside – the school.

#### EMBED PBrush **Table 2**

We interviewed 3 people who work directly for the LEA and they expressed quite different views about the possible causes of the equality gap in the city. In some cases, their opinions reflected risk factors identified by the LEA, but not always. The interviewees referred to some factors that one does not often see in LEA policy documents. These for the most part were identified as being outside the school, such as lack of parental involvement, lack of parental interest, and gang culture.

Some of the views expressed displayed little awareness of the heterogeneity of Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils' experience. These would be extraordinary if directed towards majority white pupils where, paradoxically, an awareness of diversity is commonplace:

*A lot of the Pakistani boys in the school have particularly high families, overcrowding... un-positive role models... the peer pressure of the gang culture and all that.*

We might call such views 'essentialist', in that they attribute a particular socio-economic background and/or experience to groups of pupils and their families based on ethnic origin.

Teachers also held different views *from one another* about what causes the attainment gap (some of these differing views are reflected in table above).

Teachers' discussion of these causes tended to be accompanied by an explanation of the way their school and their teaching practices were addressing that particular problem. The *perceived cause of the problem* tended to affect their view of whether or not they or the school could do anything about it. For example, one teacher when asked about factors behind differential attainment, noted

*Only when you unpick what is their home-life really like, only then do you understand that I can see why they are behaving like this – and so a lot of it stems from their upbringing, the conditions that they're living in etc. We can do so much in school, we can support them to a degree, but again I'm not a paid social worker, we try to do as much as we can in school, but a lot of that baggage comes from home and we try to work around that to avoid exclusions.*

In one instance, we were able to compare a school's list of stated attainment strategies with the views of teachers working in the school. Of about 30 strategies on the list, teachers identified only a small proportion as ones they used or knew about. To what extent might their knowledge and understanding of good practice have been influenced by their *interpretation* of the causes of the attainment gap?

Table 2 lists a selection of strategies to close the attainment gap that were listed by interviewees. These are organised in relation to those that involve change in school or change out of school. They are also located according to whether they are 'academic' or 'extra curricular' strategies.

### EMBED PBrush **Table 3**

The majority of respondents located strategies on the left hand side of the table and towards the bottom – i.e. extra-curricular and external to the school. Very few located strategies in the top right of the diagram – i.e. within the school and relating to mainstream teaching and learning practice.

Table 2 suggests that many respondents see the causes of the attainment gap as being ‘outside of school’; Table 3 reinforces this view, locating the majority of good practice strategies outside the school and in many cases as ‘extra-curricular’.

Views about good practice can sometimes be influenced by – even distorted by – the very problems the supposed good practice is intended to address. We heard an example of this from an interviewee involved with an LEA research project. This project aims to go into schools, look at the problems that Pakistani and Bangladeshi boys face and offer recommendations regarding good practice that will help close the equality gap. Many of the causes for the equality gap described by the interviewee related directly to the perceived cultural background of the pupils themselves:

*Maybe race itself is a factor as well, I mean like different, people from different races have different cultural backgrounds and maybe that has an impact... I mean in some cases, you know in Birmingham you do actually have a problem with the Pakistani gang culture that just affects maybe Pakistani boys in Birmingham.*

On the other hand, views about the causes of the equality gap did not appear to be interrogated in the research project. The project did not examine a control group of pupils from different ethnic groups to determine whether the socio-economic/cultural/criminal connotations supposedly attached to this particular ethnic group might apply equally to other pupils, nor did it interrogate its own research to examine the extent to which such assumptions might contribute to the equality gap.

The LEA project also looked solely at the experiences of pupils from a certain ethnic group. When asked what kinds of strategies were being suggested to close the attainment gap, those listed tended to reflect issues that relate to a

particular interpretation of Pakistani/Bangladeshi boys' cultural background. For example, that teachers "generally think the home should be involved a lot more" and that "parents would just send them to school and that's their sort of job done for the day". The interviewee also suggested that more work should be done to investigate whether parents from these ethnic groups take an active interest in their children's education.

By attributing 'cultural characteristics' to pupils in this way, solutions to closing the equality gap are always more likely to be located outside the school, with the emphasis placed on parental responsibility for taking an interest in their child's education, or on teachers' ability to engage parents. Viewed through such a lens, our interviewee was only ever likely to detect equality strategies that conformed to their preconceptions.

Teachers also talked about the 'needs' of certain groups of pupils in a stereotypical way:

*A lot of our African Caribbean pupils they like hair and beauty, so we get them doing hair and beauty at lunchtime. They like DJing so we set up a DJ club... All these children that would be causing chaos out there are now indoors, we've confined them. Understanding the community that we serve I think is crucial. So I think we can stereotype, all our African Caribbean kids are good athletes – fine, why don't you work with that strength*

Whilst this teacher suggests that 'we can stereotype' in this way, the teacher is making assumptions about the problems pupils face. Is a lack of culturally relevant extra-curricular activities what is contributing to under-attainment? Don't many young people, regardless of their ethnicity, enjoy these pursuits? What is it about African Caribbean boys and girls that would suggest they need these things? A number of teachers referred to a 'kinaesthetic' style of learning that African Caribbean pupils tend to favour. How are conclusions drawn to support this? How does this strategy constitute mainstream, anti-discriminatory practice?

### ***Mentoring***

From a similar perspective, we might also question how mentoring is contributing to anti-discriminatory practice in mainstream provision? Mentoring is seen by some teachers and pupils as a form of cheap social work to reduce truancy, an economical means of boosting class performance. However schools need to make a strong case as to how mentoring can contribute towards mainstream teaching and learning provision. Whilst mentoring can contribute towards the personal development of pupils, schools should be able to discern the effect mentoring can have on closing the equality gap. NRF money may be better spent on improving mainstream teaching and learning provision for *all*

pupils and in a way that avoids 'essentialist' or stereotypical notions of what may 'inspire' black and minority ethnic pupils to take more responsibility for their own education.

Not only are these supposed remedies based on stereotypical notions of African Caribbean pupils' 'inherent' characteristics, they are also located firmly in non-academic areas. Whilst the example of DJ clubs was also discussed as a means of raising self-esteem and promoting personal development, there should be a much more rigorous questioning of the assumptions such strategies are based on. Are these extra-curricular activities based on an understanding that African Caribbean pupils would not engage in other forms of extra-curricular activity that may be more academic-focused and if so what is the evidence for this?

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When discussing their own teaching practice, teachers tended to talk about the way they did not single out pupils from specific ethnic groups and treated all pupils as individuals. However, in their description of good practice in school, many of the initiatives teachers spoke about actually did target specific groups of pupils based on their ethnicity and did not relate to mainstream and teaching and learning strategies of the school.

