



Schools Forum
15 January 2020

**Report from the Strategic
Director Children and Young
People, Chair of the Strategic
School Effectiveness
Partnership Board**

Update 2 - Raising the Achievement of Boys of Black Caribbean Heritage in Brent Schools

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	N/A
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
No. of Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Farzana Aldridge (BSP Strategic Director)

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide an update from the Brent Schools Partnership (BSP) on the actions taken and progress made since the last update report on the 12 June 2019 in respect of the Schools Forum funded “Raising the Achievement of boys of Black Caribbean Heritage in Brent Schools” programme.
- 1.2 This report is in line with the recommendation in the Schools Forum report of the 20 June 2018, which was: “That Schools Forum receives six monthly reports on the use and deployment of the allocated spend and the resulting impact on securing improvement for this group of pupils”.
- 1.3 Members of the Schools Forum are reminded that at the Forum meeting on the 20 June 2018, there was unanimous agreement from members of the Forum to allocate a total budget of £564,750 over a two-year period to the BSP to deliver the proposals set out in the report. The funding allocated for the two-year period was broken down as follows:
 - 2018/19 of £359,500
 - 2019/20 of £205,250.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Schools Forum notes the report, and in particular notes the improved attainment in 2019 for British boys of Black Caribbean heritage at the end of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4.

- 2.2 Members of the Forum are requested to seek, as appropriate, any further information from the Strategic Director of the BSP.
- 2.3 Members of the Forum are requested to support the option set out in paragraph 4.3.5 to secure the continuation of the BCA Champion role in Brent schools for a further two years.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 In Brent, the overall attainment of boys of Black Caribbean heritage (including boys of mixed Black Caribbean heritage) has been consistently below that of all pupils nationally at the end of EYFS, and key stages 1, 2 and 4.
- 3.2 Although historically the exclusion figures have shown that for both fixed term and permanent exclusions of boys of Black Caribbean heritage were disproportionately overrepresented, there have been recent improvements. For 2018/19, the data shows that for permanent exclusions there has been a reduction of 9.4 percentage points (pcp) since 2016/17. In terms of number of pupils, there were three boys of Black Caribbean heritage permanently excluded in 2018/19. For fixed term exclusions, there has been no change since 2016/17 and boys of Black Caribbean heritage are disproportionately represented at 15.8 per cent compared to four per cent of the whole school roll.
- 3.3 Brent Council, the Brent Schools Partnership (BSP), the two local Teaching School Alliances and schools themselves recognise that the patterns of underachievement of a significant proportion of boys of Black Caribbean heritage, and the disproportionate levels of fixed term exclusions of this group are unacceptable. All agree that this is a key priority and should be addressed collectively.
- 3.4 The detailed report to the Schools Forum on the 20 June 2018 set out the context and analysis of the issues that needed to be addressed to raise the achievement of boys of Black Caribbean heritage in Brent schools, and to minimise the risk of exclusion for this group.
- 3.5 The funding allocated in June 2018 was approved to deliver the following provision:
- A supported rigorous and robust analysis of the performance of pupils of Black Caribbean heritage, and the effectiveness of key aspects of schools' practice to ensure pupils of Black Caribbean heritage achieve well.
 - The designation of a Black Caribbean Achievement (BCA) Champion in every school in Brent for a period of two years.
 - A programme of half termly training for the BCA Champion to ensure high levels of skills and competencies to deliver the role effectively leading to real impact on outcomes in schools.
 - A programme of subsidised training for school staff and governors.
 - The development of online resources for parents on strengthening their role and contribution to improving their children's learning and progress, and reducing the likelihood of their children being excluded from schools.
 - Leadership and management of the overall BCA strategy, including regular collation and analysis of the attainment and progress of pupils of Black Caribbean heritage.
- 3.6 The report presented on the 12 June 2019 provided an update and information on the significant developments in schools. This included the designation of BCA champions, engagement of schools in the BCA audits, and the engagement of school staff, governors and the BCA champions in professional development sessions. Schools had

also made good progress in the regular submission of progress data on pupils of Black Caribbean heritage.

