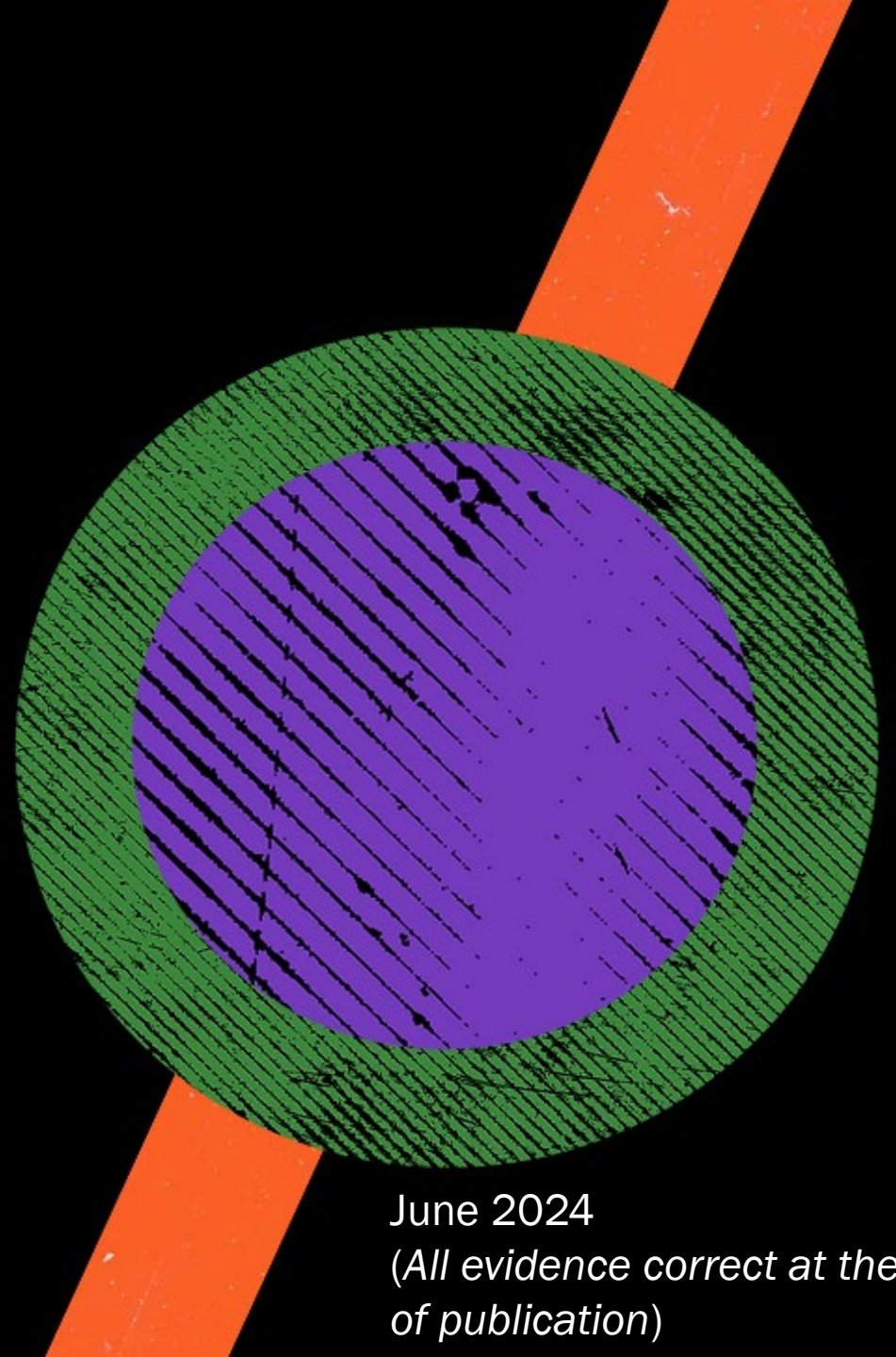


Making Teaching an anti-racist profession

POLICY BRIEF: THE NEED TO CHANGE
THE TEACHER TRAINING CURRICULUM

Professor Heather J Smith (Newcastle University:
heather.smith@ncl.ac.uk)

Professor Vini Lander (Leeds Beckett University:
vini.lander@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)



June 2024
*(All evidence correct at the time
of publication)*

Background

Our classrooms are ethnically diverse

36.1% of primary and 35.4% of secondary pupils are recorded as being pupils of a 'minority ethnic background' (DfE, update January 2024)

Link between poverty and ethnicity

The percentage of children in Black households living in persistent low income was six percentage points higher than the percentage of children in White households living in persistent low income (ONS, 2020).