Whilst teachers and schools do retain a degree of autonomy in the initiatives that they use to close the equality gap, the LEA can offer clear guidelines that relate to the priorities of NRF spending to close the equality gap. The first step in such a process must involve schools and the LEA deconstructing the thinking that currently underlies such approaches to race equality.

### ***The Limits of Multiculturalism***

In many ways the LEA has a 'multicultural' approach to closing the equality gap, with separate action plans for pupils from different ethnic groups – an Asian Heritage Achievement Action Plan and an African Caribbean Achievement Action Plan. A growing number of theorists are criticising multicultural approaches to equality practice. Whilst multiculturalism at first glance might seem a sensitive response to the needs of BME communities, it can actually serve to reinforce difference at the expense of inclusion and justice, addressing ethnicity as a root cause of under-achievement rather than addressing *inequality* and *discrimination* and taking action where this is found to exist.

Such an approach is at least partially responsible for holding back progress on equality in Birmingham, based as it is on an assumption that people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds are in some way *essentially different* from 'British' people. Thus, multiculturalism – and its focus on ethnic and/or cultural difference – has led to a city of competing cultures where 'communities' and the

organisations that are said to somehow represent them jostle for position and resources at the expense of others, their ethnic or cultural difference a key lever in staking out a claim for special measures and the resources to make these possible. To many, the development of special action plans for different ethnic groups seems a logical response. However it is also counter-productive, creating an environment of competing 'difference', of parallel lives, where ethnicity is the key determinant of need, this means that cohesion and equality within and across communities is eroded.

We have seen different policies for different ethnic groups in Birmingham since the 1980s and whilst there may have been an overall increase in attainment for all groups in the intervening period the city is still experiencing an equality gap, particularly with regard to core subject attainment at GCSE. Warren and Gillborn have described how approaches to closing the attainment gap in Birmingham are shaped by a mixture of national and local initiatives and prevailing policy directions etc. Clearly, another important factor – and a persisting one – is the understanding of 'race' equality that informs both educational strategies and those implementing them.

### ***Good practice – not 'reductionism'***

Good practice is useful only if education professionals understand and are able to reflect on the reasons for specific initiatives being implemented. Whilst teachers do need to understand and respect differences among people, this is **not** to say that pupils should be reduced to a set of 'racial characteristics'. There are many examples of good practice highlighting teachers' cultural sensitivity and awareness of pupils' cultural backgrounds.

Teachers' behaviour, attitudes and competence can contribute to their ability to deliver equality strategies (this is explored in the next section). However teachers are participants in a much bigger and more complex institutional system and good practice involves a rigorous examination of this system. The attainment gap cannot be narrowed simply by placing an expectation upon individual teachers that they will examine – and if needs be change – their own personal attitudes. Closing the attainment gap also requires a focus on the **sources** of inequality, on educational structures, institutions and decision-making processes.

### 3.3 The Role of Teacher Training

In order to explore education professionals' training needs – and also as a means of developing a clearer understanding of their priorities and outlook – we examined the role played by teacher training. In particular, we wanted to look at the levels of *confidence* that teacher training inspires and at the *competences* gained.

Teachers – newly qualified (NQTs) and more experience teachers – were asked whether they felt confident dealing with equalities issues, and where they gained their confidence and competence from in this regard. Teacher trainers and other education professionals were also asked similar questions about teachers.

We described the terms used as follows:

**Competence** refers to a set of skills; the ability to do a job. 'Competence' or 'competences' is a concept gaining currency in management circles and with increasing frequency is now being used to describe skills and abilities, which can assist organisations or individuals to 'manage' the 'race' equality agenda. This is a relatively new departure as it is only in recent years that the idea of a set of identifiable 'race' equality 'competences' – that can be checked, measured and improved upon – has come to the fore.

**Confidence** on the other hand, confidence describes how people feel about carrying out particular tasks and comments more on whether they feel they have acquired (or been given) the skills, expertise or information required for the job in hand. It may involve less tangible factors, such as emotion, and is often seen as more subjective.

#### ***Views of respondents***

The most important point to be made is that **no teachers we interviewed explored in any detailed way the difference between confidence and competence**. Teachers tended to refer to their confidence and the way they felt about the issue of 'race' equality, rather than whether they had the formal skills necessary to 'do' it or recognise it. The emphasis was on 'race' equality as an *attitude*, a 'mind set'. One teacher, for example, described their confidence as coming from "inherent belief". This might suggest that teachers do not understand 'race' equality as a competence/skill in the same objective sense that one might see child protection, for example, although both are mandatory legal requirements for all educational institutions. The inference is clear: by identifying 'race' equality with personal *confidence* rather than competence, there is a tendency to perpetuate the view that 'race' equality is essentially

attitudinal, rather than a learned skill.

A lack of confidence and competence was echoed in the views of one LEA adviser who is involved in the induction of NQTs in the city. This adviser noted:

*They come out of college with extremely limited knowledge, where the training hasn't really dealt with anything fundamental like their own values on race equality. The state that I find NQTs in is, I wouldn't even say a basic understanding, it's very limited understanding or none at all.*

It is significant too that few if any of the teachers we interviewed referred to the role of teacher training in developing their personal confidence. It is apparent that teachers tend to value experience gained 'on the job' over training. This seems equally true of both experienced and newly qualified teachers.

Is this because there is something different about 'race' equality – an aspect that can't be taught? Is there a difference between race equality and mandatory elements of teacher training such as child protection and literacy strategies? While it might be argued that 'race' equality is contentious and its surrounding theoretical landscape prone to rapid change, these are arguments that might equally be made of teaching and learning theories and child psychology, to cite just a couple of examples. These too are constantly changing, but the vast majority of teachers follow new theoretical developments in these areas as a *prerequisite for professional and personal development*.

But still the idea persists that 'race' equality is something better gained through experience than training. In order to understand the reasons for this we spoke to ITT providers and analysed policy documents offering guidelines and standards regarding the kind of skills teachers should have in order to gain 'qualified teacher' status. We spoke in particular to NQTs who had a more recent memory of ITT. They offered an insight into the ITT process and in some cases kindly volunteered course work on 'race' equality for us to look at.

ITT providers echoed some of the views of teachers and in some degree confirmed that 'race' equality is not something that teachers receive consistent or substantial training in. They identified a number of reasons for this:

■ **Time-** There is not enough time to pursue 'race' equality. Teacher trainees spend longer in schools and as a result the curriculum has had to be 'squeezed' to accommodate this change of focus.