4.0 Progress and actions, and use and deployment of the allocated funds since the update report presented to the Schools Forum in June 2019

4.1 Overview

- 4.1.1 There is much to be celebrated about the way that schools in Brent have engaged in the programme aimed at raising the achievement of British boys of Black Caribbean heritage. This has had a very positive impact on the attainment for this group of pupils in Brent. The validated data for 2018/19 shows a significant reduction in gaps in the attainment of boys of Black Caribbean heritage against all pupils at Key Stage 2, and the unvalidated data for Key Stage 4 also shows the same. For the end of EYFS there has also been a significant improvement. For Key Stage 1, concerns remain.
- 4.1.2 Attention now needs to be given to improving the rates of progress that boys of Black Caribbean heritage make at each Key Stage as this will be a major factor in further closing the attainment gaps.
- 4.1.3 A review of this initiative's progress, shows that across Brent there is a much greater focus and determination in schools to tackle the legacy of underachievement of boys of Black Caribbean heritage. The leadership provided by the BCA champions, supported by their headteachers has been strong in the majority of schools engaged in the programme.
- 4.1.4 Of the 73 schools who made a commitment to engaging in the initiative, the vast majority have participated in the range of opportunities that have been provided to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of successful practice to improve outcomes.

4.2 A supported rigorous and robust Black Caribbean Achievement audit

- 4.2.1 To date 68 schools have had their BCA audit supported by a BSP School Improvement Specialist. An analysis of the emerging issues identified through the audit across Brent has been carried out, and has informed the content of the training and support available for schools.
- 4.2.2 The need for a stronger emphasis on whole school training on 'unconscious bias' has been identified as a key priority in order to ensure that raising the attainment of pupils of Black Caribbean heritage is recognised as a whole school issue, and not just the responsibility of school leaders and governors. An increasing number of schools are seeking such training, which they are funding from their individual school CPD budgets.
- 4.2.3 During the summer term 2020, schools will be able to draw in a half-day external review to assess the progress they have made against the recommendations made in their BCA Audit during the spring term of 2019. Informal assessments of how schools have been progressing suggests that the majority of schools will have made good progress against the recommendations for improvement.

Year 1 allocation = £42,500

Actual expenditure and commitment for year 1 = £38,415

4.3 The designation of a Black Caribbean Achievement Champion in every school in Brent for a period of two years

- 4.3.1 There are 78 BCA champions in 73 Brent schools. In some schools more than one leader has been designated as a BCA Champion. The majority of the champions have a strong profile in their schools and are either part of the senior leadership team (SLT) or are able to work with the SLT to drive forward improvement strategies in their school. In some schools, the champions would have even greater impact if they had a wider range of opportunities to support and challenge their colleagues to raise the attainment of pupils of Black Caribbean heritage.
- 4.3.2 Some schools have created BCA teams which have led to staff across the school working together to address the barriers to raising the attainment of boys of Black Caribbean heritage. Where schools have appointed a BCA Governor Champion, it demonstrates there is strong strategic leadership from the governing board to raise the attainment of this group.
- 4.3.3 The work of the champions in ensuring greater engagement of parents of children of Black Caribbean heritage has led to a real transformation in the way that many parents are engaging to support their children’s learning, and working with their child’s school to develop provision to improve outcomes.
- 4.3.4 The leadership capacity created through the designation of a BCA Champion has made a significant contribution to ensuring that raising achievement is a strategic priority in schools leading to a range of actions aimed at tackling the legacy of underachievement of this group of pupils.
- 4.3.5 Consideration needs to be given to the continuation of the important role that BCA champions have in schools. This would embed and further strengthen the significant improvements that can be seen across Brent. Schools are strongly recommended to maintain the designation of the BCA Champion to a leader, and to allocate an appropriate level of funding/professional support for a further two years beyond 2020.

Year 1 allocation = £85,000

Actual expenditure and commitment for year 1 = £71,000

4.4 A programme of half termly training for the Black Caribbean Achievement Champions and personalised coaching, to ensure high levels of skills and competencies to deliver the role effectively

- 4.4.1 The BCA Champion training programme has been very well received. Evaluations of the six sessions held during 2019/20 show the following:

Evaluation Statements			
Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree
The session inspired and motivated me to take forward my role as the BCA Champion	70%	28%	2%
The session provided me with knowledge and understanding of different types of strategic planning for improving outcomes for Black Caribbean boys	48%	47%	5%
The session enabled me to explore strategies that I may be able to take forward in my own school	44%	55%	1%

4.4.2 Attendance at the training sessions has been good overall. However, attendance by some schools has been low, and this will be followed up with the headteachers of these schools.