Most of our teachers are white

85.1% of all teachers in state-funded schools in England were white British – by comparison, 70.8% of the working age population in England was white British at the time of the 2021 Census (ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk).

Unequal access to Initial Teacher Education/training

“acceptance rates [into ITE/T courses] for applicants from [Black Global Majority] backgrounds are generally lower than for applicants from white ethnic backgrounds” and “[b]y the time applicants have enrolled, completed their training and achieved qualified teacher status (QTS), Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic minority groups are under-represented compared to the wider population. Teachers from all ethnic groups other than white are also under-represented at each subsequent stage of the profession from newly-qualified teacher through to headteacher, compared to their representation in the population in 2021.” (Worth et al. 2022, p.v)

Evidence

Office for National Statistics (ONS). (2020). Child poverty and education outcomes by ethnicity. The Office for National Statistics (ONS).
Worth, J., McLean, D., & Sharp, C. (2022). Racial equality in the teacher workforce: An analysis of representation and progression opportunities from initial teacher training to headship – Full Report. NFER

The Problem

Inequitable outcomes

Continued racial disparities in education outcomes at all stages of schooling in England^{i,ii}

Racism in schools

Continued escalation of racist incidents in schools (Batty and Parveen, 2021; YMCA, 2020)

2,847 children aged 8-17 were strip searched by police forces in England and Wales (2018-2022), 38% carried out on Black children, the vast majority of whom are boys. For the case of Child Q “racism (whether deliberate or not) was likely to have been an influencing factor in the decision to undertake a strip search” (Children’s Commissioner for England Report, 2022, p.6)

ITE/T Policy gap

There is currently no requirement for initial teacher education/training courses to teach about racism with our future teachers in England today: “the CCF[core content framework] contains no reference to race, racism, anti-racism, or even ... prejudice or discrimination” (Smith and Lander, 2022, p.23)

School Exclusions

Black and Global Majority pupils are excluded at a far higher rate than white pupilsⁱⁱⁱ

“[E]xclusion [of young girls at risk of exclusion] often stems from their unaddressed experiences of sexual harassment and abuse, poor mental health, and experiences of racism, with negative stereotypes attached to Black and minoritised girls and young women playing a critical role in their exclusion.” (Agenda and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, 2021: [New Data Shows Black and Minoritised Girls More Than Twice as Likely to be Excluded](#) - Agenda Alliance)

Permanent exclusions for racial abuse is very rare (House of Commons Library, 2023)

Evidence

Batty, D & Parveen, N. (2021, March 28). UK schools record more than 60,000 racist incidents in five years. The Guardian.

YMCA. (2020). Young, discriminated, and Black: the true colour of institutional racism in the UK. Young, discriminated, and Black: the true colour of institutional racism in the UK - YMCA England & Wales

Smith, HJ & Lander, V (2023) Finding ‘pockets of possibility’ for anti-racism in a curriculum for student teachers: From absence to action. The Curriculum Journal BERA

Recommended Solutions: Advocating for Policy Change

We know that Initial teacher education plays a pivotal role in transforming school practices. Therefore, we advocate urgent action to:

- endorse the anti-racism framework for England (ARF) (Smith and Lander, 2022) <https://www.anti-racism-framework.co.uk/>
- revise the Initial Teacher Education/Training curriculum to include explicit reference to racism and how to be an anti-racist teacher with ARF as a recommended resource for initial teacher education providers across England.

