










Report of^[x1]: The Community Scrutiny Review Group

To^[x2]: City Executive Board

Date^[x3]: 11th June 2008

Item No

Title of Report ^[x4]: Educational Attainment of BME pupils in Oxford City



**urpose of report^[x5]:** To present the findings and recommendations from the Community Scrutiny Review 'Educational Attainment of BME pupils in Oxford City'

**Key decision^[x7]:** No [0][EM6]
Board Member ^[x8]: Cllr Bob Price
Ward(s) affected^[x9]: All
Report Approved  Jeremy Thomas (Legal & Democratic Services)
Andy Collett (Financial & Asset Management)
Paul Spencer (Climate Change Officer) 
**Policy Framework^[x10]:** No
Recommendations^[x11]: The City Executive Board is asked to:
o note and comment upon the findings of the review report.
2. To endorse the recommendations listed in Section 3 of the covering report.



1. Background

1. The Director of Public Health for Oxfordshire Annual Report (2005-2008) states that educational attainment provides a good indication of children's progress, future prosperity and health.... differences in attainment are a good way of identifying where action is needed. A good education is key to breaking the cycle of deprivation.'
2. The report's findings from 06/07 noted differences in achievements between White and Black Minority Ethnic (BME) pupils in Oxfordshire and disparities between the most deprived and affluent communities. The report highlighted the fact that the greatest disparities are around the achievement scores of Black Caribbean, Bangladeshi and Pakistani pupils when compared with countywide average scores.
3. The Director's 2007 –08 report states that in regard to these disparities only Bangladeshi pupils at Key Stage 4 will meet the Children and Young People Board target this year.
4. The findings from the Director's 2006-07 report led to Oxford City Council's Community Scrutiny Committee requesting further analysis of Oxford City pupils' Key Stage scores by ethnicity. An analysis of the Central Area locality (covering schools in the Oxford City area) using 2006 and 2005 results showed the same disparities between Black Caribbean, Bangladeshi and Pakistani pupils, across all the Key Stages. The results showed that average scores were increasing for these pupils, but they were still below the average scores for their national cohort.
5. The Community Scrutiny Committee was not aware of any detailed research that had been undertaken into this area. Although the committee recognised that it has no direct responsibility for Education Services, it felt that the issues around disparities of achievement significantly affected pupils in the City. The Committee is aware that the Oxfordshire Children's Services Scrutiny Committee is due to undertake a broader but linked review looking at deprivation and educational achievement. The review group notified this Committee of its intended research project to ensure its scope was complementary.
6. The Committee decided to conduct a more in-depth review to:
 - Look at the ongoing work in schools to promote race equality, identify and tackle underachievement
 - To consider links between the community particularly the Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black Caribbean community and schools.
 - Consider the role and remit of Oxfordshire's Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) in helping schools tackle under achievement issues amongst some Black and Minority ethnic pupils.

(A copy of the full report is attached as Appendix 1)

2. Key findings

1. Raw score analysis of the Key Stage results by ethnicity shows that there are disparities in achievement compared with national cohort figures. The greatest disparities are seen in the Key Stage scores of Black Caribbean and Pakistani pupils. Whilst year on year improvements are noted, comparison with national cohort figures suggest these improvements are below the increases experienced by these pupils nationally.
2. Prior to 2007 significant disparities in achievement were also noted in Bangladeshi pupils. However in 2007 Bangladeshi pupils scored significantly above the national average at Key Stage 4.
3. Use of Central Government funding to improve the achievement of BME pupils does recognise these disparities to some degree. A funding weighting is given to schools with Bangladeshi and Pakistani pupils. No recognition is given to the achievement scores of Black Caribbean pupils in the local school funding formula, although some monies are retained centrally for this purpose.
4. Community representatives would like to see more funding support for homework clubs / weekend classes targeting the national curriculum subjects. Funding from EMAS to external groups is predominately around language classes where the main beneficiaries are the Chinese Community. Chinese pupils are in line with or exceed the County average Key Stage scores. It would be more cost effective for community based EMAS funding to be directed towards BME groups where achievement results show the greatest disparities.
5. Community representatives and schools would like to see EMAS becoming a more transparent and user- friendly service. They would also like to see EMAS providing more web - based learning resources and the wider dissemination of good practice information. Community representatives state that it is difficult to obtain information around the strategic direction, funding and performance of the service. This corresponds with the experiences of the review group in trying to obtain data on the service.
6. City Schools are seeing diminishing spend per pupil in relation to EMA funding. Secondary schools mainstream budgets are increasingly deflected to support this area. Funding constraints are due to the fact that Central Government funding has remained relatively constant, but schools are seeing a significant increase in 'new arrival' pupils with EAL needs.