4.4.3 All BCA champions have been allocated a personal coach for a two-year period. Coaching sessions have commenced and are being very well received. Some champions have not as yet taken up this offer.

Training

Year 1 allocation = £18,000

Actual expenditure and commitment for year 1 = £28,024

One-to-one coaching

Year 1 allocation = £40,000

Actual expenditure and commitment for year 1 = £40,000

4.5 A programme of training for school staff and governors

4.5.1 Twelve sessions have been made available (two per half term). Schools have been able to take up as many places as they wish at each of the sessions. Overall, 360 places have been taken up. Take up at each session has ranged from 13 to 48. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. The sessions with lower attendance figures have been those aimed at school governors.

4.5.2 The active engagement of school governors is critical to the sustainability of the progress that has been made to date, and to embed and further strengthen the strategies which close the gaps between the attainment of boys of Black Caribbean heritage and all pupils nationally, and in Brent schools. The BSP and Brent Council will be taking forward plans for the greater involvement of governing boards to ensure that the good practice being developed in Brent is shared and embedded across schools.

Year 1 allocation = £24,000

Actual expenditure and commitment for year 1 = £24,375

4.6 The development of online Resource Portal for Parents on strengthening their role and contribution to improving their children's learning and progress

4.6.1 The development of the Parent Resource Portal has progressed well and the content has been completed. Filming for sections of the portal is currently taking place.

4.6.2 The development of the content has been led by parents of Black Caribbean heritage and community members, and by professionals with expertise in specific areas of education, SEND and the law. There is a strong sense of commitment and pride amongst the parents and community members who have led on the development of the portal.

4.6.3 Parents and community members recognise that the resources they will have available through the portal are of great value. One parent stated:

"I wish I had had access to such a Resource Portal when my children were younger, I would have understood schools more, I could have helped my children properly, and may be have been a better parent".

Another parent said:

“I have already told lots of parents to look out for the portal, and I will be making sure they use it, particularly the section on black history. I have learnt so much about my history from the portal, stuff I never knew about my people, it makes me proud”.

4.6.4 The web-developer commissioned to provide the technical expertise and develop the wire frames and the IT infrastructure for the portal has been working closely with the Development Group to ensure that the content is compatible with the structure of the portal.

4.6.5 As planned, the portal will be launched in the spring term 2020.

Web Design and Construction

Year 1 allocation = £35,000

Actual expenditure and commitment for year 1 = £35,000

Development Costs

Year 1 allocation = £60,000

Actual expenditure and commitment for year 1 = £67,711

4.7 Leadership and management of the overall Black Caribbean Achievement strategy, including regular collation and analysis of the attainment and progress of pupils of Black Caribbean heritage

Programme management

4.7.1 A detailed financial monitoring plan for the initiative has been established which provides detailed breakdown of expenditure and commitments.

4.7.2 Additional capacity to deliver the programme has been created through additional time from BSP School Improvement Specialists and consultant support from external organisations and individuals. Additional business and financial management support has been directed to the programme. A considerable amount of time has been allocated from the BSP Strategic Director to provide leadership of this initiative.

Year 1 allocation = £45,000

Actual expenditure and commitment for year 1 = £45,000

Collection of pupil performance data

4.7.3 A total of 68 schools agreed to provide termly data: 50 primary, ten secondary, four special and four nursery schools.

4.7.4 There have been significant improvements in the submission of termly data from schools. The BSP is working to support those schools where the data provided is not fully secure. Brent Council senior officers and BSP School Improvement Specialists have worked collaboratively to ensure rigorous analysis of data.

4.7.5 The focus by schools on regularly monitoring the progress of their pupils of Black Caribbean heritage and ensuring that early support and intervention are made available to those pupils who are under achieving, or are at risk of underachievement reflects the commitment of schools in Brent to this initiative.