■ **Uncomfortable issue-** 'Race' equality is still seen as a 'hot potato' in some ITT establishments. One interviewee, a teacher trainer, reported being passed from colleague to colleague in her institution in an attempt to talk to somebody about the issue. We conducted a telephone interview and had to cut the

conversation short on two occasions because the interviewee felt uncomfortable talking about 'race' equality, unless in private (there were other colleagues in the room the interviewee was using). The interviewee said the main reason for this discomfort was the **blame culture** that has grown up around 'race' equality: teachers are afraid of being labelled as "unable to manage equality issues".

It should go without saying that we need to encourage a climate in which 'race', 'race' equality and discrimination can be discussed constructively and reflected upon free from fear of threat, blame or stigma.

■ **'Race' equality is a specialist knowledge only needed in specific circumstances** - The same interviewee suggested that 'race' equality is seen as specialist knowledge that can be put off until the circumstances arise in which it may be needed: "we will cross that bridge when we come to it." There seems to be a view that if teachers are unlikely to have a large proportion of black and minority ethnic pupils in their classrooms, then an understanding of 'race' equality practice is less important than other aspects of being a good teacher. **This is a view that should be challenged and it is extraordinary that it should be held within ITT establishments.**

■ **Terminology** - The terminology used to cover issues of 'race' equality and racism is deemed to be something that prevents teachers from receiving consistent or substantial training on 'race' equality. One teacher trainer noted that the preferred term is now 'inclusion', with lectures on 'inclusion' focused "more on how to help youngsters with language support issues and the effect of race/ gender on learning (with a focus on African Caribbean boys and exclusion)". This was all covered in a half day of a PGCE course. In discussion with NQTs about the content of their courses about 'race' equality, they tended to refer predominantly to similar issues, and in particular issues for pupils that have English as an Additional Language (EAL).

One teacher suggested that referring to these issues as 'inclusion' helped to 'defuse' what are seen as uncomfortable, difficult issues of racism: "racism is a smaller issue within the more encompassing issue of inclusion which has a higher priority". This is not to say, however, that such terminology is unchallenged in all courses. One module highlighted by teacher trainers in one establishment did just this. A course called 'education, equality and identity' explores the validity of terms like 'race' and the impact of the educational system and its values on pupils. Staff felt able to offer this module because it constituted part of a 4 year Bachelor of Education degree, noting that a whole module like this would not be possible in a one year PGCE course. However, even within the Bachelor of Education degree, teacher trainers suggested they could "chart the marginalisations" of race equality since 1995, suggesting that previously 'equality of opportunity' would certainly have comprised one and possibly two modules. They noted that they were only able to offer the current

module on 'education, equality and identity', because it fits in with education benchmarks in other non-ITT areas.

■ **QTS Standards** - QTS standards are seen to limit room for 'race' equality training. Whilst teacher trainers acknowledged the existence of 'inclusion' issues in the QTS standards – “standards do absolutely signal a shift towards inclusive themes” – they noted the limited attention paid to these issues in the overall scheme of the standards. One interviewee suggested that there are only two clear statements in the whole QTS standard about 'race' equality and one teacher trainer noted that in the 'teaching and management' strand of the document, a statement about inclusion comes right at the end of the standards, which was seen as significant. The interviewee also noted that in the 'professional values and practice' strand of the document, however, it was the opening statement that relates more closely to 'race' equality.

One interviewee – a Teacher Training Agency (TTA) worker responsible for helping ITT establishments to implement the QTS standards in relation to inclusion – revealed a slightly different view. This interviewee acknowledged that there would be differences between different ITT establishments' ability to meet the standards with regard to inclusion, mentioning the differences, which exist between SCITTs and more traditional higher education establishments. The interviewee also accepted that not all teachers would be able to do all aspects of inclusion in their training, but suggested that teacher trainees should be able to demonstrate that they could deal with these issues if they had to and that this should be linked more explicitly to ITT establishments' continuing funding. The TTA is developing a Professional Resource Network to help teacher trainees and ITT providers to meet the standards with regard to inclusion.

This view seems to reflect a realism on the part of the TTA about ITT establishments' ability to meet all of the QTS standards. But the notion that 'race' equality is a “bridge that can be crossed when we come to it” is clearly unacceptable and a **detailed study needs to be done to determine whether the QTS standards can be used to inform 'race' equality training.**

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This is obviously not just a question of having the right standards in place. Irrespective of whether the standards are there or not, there needs to be a **will** to use them. A link adviser we spoke to suggested that teacher training establishments tended to see QTS standards and 'race' equality as mutually exclusive

*[They] seem to see these things as mutually exclusive, they're at opposite ends of the spectrum, but I see them as complimentary. It requires us to be very creative in our approach, it's all part and parcel of what good teaching is about. To me, QTS standards, proper QTS standards would be the type of standards that would equip a new teacher with the skills to be empathetic with pupils of different cultures and backgrounds.*

The same interviewee implied that more experienced teachers may be no different from NQTs in their understanding of 'race' equality

*The teacher training has always been lacking, so teachers who are in service at the moment will also be ill prepared and unskilled in relative terms. Not able to use the appropriate skills to meet the needs of our population today, so there's a strong case there for there to be in-service training within schools that deal with race equality matters. To some degree that is being done in Birmingham, but we could do more of it.*

It is not just teachers who see 'on the job' experience as important in developing an awareness of 'race' equality. Teacher trainers too value the experience that trainees gain in school placements. Classroom experience, one remarked, helps explode "some of the myths that young people come to us with", especially, for trainees whose upbringing has been a very 'white' experience. Trainees exposed to classrooms with higher numbers of black and minority ethnic students are better able to confront some of the stereotypes they may previously have held about people from different ethnic groups, explained our interviewee.

Such contact is seen as vital in developing a critical understanding of 'race' equality. But it is not sufficient in itself and should be accompanied by a forum where issues arising from trainees' placements can be discussed and examined. One newly qualified teacher noted that many fellow trainees encountered issues that they would have liked to discuss during ITT in relation to 'race' and 'race' equality, but found there was no appropriate 'space' in which to discuss these issues in a consistent way. She referred to one fellow trainee that had experienced racial harassment in a school, but did not feel comfortable in sharing that with other trainees in a lecture hall of 100 people.