7. A best practice visit to Bristol City Council has highlighted a number of areas that are beginning to deliver key improvements in the educational attainment of BME pupils such as:

- The development of a strategy and detailed action planning around the educational attainment of BME pupils.
- Greater use of joined up working with linked services e.g., Youth Services, Extended School Services, Community Development Services.
- Introduction of a two week intensive induction for 'New arrivals'

3. Recommendations

Recommendations

R1. Oxfordshire County Council should conduct a review of EMAS.

Based on findings to date it is strongly recommended that this review cover three main areas

a.) Strategic planning – Evidence from the review indicates planning needs to be:

- More medium term
- Focused on an evidence based approach to tackle achievement disparities in BME pupils
- Recognises the difficulties schools face, particularly in regard to 'new arrival pupils'
In reviewing the management of new arrivals consideration to be given to offering a two - week intensive induction course for pupils new to the UK. Offering a this as a central resource, would be more cost effective enhanced by extending and supporting the work of the existing community programmes such as 'Oasis'

This could be considered within an overall strategy for raising BME pupils' educational attainment levels linked with more detailed performance monitoring / action planning. (see web link below for example from Bristol City Council)

http://www.bristol-cyps.org.uk/services/pdf/eit_raisebmepupilachievement_strategy.pdf

It is understood that a review of EMAS will be undertaken by the Raising Achievement Service, during May and June 08. The Community Scrutiny Committee welcomes this and hopes the findings and recommendations from the review will be publicised.

Reviewing

b.) Allocation of Central / School funding and it's cost effectiveness – Evidence from the review indicates that the following areas should be focused upon

- Allocation of funds matched to the strategic priorities of EMAS
- The current apportionment of the EMAG, particularly the amount that is retained centrally.

This should include reviewing the role and numbers of EMAS consultants and their utilisation in the school environment. Consultants need to provide a specialist role not being met within the school environment e.g. Race Equality and addressing under achievement of small cohorts of BME pupils such as Black Caribbean pupils.

- A review of the local funding formula, to ensure the weighting is adequately linked to prior attainment levels of all BME groups, including Black Caribbean and Mixed Heritage pupils.
- Investigating qualification for the Exceptional Circumstances Grant

c.) The funding and support to community groups and representatives who offer language and education programmes – Evidence from the review indicates that the following areas should be focused upon:

- Is present funding support in line with the Government aims for EMAG spending e.g. Is it targeted towards raising overall achievement levels of BME pupils with a particular focus on underachieving minority ethnic groups?
- Does it reflect community identified priorities e.g. funding targeted towards the teaching of core subjects?
- Conducting an appraisal of current community based education programmes for BME young people that meet the above criteria and exploring ways to offer support funding.
- To ensure the allocation and eligibility for funding is managed in a transparent manner.

R2. The Children and Young People's Board to consider more detailed performance monitoring and target setting by ethnicity for all Key Stages. (Presently only KS4 targets are routinely analysed within the Children & Young People's Plan where the problems of underachievement are arguably more intractable and left too late to correct.)

Based on the review group findings it is suggested that this includes pre – school assessment data by ethnicity so that areas of underachievement can be highlighted and addressed early on.

R3 The Children and Young People’s Board to consider Area Performance monitoring & target setting by area for all Key Stages and Pre school assessments. (It is clear that there are still significant divergences between the Central (Oxford) area average and the County average. Areas for improvement identified in Ofsted’s Annual Performance Assessment would be more effectively delivered by targeting existing education ‘localities’ that are shown to be significantly below other similar authorities)

R4 The Children and Young People’s Board to consider more detailed review and scrutiny of education performance via the introduction of Education Review Boards. The Boards could link to Children & Young People’s Board and be set up around localities to monitor Key Stage progress.