Data collection and analysis

Year 1 allocation = £10,000

Actual expenditure and commitment for year 1 = £10,000

5 Early assessment of impact

- 5.1 Schools in Brent should be congratulated for the exceptional progress they have been able to secure in closing gaps between the attainment of boys of Black Caribbean heritage and all pupils in 2018/19 at the end of EYFS, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4.
- 5.2 The 2018/19 validated data for the **end of Key Stage 2 shows significant narrowing of gaps between the attainment of boys of Black Caribbean heritage and all pupils**. In reading, writing and mathematics (RWM) combined there has been an improvement of 16pcp representing a remarkable 70 per cent fall in the size of the gap. The gap now remaining is 7pcp. Based on this level of improvement there is a real possibility that the attainment gap for RWM combined at the end of Key Stage 2 will be closed in Brent. However, the attainment of the higher standard at Key Stage 2 by boys of Black Caribbean heritage is lower than that for all pupils and must be a focus for future years.
- 5.3 **Significant improvement can also be seen in the data for the end of EYFS**. There has been an improvement of 6pcp in the year 2018/19 bringing the gap down to 2pcp between boys of Black Caribbean heritage and all pupils. This is a 75 per cent reduction in the gap. Based on this rate of improvement there is potential for the gap to be closed in 2019/20.
- 5.4 **A breakdown for the provisional data for Key Stage 4 Attainment 8 at the end of 2018/19 shows an improvement of four points reducing the gaps between boys of Black Caribbean heritage and all pupils down from 12 points to 8 points**. Whilst this is to be celebrated, at the end of Key Stage 4, Brent pupils overall attained better than the national average by three points. As well as gaps between boys of Black Caribbean heritage in Brent schools and the national average for all pupils nationally, there is a need to consider the gaps between the Brent average and the attainment of this group.
- 5.5 Disappointingly at Key Stage 1 there appears to have been a widening of gaps. The analysis of data shows that whilst the gap for mathematics (10pcp) has remained the same as for 2017/18, there has been a widening of gaps in reading (by 5pcp) and in writing (by 4pcp). This is of concern and need to be a key focus for all schools with Key Stage 1 pupils.
- 5.6 There is a need to review the reasons why the Key Stage 1 attainment of boys of Black Caribbean heritage appears to have worsened. This is a key priority for the second year of the programme. One area for consideration is that Key Stage 1 is teacher assessed, and therefore working with the local authority, there should be an evaluation of school moderation processes for this group of pupils. There is also a need to carry out a rigorous analysis of the profile of the 2018/19 cohort of boys of Black Caribbean heritage to identify if there were any specific factors that led to these outcomes.
- 5.7 For EYFS, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 it will be critical to build on the success of the first year, maintain the leadership focus in Brent schools and strengthen further their provision and practice. Closing the gaps further at the end of 2019/20 is now an achievable aim.
- 5.8 In many schools, the number of pupils of Black Caribbean heritage is low and therefore it is difficult to provide statistically valid data for the individual schools. However, focused monitoring of pupils of Black Caribbean heritage in many of these schools is ensuring that targeted intervention and support for all the pupils is more rigorous and robust.
- 5.9 Within the positive profile and improvements at the end of Key Stage 2, the detailed analysis of outcomes shows that:
 - Prior higher attaining pupils are in line with national conversion rates for attaining the expected standard or above in reading, writing and mathematics, and at national

conversion rates for the greater depth for mathematics, but lower than conversion rates for greater depth for reading and writing.

- Prior lower attaining pupils are showing better than the national conversion rates for all pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Prior middle attaining pupils are attaining in line with or slightly better than the national conversion rate for the expected standard or above and for greater depth in mathematics, but lower than national conversion rate for reading and writing.

5.10 Overview analysis of data for year groups within key stages 1 and 2 shows that whilst there is a small gap in the expected standards and greater depth in mathematics, there is a pattern of significant gaps in the attainment of boys of Black Caribbean heritage attainment at expected standard and greater depth in both reading and writing. This is a major issue to be addressed if the attainment gaps at Key Stage 2 are to be removed.

5.11 Detailed analysis of the performance data at Key Stage 2 shows that boys of Black Caribbean heritage without SEND attain broadly in line with, or better than standards achieved by all pupils. However, data shows that the percentage of boys of Black Caribbean heritage identified as having SEND is significantly higher than the percentage of all pupils identified as having SEND. This applies to both boys of Black Caribbean heritage with education, health and care plans, and pupils with SEN support.

5.12 After the validated data for Key Stage 4 is published later this month it will be analysed to identify specific areas of strength and for improvement in respect of boys of Black Caribbean heritage.