There is, however, a further missing component. Teacher trainers suggested that trainees also require a sufficient *command* of the language necessary for discussing 'race' equality:

*Students have difficulty in command of the language to do with equality issues, anti-racist strategies, it is exactly that point that you were making last year (referring to colleague) about just decoding language and language that you use so I think there are a number of students who are frightened to discuss the concept of what it means to be 'black', what 'mixed race' might mean – is it acceptable, is there a problem with that term...*

Personal experience, contact with people from different backgrounds and wider socialisation, then, all have an impact on teachers' views regarding and confidence in dealing with 'race' and 'race' equality issues. **But being able to discuss and critically reflect upon one's own views, language and practice with regard to 'race' equality does not come from personal experience alone: it is an ability or competence that is learnt or developed over time.**

And yet, it was evident in a number of our interviews that such a view runs counter to that held by some teachers, where repeatedly we found confidence and competence in 'race' equality issues was thought to derive almost entirely from personal, lived experience. One teacher from a BME background said: "when you look at the make-up of our senior management team you will see we are very confident. I can genuinely say that I do not have a problem. A black child cannot say to me that I'm being racist, they can't say that to...the head, because his partner is black. So we've all come from that background, we've been brought up in that environment where we've had nothing but race equality."

The same teacher suggested that an African Caribbean mentor's role in the school was especially valuable because of the way he could 'relate' to African Caribbean pupils. But this train of thought was not pursued to its logical conclusion: what is stopping *all* teachers relating to their pupils, irrespective of ethnicity? Does this suggest that a teacher's ethnic background influences their ability to teach pupils from other ethnic backgrounds? Such issues cannot be lightly dismissed, and yet intellectual 'space' to consider them – whether in the school or the teacher-training establishment – is lacking.

There are also issues that need to be dealt with regarding the recruitment and retention of BME teachers and teacher trainees in ITT. A recent report suggests that in 2002 the total number of BME teachers in England was 2.4% of all teachers.

While the TTA is working nation-wide to recruit more teachers from BME backgrounds, ensuring that the workforce is 'representative' does not mean that newly qualified and more experienced teachers will automatically possess the competence to deliver on 'race' equality. Teachers who have themselves had some direct experience of suffering racism may well be well-placed to recognise it in schools, but this emphasis on personal experience is not a replacement for 'race' equality practice based on structured learning and **competence** and BASS link advisers have a central role to play in this. One link adviser interviewee told us:

*What we have, I guess Birmingham is no different from anywhere else in the country, is a service that is aware of the issues but not en-skilled to address those issues in schools and to answer the needs of schools and to lead schools, challenge schools, support schools in delivery... you're going to have to have confident, competent advisers in that area before*

*you can then promote training for teachers because the idea would be for BASS staff to train the teachers.*

### 3.4 Evaluation: Why We Don't Know What Works

The two previous sections have established that a critical understanding of 'race' equality can help teachers to identify good practice and to determine the appropriateness of particular strategies aimed at closing the equality gap. The evaluation of existing strategies by monitoring exam results of different pupils, for example, plays a crucial role. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act (RRAA) identifies the **evaluation of attainment data in relation to ethnicity** as a clearly identified **specific duty** for schools. Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) guidance also advocates the role that OFSTED and the LEA can play in measuring progress in 'race' equality.

Before exploring what is happening in schools, we should first map the role that the LEA and OFSTED have played in evaluating 'race' equality performance in Birmingham.

*What information is collected regarding 'race' equality performance?*

The LEA uses quantitative statistical data to identify where schools are at in terms of the performance of black and minority ethnic pupils. If it notices that a school has certain groups that are noticeably underachieving, it will attempt to address this problem by contacting the school and offering advice and support. BASS also examines OFSTED schools reports to identify inclusion issues that a school may need assistance with.

The LEA also uses qualitative data. To understand how the LEA approaches evaluation of good practice in this sense, we undertook a qualitative content analysis of an LEA questionnaire sent to all schools in Birmingham. The questionnaire is also supplemented with visits to schools, but unfortunately we were unable to talk to link advisers about what was discussed in these instances. Consequently, the detail of our analysis focuses on the questionnaire itself.

The questionnaire represents a citywide attempt by the LEA to collect information about the success of initiatives to close the equality gap with a view to identifying good practice that might be shared with other schools. It is also being used to identify professional development needs of teachers.

The questionnaire is divided into three main sections: 'achievement of minority ethnic pupils'; 'deployment of ethnic minority achievement grants (EMAG)'; and 'implementation of the Race Relations Amendment Act (RRAA)'.

With regard to funding, the questionnaire does not explore in a comprehensive manner the way the EMAG fund is actually used in the school. From the information collected it would be difficult to establish not only the deployment of

resources, but also the *outcome* of that funding (for example how has the deployment of a new teacher directly improved pupil performance?). The NRF education theme panel has been grappling with similar issues and has identified the need for NRF funded projects to clearly identify their outcomes and the way they impact on floor targets.

The questionnaire does not enable evaluation of the way EMAG initiatives link with mainstream practice. In this sense, initiatives to close the equality gap are seen as 'additional'. Question 13 asks "Does the school employ staff from other funding sources to provide targeted support for ethnic minority pupils?" Does this imply that if schools do not receive additional support they cannot help BME pupils? The emphasis in this section is also on teaching materials rather than teaching practice/training. This indicates that teaching using multicultural material is helpful, but there is no exploration of the *purpose* of this teaching, or whether it is what teachers should actually be doing.

The third section of the questionnaire - about implementation of the RRAA does refer to some of the specific duties under the Act. However, the spirit of the Act and the general duty are in many ways equated with specific duties such as the school's 'race' equality policy and components of this (school development plan, teaching and learning policy). One could argue that the existence of these documents in and of themselves means very little when trying to judge the quality of the school's response to the RRAA. A comprehensive evaluation should be more explicit about the ingredients of the RRAA, moving schools closer to the general duty and the 'spirit' of the Act.

Obviously this is only one example of an attempt to evaluate good practice in closing the equality gap, but nonetheless it is an important attempt to fill some of the gaps in knowledge in Birmingham. There are, however, inconsistencies within the questionnaire that limit the scope for reflection on the part of teachers and also the ability for the LEA to understand the impact of 'race' equality initiatives. These limitations suggest the prevalence of a 'multicultural' interpretation of 'race' equality – in which the emphasis is on addressing the 'problems' or specific 'needs' of particular ethnic groups by special measures rather than broad equality practice that is consistent throughout the mainstream of a school's provision.

There is therefore a danger that implementation of the RRAA becomes literally a 'tick box' exercise, where schools either have a 'race' equality scheme – tick – or they don't, they either ethnically monitor pupil performance – tick – or they don't. While space is allocated to comment on this information, there appears to be no sustained attempt to interrogate or analyse these outcomes.