Oxfordshire County Council should consider:

R5. Piloting the ‘Going for Gold’ programme in one School Partnership area.

R6. Regularly consulting BME pupils and ensuring the results of consultations are published along with feedback on how the findings will be taken forward.

R7. Developing a more accessible EMAS Service e.g. a more developed web –site where learning resources can be down loaded and parents can obtain information updates about the service.

Hard copies of these learning resources should also be made available to parents without internet access.

R8. Reviewing the extent of parent outreach work attached to school partnerships particularly targeted to families where English is not the first language and at an earlier pre-school stage. It would be useful for the Raising Achievement Service and School Partnerships to review the key success factors of current outreach schemes.

R9. Reviewing the amount of support for parents e.g. Language Courses, sessions around understanding the National Curriculum.

R 10. Reviewing the key success factors of the Progress and Achievement days held at Cheney and Oxford Community Schools. What elements of these schemes could be more widely used by Schools, particularly Secondary Schools?

R11. Establishing links between Children’s Centres, Extended School Partnerships, EMAS, Youth Services and Community Development Workers regarding consultation of Community Representatives.

R12. Conducting a comprehensive review of each school's Race Equality policy and their practical implementation within the school. It is thought that Local Authority Governors should undertake more of an advisory role in schools.

R13. Reviewing the levels of support and guidance given to schools to ensure they recognise the cultural traditions of all their pupils.

R14. Engaging and encouraging schools to participate in national best practice initiatives such as 'Aiming High, Black Pupil Achievement Project, Junior Windsor Fellowship'

R15. Proactively seek links and greater engagement with the two universities in the City, particularly

- i.) Acting in an advisory and support capacity to Education Departments in areas such as promoting Race Equality and teaching a diverse curriculum
- ii.) Linking with existing Access programmes which seek to promote higher education amongst BME students.

4. Minutes of Community Scrutiny - 22nd April 2008

95. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC PUPILS – REVIEW REPORT

The Committee had before it, the report of the Review Group (previously circulated and now appended).

The Committee was addressed by Sylvia Richardson (Head of Raising Attainment – Oxfordshire County Council Ms Joyce McCullagh – Children's Society (Oasis project manager), Professor Mohammed Talib, Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, Sue Funge ('Going for Gold' programme) and Ms Bernadine Spencer (manages a weekend school on South East Oxford)

Ms McCullagh : said that she welcomed the report and the recommendations contained in it; praised the commitment of Cheney and Oxford Community Schools for the work they did with black and minority ethnic pupils; spoke of the implications for schools of the number of late starters and early leavers; explained that resources had not been increased greatly in recent years, which meant that they were now spread thinly and commented on the apparent lack of openness and transparency on the part of EMAS in the funding of projects.

Professor Mohamed Talib outlined his views regarding educational attainment, educational underachievement and the need to increase achievement and outcomes. Professor Talib stated that problems existed

on the side of the school with low expectations of teachers from BME pupils and ill preparation of teachers / curriculum to teach BME pupils. There were also problems on the part of the family – community, with low parental involvement.

Professor Talib recommended that schools increase parental and community engagement and that there should be more Black parents / community representatives becoming Governors, Teachers and Teaching Assistants. Parents should be organised early on in the school year when parents can influence their child's progress. More work was needed to involve parents / the local community e.g. homework and revision clubs, drop in sessions to be organised around the core curriculum subjects. More parental involvement in education through active collaboration via a school – home link worker. Parents needed to be encouraged to take a more proactive role in their child's education by gaining a fuller understanding of the National Curriculum. Community representatives and mosques needed to become more proactively involved in educational programmes of supplementary classes targeting pupils where there are known underachievement issues.

Professor Talib thought that the Bangla School was an example of local good practice.

Sue Funge told the Committee of an "I can do it" conference she had organised and a course she had tried to arrange and the difficulties she had experienced in doing so.