5.13 68 schools have had a BCA audit visit. Reports from these visits have been analysed, and strengths and areas for improvement across Brent have been identified. Many schools demonstrate excellent practice. Dissemination of good practice is a key focus of the BCA networking and development meetings for the BCA champions in the second year of the programme

5.14 A number of audit findings highlight a significant shift in the way schools are focusing on raising the achievement of boys of Black Caribbean heritage. In particular the following are noted:

- More regular review and evaluation of the progress and attainment of boys of Black Caribbean heritage.
- Focused targeted intervention for pupils underachieving to close gaps.
- Strong commitment from headteachers and senior leaders in many schools.
- Strong leadership and commitment from the BCA champions, including training and support for whole school staff.
- Support and challenge from governing boards.

5.15 Feedback from schools on the training for BCA champions has been overwhelmingly positive. Informal feedback from many headteachers states strong leadership and challenge from their champions and a real passion to make a difference and raise the attainment.

5.16 The developments and positive progress noted above are to be welcomed. However, the following areas still need to be addressed:

- In a number of schools the small cohort size is often given as the reason for minimal focus on raising the achievement of boys of Black Caribbean heritage and the limited action being taken to ensure that the attainment gaps between this group and their peers are narrowed. This could be a barrier in the future to ensuring that achievement across Brent improves and gaps are narrowed.

- A small number of champions feel that they are not being sufficiently supported.
- The majority of schools who made a commitment to being part of the programme have yet to explicitly include a focus on raising attainment and reducing the fixed term exclusions of boys of Black Caribbean heritage in their school improvement plans.
- Feedback from a small number of parents during the BCA audits indicated significant variations in the extent to which parents feel well supported and involved in the work of their children's school.
- Standards being attained in reading and writing by boys of Black Caribbean heritage overall is lower than all pupils, and is a significant barrier to closing the overall gaps at Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4.
- The over representation of boys of Black Caribbean heritage being identified as having SEND needs to be robustly analysed across the local authority and by individual schools, and appropriate action taken.

6 Priorities for 2019/20 and beyond

- Close the attainment gaps further at the end of EYFS, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4, with a particular emphasis on improving rates of progress.
- Improve the attainment of greater depth for boys of Black Caribbean in reading and writing at Key Stage 2.
- Strengthen assessment processes and provision at Key Stage 1 to ensure that attainment gaps between boys of Black Caribbean heritage and all pupils are narrowed.
- Reduce the rate of fixed term exclusions of boys of Black Caribbean heritage.
- Enable schools to access whole school training in 'unconscious bias'.
- Strengthen processes for school self-review and evaluation of their strategies for raising the attainment of boys of Black Caribbean heritage and their impact on closing gaps.
- Complete and launch the Parent Resource Portal across Brent.
- Carry out half day follow up visits in all schools which had an audit in the first year to review progress against the recommendations and to identify further the good practice.
- Secure the continuation of the BCA Champion role in schools beyond the two years for which funding from the Schools Forum has been made available for the period 2018-20.

7.0 Financial implications

7.1 Termly purchase orders are raised by Brent Council for one third of the total annual budget allocated. The BSP then raises an invoice.

7.2 The budgets for this initiative are set aside separately from the BSP core budgets and separately monitored.

Total budget allocated for the academic year 2018/19 = £359,500

Total Budget allocated for the academic year 2019/20 = £205,250

8.0 Legal implications

8.1 The local authority has a statutory duty for the outcomes of all pupils. It has a statutory responsibility to monitor the performance of schools including the identification, support and intervention in schools where pupil achievement is of concern. The local authority's powers of intervention in schools are restricted to the maintained sector. Where there are concerns about an academy's standards, leadership or governance, the local authority is expected to raise them directly with the Regional Schools Commissioner.

9.0 Equalities implications

- 9.1 The Equality Act 2010 sets out that those subject to the general equality duty must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 9.2 This proposal directly addresses the need to advance the equality of opportunity for boys of Black Caribbean heritage.

10.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

- 10.1 A wide range of stakeholders have been consulted with and contributed to the initiative being taken forward. This includes: BCA champions, parents of pupils of Black Caribbean heritage, primary and secondary headteachers, senior leaders and governors, and community groups and advocates.
- 10.2 The Strategic School Effectiveness Partnership Board, chaired by the Director of Children's Services has received this report and commented on it.

Related Documents:

- Reports to Schools Forum (20 June 2018 and 12 June 2019)
- Report to Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee (18 March 2019)
- BCA Audit framework

Report sign off:

Gail Tolley
Strategic Director Children and Young People