When considering the LEA's use of research and audit tools to monitor 'race' equality, one interviewee suggested that the questions advisers ask need modification, and that the *way in which* schools are monitored is crucial:

*I don't think having the proper audit tool is the issue, as I said before audit tools are in existence, it's having people confident enough to use the audit tools. It's having advisors within the authority confident enough to say to a school, well that's interesting, you put this answer down in the audit, but where's the evidence? You say that you did a project a year ago but is that real evidence? Because you did a one off event, where did it impact on the pupil's learning? Where's the evidence in their current attainment? How's it raised teachers' awareness and confidence in dealing with race equality issues?*

Information from the *Achievement for All* Project will be available in 2004. It will be interesting to see how this is fed back to schools and how it informs LEA practice. Gillborn and Warren, for example, have identified the BASS link advisers' role as crucial in managing knowledge about good practice in closing the equality gap. Advisers should have the competence – and for this they will require professional development – to identify evidence that indicates anti-discriminatory practice in schools, to share this with teachers and to push them to question their approaches to 'race' equality.

## **OFSTED**

OFSTED also plays a role in the evaluation of 'race' equality in schools. A report by the CRE in 2000 criticised OFSTED for its failure to inspect and identify the effects of racism in the education system. Acknowledgement from OFSTED that inspectors needed racial awareness training was accompanied by an amended framework for inspectors and an additional handbook was produced relating specifically to inclusion.

An analysis of the OFSTED "inspecting schools framework" reveals that there are some gaps/inconsistencies in the framework relating to how the implementation of good practice is measured. However, there are also some strong messages about the schools' analysis and use of data about the attainment of pupils from different ethnic groups. The handbook suggests that aspects of 'race' equality are to be evaluated (to varying degrees) in a number of areas, including effectiveness of teaching and learning, inclusiveness in the curriculum, governance and leadership of the school etc.

To understand the relevance of this evaluation with regard to 'race' equality, and to understand its relevance to Birmingham schools, we compared the framework's 'race' equality and inclusion guidelines to actual OFSTED reports. These reports were those conducted post-September 2003 when the new framework came into use (6 schools in all after this date). The content of these reports indicates a varying and sometimes limited reference to issues of inclusion and 'race' equality.

All the reports referred to the ethnic profile of schools' pupil population. Reports were also strong in describing 'race' equality in relation to the development of pupils' attributes, values and personal qualities. The reports referred to space for spiritual and moral development, but there was less reference to how issues of **racial harassment** were dealt with. In one of the reports, for example, a teacher is quoted as stating that no real system is in place to deal with racial harassment and yet this view is not picked up on or questioned.

With regard to teaching and learning strategies and the 'extent to which teachers promote equality', the OFSTED reports have much less to say directly relating to 'race' equality. Examples of actions cited by inspectors in this section do not refer in any substantive way to specific teaching and learning styles. There are a number of examples of 'celebrating diversity' or of pupils' 'cultural development' – one report quoted a coach trip to the seaside for African Caribbean pupils and discussed how communities can help the school to raise attainment – but there is little if any exploration of teaching strategies indicative of an *active promotion of equality* throughout the mainstream of schools' provision.

With regard to governance, the reports exhibit very few references to governors' understanding of inclusion and scant reference to the inclusiveness of the governing body.

Similarly the section about leadership does not refer much to senior management's role in 'running an equitable and inclusive school'. Evaluation tends to be framed in terms of management's role in general improvement, inspiration and motivation. While there are some references to management providing leadership that ensures consistency of approach and appropriately challenges all groups of students, there is little mention of **mainstreaming** 'race' equality or of the role played in the overall improvement plan and performance management of the school by of implementation of the RRAA.

There is a growing voice amongst teachers that the role of OFSTED is misplaced – that as a structure it absorbs money that could be spent on improving schools and that it is more for parents' benefit than for teachers. Birmingham teachers are equally vocal in this view. However, given that OFSTED seems here to stay, the LEA should focus its efforts on using OFSTED to evaluate schools' ability to meet the duties of the RRAA. The LEA and OFSTED have an opportunity to work together as partners to effectively evaluate the role that 'race' equality is playing in Birmingham schools. One link adviser noted in relation to the OFSTED framework:

*We don't have to pluck the answers from the air, there are already tools that we can use, that specifically inform this process, so people don't have to guess. There are other audit tools around that we can use, we*

*can either use one of the range that are there or create an amalgam based on best aspects from each of those audit tools for the Birmingham context. At the same time, your advice service has got to be confident and competent enough to be able to use that audit tool, and that's what we're looking at, at the moment. Being able to use equipment, because it is a tool.*

As the above comment reinforces, having an appropriate audit tool, such as the OFSTED framework, is not enough in itself. OFSTED inspectors and link advisers need to have the confidence and competence to use the tool in a way that measures progress of the 'race' equality agenda.

### **Teachers' views**

We asked teachers two questions about evaluation of the attainment of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds:

'What information is collected regarding the attainment of pupils from different ethnic groups?'

And 'What is done with that information?'

In answer to the first question, most teachers indicated that they would look at performance data in relation to particular students, rather than in relation to students from certain ethnic groups.

*Once they've done their GCSEs we do the breakdown by gender, by ethnicity, what they got – I'm probably going to go totally against the trend here – for us within the department, the biggest thing is, this is a pupil, we want them to get the best, so we don't actually pay much attention to what race they are and what gender they are...It's individuals, and we're looking for them to progress and to reach their potential, and so a lot of the time we don't do statistical analysis and say this group is failing, [or] this child is failing because of various characteristics, or [because of] its home-life or its lack of organisation, so that's what we need to tackle.*

However this particular teacher did not seem to be going against the trend: these were views reflected in the other teachers' responses to this question. Interestingly two teachers from the same school as the teacher quoted above suggested that monitoring attainment in relation to ethnicity did inform their practice. One teacher noted, "Well we do, I mean I analyse all our GCSE results by ethnicity, for the past 4 years I have broken it down".

This raises interesting questions as to who is responsible for or capable of using statistical analysis as a performance management tool in closing the

equality gap. The teacher quoted above conducting this type of analysis was a deputy head. In this school the movement of information seemed to be 'bottom up' in many respects. A newly qualified teacher explained with regard to evaluative information:

*It's for me personally if it's an informal thing, if it is a course work piece, then that is something that my head of department has access to, but it is mainly for me to evaluate. But if there is a concern that I have, if I think that someone is not meeting their potential, or not improving, then I talk to my head of department, about how to.*

One Head of Department in this school indicated they might not be in the best place to see across subjects in a "global sense" whether one or several children were failing from similar ethnic backgrounds. This teacher suggested that

*That is then something that would probably be picked up by head of year, and then you would go and say, look we've got these children that are failing not just in one area, but in several areas, and then the school has in place all sorts of strategies to try and deal with that... so we've got people like... the learning mentor. There's also individual subject mentors, so it gets picked up there really*

This would indicate that certain people are better placed or have better access to information about attainment in relation to ethnicity in this school. School Improvement Groups (SIGs) were suggested as places where this kind of information might inform performance management. However an unequal distribution of information about closing the attainment gap can result in inconsistency of approach. One link adviser noted that when he goes into schools

*The problem I see is inconsistency, where you've got some members of staff who are committed and understand the issues, being very proactive, but its not shared with other colleagues, not supported by senior management, not validated by the head, so it has relatively little impact*

Interviews also reflected differential interpretations of what constituted 'formal' and 'informal' evaluative information. Examples of 'formal evaluation' included analysis of GCSE results, assessment in GCSE courses of public speaking and marking of homework. 'Informal' methods of evaluation included areas of school life such as pupil engagement, participation, getting coursework in on time, pupils coming and asking extra questions and so forth.