Sylvia Richardson told the Committee that EMAS worked within a number of constraints which had not been referred to in the report – for example, funding was devolved to schools who were able to spend it as they wished and that the funds available to her allowed her only to maintain a small service comprising 3.2 whole-time equivalent staff which meant that the service had to prioritise its activities so that it worked with the largest number of pupils possible. She said that she would be carrying out a review of how EMAS operated in the county, which she said she anticipated completing in May or June so that she could submit a report to her director by the end of June.

Bernadine Spencer outlined the work of the weekend school she was involved with. She told the Committee that she received little help from schools and would appreciate more. She said that the school had been unable, for the first time, to provide assistance for pupils with their SATS over Easter.

Councillor Susanna Pressel suggested that recommendation 11 should include a reference to children's centres, that reference should be made in recommendation 12 to the role of governors and governing bodies and that a recommendation should be added referring to the role of universities.

The Chair said that he welcomed the review of EMAS mentioned by Sylvia Richardson.

Councillor Dee Sinclair referred to the excellent work being done in this area by certain schools and said that this should be extended to other schools and suggested that EMAS had a role in doing so. She suggested that EMAS should be concentrating its efforts on pupils who are underachieving. She also referred to the role of the universities in assisting schools and the importance of partnership working.

Councillor Susanna Pressel: said that she would appreciate more information concerning the achievements of the Bangla School; suggested that EMAS should use peripatetic teachers to teach isolated learners and said that the use of Oxford University Students' Union JAKARI should be encouraged.

Councillor Tony Hollander said that he deplored the fact that Oasis's funding was being stopped. He suggested that Oxford Brookes University, bearing in mind that it had a school of education, had a major role to play. He also expressed his disquiet concerning EMAS.

Resolved:-

- (1) to adopt the report and the recommendations in it subject, in the case of the latter-
 - (a) to a reference in recommendation 1 to the fact that the Committee would wish the County Council to investigate the possibility of funding being used in a more transparent manner than appears to be the case;
 - (b) to reference being made in recommendation 11 to children's centres;
 - (c) to reference being made in recommendation 12 to the role of governors and governing bodies and a suggestion that EMAS indicates how it would expect governors to carry out such a review and subsequent implementation;
 - (d) to an additional recommendation being added recommending that the universities be encouraged to get involved in issues relating to black and minority ethnic pupils in the city;
- (2) to RECOMMEND the Executive Board to consider the report and the recommendations contained in it.

5. Comments from Board Member – Corporate Governance and Strategic Partnerships

This is an excellent report and the City Executive Board approves the recommendations. It will establish a dialogue with the County Council around these issues.

6. Comments from the Head of Service - Community Housing & Community Development

‘We welcome the report, and note their comments re joint working in community development and the grants. There are actions in our service plan to address both of these - the development of a community cohesion strategy for the city, and a specific action to include, in a wider review of the grants programme, a review of the accessibility of that programme to members of BME communities and organisations. I would also add that we are working closely with officers of the Oxford Economic Development partnership to develop a programme for delivering LAA2 targets around skills attainment, and will ensure that the equalities agenda is firmly embedded in that programme.’

7. Involvement and consultation of Oxfordshire County Council in preparing the Review Report

The Review Group has sought to involve relevant officers attached to the Raising Achievement Service and allowed them an opportunity to comment upon the findings and recommendations of the report from the early draft stages.

The Review Group met with the Director of Children’s and Young People Services and the Head of the Raising Achievement Service to present the key findings of the report in April.

The Head of the Raising Achievement Service also attended the Community Scrutiny meeting in April at which the report was presented. The Head of Service stated at this meeting that the funding to Language Schools was not directly funded from the EMAS budget and that the funding to Language Schools was block funding and not per pupil.

All the statistical data in the report including that questioned, was obtained from data analysts at the County and EMAS.

The Scrutiny Officer has made a number of requests to obtain this updated information around the Language School Service, in an effort to obtain a clear picture in the report. This request has not been responded to.

It should be noted that the Key Stage result evidence was provided by the data analyst team attached to the Raising Achievement Service. The Review group would like to thank this team for their co-operation.

The evidence from Oxfordshire EMAS, including the Language School data was provided by the Head of that Service

Name and contact details of author^[x12]:

Julia Woodman

Scrutiny Officer

Tel: (01865) 252318

E Mail: jwoodman@oxford.gov.uk

Background papers^[x13]: Attached