Building upon this, introduce:

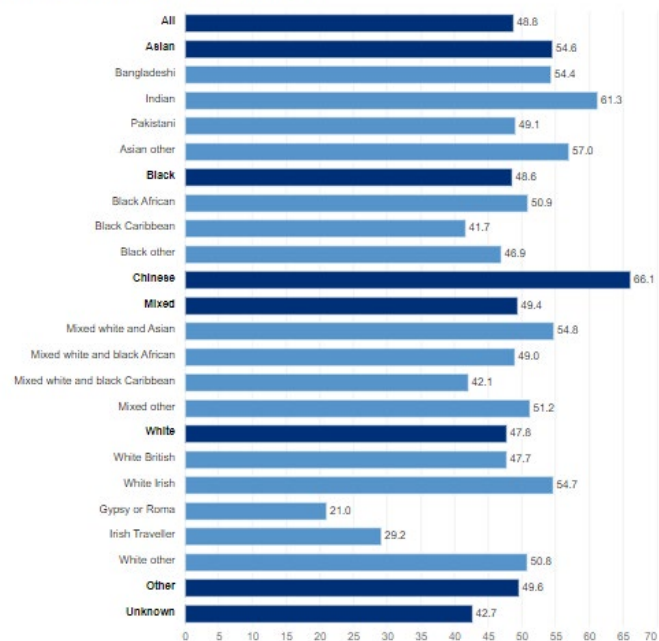
- racial literacy training for *all* teachers (in a similar vein to Education Scotland's 'building racial literacy programme').



Additional Evidence

i) GCSE Attainment 2021/2022

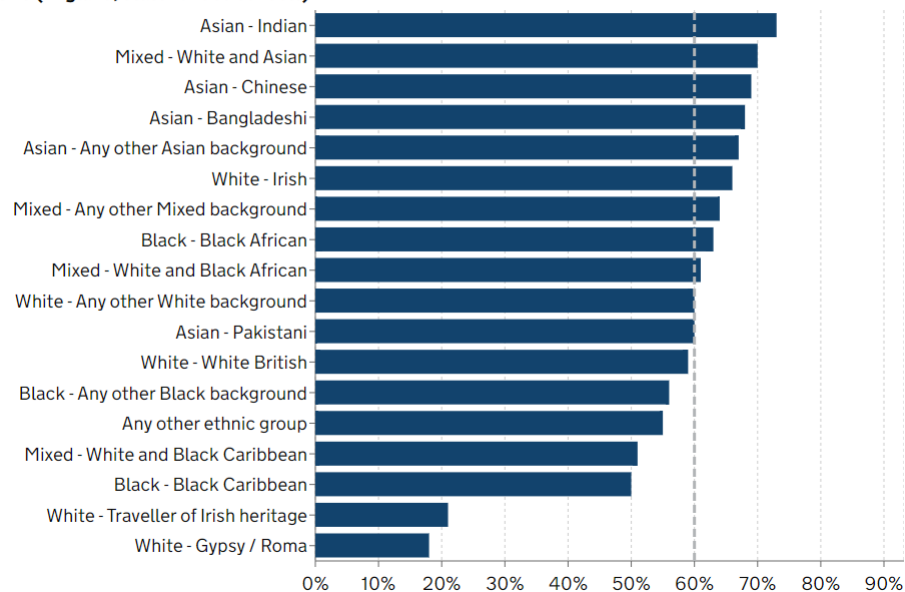
Average Attainment 8 score (out of 90.0), by ethnicity



2021-2022: [GCSE results \(Attainment 8\) - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/gcse-results-attainment-8) Ethnicity facts and figures (ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk)

ii) SATS Attainment 2022-2023

Percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths (combined) by ethnicity, 2023 (England, state-funded schools)



End of KS2 SATS results combined: [Key stage 2 attainment, Academic year 2022/23 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/key-stage-2-attainment) (explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk)

iii) Exclusion rates 2021-2022

“Pupils from some ethnic groups have disproportionately high rates of both fixed-term and permanent exclusion (i.e, expulsion from school). In the Autumn 2021/22 term:

- Gypsy and Roma pupils had the highest permanent exclusion rate, at 0.12%, or 12 per 10,000 pupils – although the absolute number of pupils in this group (and therefore the number of exclusions for pupils in this group) is small.
- Travellers of Irish Heritage had the next-highest permanent exclusion rate, at 0.08%, or 8 in 10,000. Similarly, the number of exclusions here is small.
- The next highest permanent exclusion rate is for mixed White and Black Caribbean pupils (0.07% or 7 in 10,000).

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CDP-2023-0049/CDP-2023-0049.pdf>