There were different approaches to this evaluation – which one would expect given differing teaching styles – but nonetheless there may be a need to further clarify expectations and approaches regarding informal and informal evaluation. A common approach would help teachers to compare improvement

across subjects and in relation to ethnicity. Sharing of evaluative information across subjects and at different levels of the school management structure needs to be encouraged. To do this would require clear guidelines regarding:

The information to be collected (both informal and informal)

How it is shared

And how it is to be used to inform professional development, teaching strategies, change management and school improvement.

**BASS link advisers and the LEA have a clear vantage point from which to encourage this knowledge management procedure.**

\*

In our interviews with pupils we asked about student evaluation of teacher performance. Warren and Gillborn talk about what it is to be a 'good' teacher. However, the findings of our research suggests that the evaluation of teaching practice by pupils themselves is more commonly limited to administrative issues such as student council decisions that influence the distribution of new resources. Pupils indicated that there was little opportunity to talk to teachers about their own teaching strategies.

One of our teacher interviewees was keen to demonstrate an innovative approach undertaken in his school to establish ground rules for pupil engagement in the classroom. The approach is based on principles that involve a teacher giving and *receiving* constructive criticism. This ability to reflect on one's own practice is acknowledged as a skill – something that can be learnt and seen as a positive contribution to professional conduct. When we asked teachers about this kind of self-reflection in relation to 'race' equality, it brought an added dimension of sensitivity. Other interviewees have highlighted the 'blame culture' that still exists amongst teachers. Evaluation of teacher performance in relation to many things, but in particular to 'race' equality, is seen as being negative and critical of teachers. **It is vital that a professional climate be established in which the questioning of teacher performance in relation to 'race' equality is no longer seen as stigmatising or taboo.**

The RRAA highlights the importance of professional conduct. Institutional racism, whilst being a systemic thing, also involves seeing organizations as being composed of individuals that contribute to an organisational culture in the delivery of services. This makes a strong case for strengthening training, particularly with regard to the use of more sophisticated evaluation mechanisms to monitor pupil *and* staff performance.

The DFES places great emphasis on the use of evaluation in closing the

equality gap. A DFES consultation document 'Aiming High: Raising the Achievement of Minority Ethnic Pupils' indicates the importance of self-evaluation in schools, emphasising that this should be supported and stimulated by LEAs.

OFSTED inspection also offers an opportunity to compare teachers' self-evaluation of 'race' equality progress with pertinent elements of the OFSTED inspection framework. In order for this to happen, however, schools and the LEA need clear **knowledge management strategies**. Senior management in schools and BASS link advisers need to be able to identify new and creative approaches to 'race' equality that challenge existing practice (this knowledge will come from consistent and sophisticated evaluation). It is then crucial that this knowledge is **shared with colleagues** and that evaluative data is **analysed and used to inform practice**. Teacher and pupil evaluation should encourage innovative ideas, but evaluation should be based on consistent standards (evaluating the effect of both 'formal' and 'informal' approaches to 'race' equality). These consistent standards will make life much easier for BASS link advisers to promote sharing of knowledge within the school and between schools.

If knowledge management is to have any impact on the way schools do business, then it involves making some significant changes in the way schools perceive and use knowledge. It's about 'making knowledge productive'. This will involve creative learning within and between schools. The role of the LEA link advisers is crucial here in creating a learning environment that encourages sharing and dissemination of knowledge.

### 3.5 NRF & the Role of NRF Resources

There are two very clear targets that are used by the City Strategic Partnership (CSP) to guide spending on closing the equality gap:

Raising GCSE levels to above area minimum  
And closing attainment gaps between underachieving groups and city averages.

However, it has not always been clear how NRF-funded project outcomes contribute directly to progress in hitting the floor targets. As the most recent City Pride review of NRF spend indicates, there needs to be a **clear rationale guiding the use of NRF resources**.

**Our research has identified that action to address the attainment gap in schools – and indeed the broader equalities agenda – requires a level of clear strategic direction from the LEA, which is currently lacking.** It also indicates that initiatives to close the attainment gap should be funded by the NRF if – and only if – they target **mainstream teaching and learning** and they exhibit **anti-discriminatory practice**.

Such an approach would be entirely in keeping with national guidance on the use of NRF resources, which similarly emphasises effecting improvement in **mainstream services**. The ‘Special Grant Report (No. 111), ODPM’, specifies the conditions under which grants will be paid during 2003/2004. In Annex B (paragraph 6) it stipulates

*The NRF is intended as time-limited funding to ‘kick-start’ more effective, long term targeting of mainstream resources to tackle deprivation in the most deprived areas. It is therefore strongly encouraged, where service quality should be improved, that NRF funding should be devoted to the sustainable improvement of mainstream services, provided that the funding benefits the most deprived areas.*

In previous years, central and ward-based NRF spend aimed at closing the equality gap has favoured initiatives that take place outside of mainstream teaching and learning provision in schools. Our research has shown that these projects have not directly addressed the systemic discrimination that takes place day in, day out in schools. A recent attempt by the CSP to compile a ‘Best Practice Project Guide’ illustrates this point perfectly. The project held up as best practice in closing the equality gap is **‘out of hours learning’**. Although the central problem is that pupils, teachers and LEA workers are struggling to address ‘race’ equality during ‘in hours’ learning in Birmingham’s schools, the knee-jerk response is to try and address this by special, add-on provision that is **specifically out-of-the-mainstream**. This is symptomatic of attempts to address

equality in a wide range of service provision in the city.

The CSP is well aware of the challenge of developing a clear rationale to guide NRF spend. This report offers some key principles that can be used to develop this kind of rationale with regard to 'race' equality and closing the equality gap. We have highlighted some of the pitfalls to typical add-on approaches to 'race' equality that are too often funded by both central and ward level NRF spend.

The recommendations in the next section relate firmly to the mainstream. These recommendations are particularly pertinent given Birmingham's gradual devolution and localisation of services. An essential element of Neighbourhood Renewal is the participation of local communities in setting priorities for improving mainstream services; this is why a significant proportion of resources has been led by wards. To maintain a consistent and sustainable approach to closing the equality gap in all wards of the city, guidance for schools about how they apply NRF resources should clearly prioritise anti-discriminatory practice and measures that relate directly to mainstream teaching and learning.

### **'Commissioning' – not project-led**

In a similar way, there is a strong argument to support the use of a commissioning model in making decisions about whether or not projects are funded (at Theme Panel, district and ward level). Whilst service level agreements between the funder and the schools bidding for funding already exist, these are not rigorously monitored, nor do they contain clear guidelines that stipulate anti-discriminatory practice. Clear guidelines about what should – or more importantly should *not* – be funded would move the city closer to a coherent rationale to guide NRF spend.

BASS has a central role to play here, in that it could quite easily provide district and ward committees with up-to-date information about the strengths and weaknesses of good practice in closing the equality gap, with particular emphasis being placed on mainstream teaching and anti-discriminatory practice.

Central to this approach is a willingness to learn from – and where necessary put aside – approaches that have not made a visible impact on closing the equality gap in the past. This requires education professionals who are confident enough to question the system they work within and competent enough to do something about it. And, as many of our interviewees reinforced, it requires a climate in which 'race' and 'race' equality practice can be constructively discussed without fear of stigmatisation or 'blame'. Writing recently in the Guardian, John Crace said: "Racism is one of the last taboos of the education system. Ask to talk to a head about drugs, sex or violence in school and you'll be given chapter and verse. But ask to talk about racism in schools in flashpoint areas and the phone line goes cold. Not one of the head

teachers we approached even returned our call.” Clearly, this is not a climate in which racism, inequality, or the rise of far right politics can successfully be countered.

The LEA has a strong relationship with its schools, but it cannot be too prescriptive, and needs to encourage schools to pursue ‘race’ equality and to use the information available. Not so long ago, Birmingham’s Head of Education made it a priority for schools to understand the importance of ‘school improvement’. Now in Birmingham schools, the message of ‘school improvement’ saturates school policy and senior management meetings. The head of the LEA and those making decisions about NRF spend are in a position to send a similar message to schools about ‘race’ equality. By saturating communication channels to schools with the central importance of anti-discriminatory practice and its connection to mainstream teaching and learning, schools will see ‘race’ equality as a critical element of professional conduct and something that the LEA values and promotes at the highest level.

## 4.0 Conclusions & Recommendations

### 4.1 Conclusions

This report has emphasised the need for developmental work with education staff. It has also underlined the importance of funding initiatives that move away from 'add-on' and often 'activity-based' measures to those that **clearly show an impact in improving mainstream teaching and learning practice.**

It also highlights the need for a more consistent, structured and competency-based approach to developing equalities practice and skills. A clear intention must be signaled at all levels of the education system to move equalities onto a structured **professional development** footing and away from the 'personal' and 'attitudinal' emphasis it currently has amongst teachers and ITT trainers.

However more than this, the research signals a clear need for much greater strategic leadership across the system and at all levels in matters of equality, anti-discrimination and duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act. These are not, as things currently stand, securely embedded in the mainstream of educational provision.

### 4.2 Recommendations

Our recommendations are split into three categories:

- (i) Recommendations regarding overall leadership and strategic direction in 'race' equality and anti-discriminatory practice in education
- (ii) Recommendations regarding measures that might appropriately be resourced from central funding
- (iii) And measures that might appropriately be resourced via Ward-based funding.

#### *(i) Overall leadership & strategic direction*

- 1) In order to address the clear need for greater and more effective leadership on 'race' equality and anti-discriminatory practice in Birmingham's education system, the LEA should:

establish a clear, well publicised and high profile strategic plan designed for pupils from **all ethnic groups** for driving equalities **and especially**

**duties under the RRAA** into the mainstream of school provision;

and should liaise as a matter of urgency with ITT providers in Birmingham to establish the importance of, and clear strategic direction for, incorporating 'race' equality into mainstream teacher training.

- 2) Clear guidelines are also urgently required to dramatically improve how 'race' equality information/intelligence is shared within and between schools and the role that the LEA plays in facilitating this flow of information.

**(ii) Central funding**

- 1) Clear 'information packages' for wards and districts to use in the process of commissioning NRF activities should be developed. These 'information packages' should include local data about attainment statistics and a city-wide 'best buys' guide that identifies mainstream anti-discriminatory approaches to closing the equality gap. Any good practice propositions should be contextualised to take account of the changing demography of Birmingham and the issues of disadvantage that this entails. Good practice that is produced at a national level – which can refer to 'add-on' responses to 'race' equality – may not necessarily be effective in Birmingham where we have a BME school-age population that is quickly becoming the majority. Training for decision-makers about how to use this information should be bought at a ward level.
- 2) BASS link advisers should be supported to develop their confidence and to improve their knowledge and competence in progressing and evaluating the **mainstreaming** of 'race' equality practice in schools.
- 3) An audit tool should be developed by BASS, OFSTED, and other people with relevant expertise, that can assist in mapping formal and informal approaches to closing the equality gap and measuring progress in schools. This may utilise elements of existing tools, such as OFSTED's inspection framework. (It may also present an opportunity for building on the work carried out by Gillborn and Warren.)

Auditing should identify anti-discriminatory initiatives that contribute towards mainstream teaching and learning practice and should ensure consistency of inter-school evaluation.

The audit tool should be used by link advisers in their work with schools and by teachers in their self-evaluation. This would encourage the idea that there are skills and knowledge needed in terms of teacher performance in relation to 'race' equality and that

these can be learnt – and weaknesses addressed – as part of a structured developmental process.

The role of link advisers is crucial in this process. Evaluation of progress needs to be complemented by advice and guidance. This would involve one-to-one work with teachers but could also include resource packs, for teachers, that tackle key issues – such as what ‘race’ is and teachers’ responsibilities in relation to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act.

- 4) NRF should consider contributing funding towards an ITT pilot course aimed at building the competence of trainees in dealing with equalities in schools. The course would encourage self-reflection and evaluation in relation to ‘race’ equality. An effort would be made to give trainees access to placements that challenge their views on ‘race’ equality.
- 5) The LEA should commission a detailed study to examine whether existing QTS standards can be used to measure competence in ‘race’ equality in initial teacher training establishments. This work would build on the work of the Teacher Training Agency Professional Resource Network.

**(iii) *Ward Funding***

- 1) Cross-theme initiatives that relate not only to education but also to other key outcomes such as employment and the environment should be developed and resourced. Particular attention should be paid to linkages between ‘socially patterned’ core subject attainment by pupils and the wider issues of basic skills and employment.
- 2) Provision should be made for the training and development of Ward Support Officers, District Support Officers and other relevant stakeholders in ‘race’ equality, the use and analysis of educational attainment information, and the use of the NRF Theme Panel’s guidance about ‘best spends’ on closing the equality gap.
- 3) There should be targeted resources for voluntary organisations supporting pupils in **academic** areas of school development in core subjects in years 8, 9 and 10 of secondary school (this might include pump-priming for homework clubs).
- 4) Resources should be made available to enable development of guidelines that will help parents understand information about the examination process, which exams their children will be taking and the differences between course work/ examination work.

- 5) Creation of 'Teaching Awards' at a ward-level that recognise good practice in schools, **as voted for by pupils**. Lessons about exemplary practice of particular teachers can be shared within and between schools.

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See table 1, page 13

Lists of Good Practice can be found in a number of LEA documents, for example see Appendix 1 in *African Caribbean Achievement Action Plan*, Birmingham City Council, 2004. There is also a plethora of national guidance, see for example the DFES' Consultation document *Aiming High*, DFES, London, 2003. See also *Removing the Barriers*, DFES, London, 2000.

See Gillborn, D., Warren, S., *Race Equality and Education in Birmingham*, Education Policy Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London, 2003, p. 44. The authors note that despite a clear focus of attention and resources on minority ethnic attainment by the LEA, there still remain mixed messages about the co-ordination of different delivery mechanisms and the effectiveness of those initiatives.

For a critical interpretation of this strategic approach see Gillborn, D., Warren, S., op. cit. pp. 37-54.

See Learning and Culture-Birmingham City, *Birmingham Education Plan 2004-2009*, March 2004.

Gillborn, D., Warren, S., op. cit.

These include for example Birmingham City Council *Local Education Standards Strategy (LESS) 2002-2007*, March 2002 and Birmingham City Council, *Best Value Performance 2002-2003*, 2002.

See Birmingham City Council, *Raising the achievement of pupils most at risk of underachieving (extract from a report to Birmingham City Council Education and Arts Overview and Scrutiny Committee)*, January 2003.

See for example Gunter, M., *An evaluation of impact of EDP Priority 4 (Activities 4 and 5) on raising the achievement of pupils at risk of underachieving on a cross-section of Birmingham Secondary Schools*, University of Birmingham/ BASS, 2001. Note also that results from the *Achievement for All* project will be published by BASS in 2004 – see page 31 of this report.

For an extreme example of this, see *Bishop-Black Children Fail for Lack of Discipline* in 'The Birmingham Post', March 31<sup>st</sup> 2004. This article outlines views about a perceived lack of discipline in homes of African Caribbean people as being the cause of under-attainment at school.

See Birmingham City Council, *Raising the achievement of pupils...*, op. cit.

Accessibility to information about service users and employees in relation to ethnicity is improving in the city. However, although organizations may have this information this does not necessarily mean that it will inform policy development. Including 'race' equality as a key element of mainstream performance management criteria is a challenge that many statutory organizations in the city have yet to face. See *Fact and Friction*, b: RAP, 2003 for some background on these issues.

See Birmingham City Council, *Raising the achievement of pupils...*, op. cit., Appendix 2.

See for example Gillborn, D., Mirza, H., *Educational Inequality: Mapping race, class and gender- A synthesis of research evidence*, OFSTED, London, 2000.

In the third part of this section (evaluation) the role that knowledge management might play in this gap in knowledge is explored.

See *African Caribbean Achievement Action Plan*, Birmingham LEA, 2004 and *Asian Heritage Achievement Action Plan*, Birmingham LEA, 2004.

See for example Malik, K., *Against Multiculturalism*, in 'The New Humanist' Magazine, London, June 2002.

We focused in particular on statutory requirements to achieve qualified teacher status. See Teacher Training Agency, *Qualifying to Teach*, 2003.

Maylor, U. et. al, *Minority Ethnic Teachers in England*, Institute for Policy Studies in Education, London, 2002.

We analysed the 'content' of the questionnaire in some detail, exploring the links between the text of the questionnaire and broader issues that affected the content (such as the LEA's approach to 'race' equality etc.)

Questionnaire sent as part of a BASS project called *Achievement for All: Monitoring Standards for Achievement and Equality of Opportunity in Schools* 2004.

See 'The Limits of Multiculturalism' in section 3.2 of this report

OFSTED, *Inspecting Schools for Racial Equality: OFSTED's Strengths and Weaknesses*, 2000.

OFSTED, *Inspecting Schools: Framework for Inspecting Schools*, OFSTED, 2003. See also *Evaluating*

*Educational Inclusion: Guidance for Inspectors and Schools*, OFSTED, 2000 and *Writing about Educational Inclusion: Guidance for Inspectors on Writing about Educational Inclusion in Inspection Reports*, 2000.

OFSTED, *Inspecting Schools: Framework...* op. cit., p. 36 refers to the extent to which teachers “use assessment to inform their planning and target-setting to meet the needs of individual pupils and groups”.

OFSTED, *Inspecting Schools: Framework...* op. cit., p. 36.

OFSTED, *Inspecting Schools: Framework...* op. cit., p. 41

DFES, *Aiming High: Raising the Achievement of Minority Ethnic Pupils*, 2003.

See Gurteen, D., *Knowledge Management and Creativity* in ‘Journal of Knowledge Management’, Volume 2, Number 1, 1998. Gurteen offers a framework in this article to discuss the way knowledge management can encourage creativity and innovation in an organisation. He sees knowledge management as “an emerging set of principles that govern organizational and business process design, as well as specific processes, applications, and technologies that help knowledge workers dramatically leverage their creativity and ability to deliver business value.”

SQW, *Birmingham Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy: Interim Evaluation 2003*, Cambridge, 2003.

The Annual Report from the NRF Panel for the program 2002-2003 indicates that central spend on closing the equality gap was for the establishment and training of community ward fellows and fellowship program, summer school and curriculum, Saturday and after school sessions, family learning, training residential care workers, learning mentor fellowship, Young Peoples Parliament. This spend of three quarters of a million pounds does not in any clear way relate to the improvement of mainstream teaching and learning provision and in helping mainstream providers (teachers, LEA workers) to develop their confidence and competence in delivering anti-discriminatory practice.

Birmingham CSP, *Birmingham NRF- Best Practice Projects: A Guide*, July 2003.

See Crace, J., *Booted and suited* in ‘The Guardian: Education’, 4<sup>th</sup> May 2004.

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