Race, Racism and Education:
inequality, resilience and reform in policy & practice

A Two-Year Research Project Funded by the Society for Educational Studies (SES) National Award 2013

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2013 Society for Educational Studies (SES) National Research Award marked the 20th anniversary of the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence, an event that is frequently viewed as a landmark in British race relations. Following years of campaigning for an official inquiry into the police's handling of the investigation, the publication of *the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report* (Macpherson 1999), and the subsequent Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (RRAA), represented a high point in policy discussions of 'race' and racism in the UK.

Opinion is divided about the long-term effects of the Lawrence case and its legislative consequences. Speaking on the 20th anniversary of Stephen's murder the prime minister, David Cameron, hailed 'monumental change in our society' but race equality campaigners – including Stephen's mother Doreen Lawrence – have been much more circumspect. This research project is the most comprehensive investigation into the state of race equality in the English education system during the twenty years following Stephen's murder in 1993.

Our project uses a mixed method approach to explore the changing landscape of race and education in England.

Statistical data are used to map the educational experiences and achievements of the principal ethnic groups, specifically those with at least 5,000 students in the cohort of school leavers annually: i.e. White British, Pakistani, Black African, Indian, Black Caribbean, Bangladeshi, and Mixed/Dual Heritage (White/Black Caribbean): together these groups account for 89.7 per cent of the age group.

Qualitative data are used to explore the detailed experiences and perceptions of people involved in the process throughout the period. In total 35 people were interviewed, including 'stakeholders' (community advocates, teachers, academics and race equality campaigners) and people inside the policy process (including Secretaries of State, civil servants and advisors).

MAPPING RACE AND EDUCATION OVER 20 YEARS: The Quantitative Dimension

GCSE Achievement

Overall rates of achievement at age 16 have been consistently rising throughout the period covered by our research; the proportion of students achieving at least five higher grade GCSE passes *almost doubled* between 1993 and 2013.

Comparing patterns of achievement between ethnic groups is complicated by changes in the kinds of qualifications required to meet the preferred 'benchmark';

- in 2006 the New Labour government adopted the *'Gold Standard'* measure of five or more higher grade passes *including English and mathematics;*

- in 2011 the Conservative/LiberalDemocrat Coalition government introduced the English Baccalaureate (requiring higher pass grades in English, mathematics, *two* sciences, a modern or ancient foreign language and either history or geography).

These changes have had a detrimental impact on some minority ethnic groups, in particular those categorized as **Black Caribbean**.

In terms of the *original* benchmark (5+ higher grade passes *in any subject*) the Black/White gap has almost closed in the 25 years for which data are available (from 12 percentage points in 1988 to 2.3 percentage points in 2013).

In relation to the changing benchmark levels of achievement the picture is more mixed. The odds of White success relative to Black Caribbean students have narrowed somewhat; from almost 3 times the Black rate (2.84) in 1993 to just under twice the Black rate (1.73) in 2013.

Nevertheless, inequality of attainment is clear throughout; White students are never less than half as likely again to reach the benchmark; the smallest Odds Ratio is 1.56 in 1999.

Black Caribbean students are the lowest achieving of all the main ethnic groups in terms of the headline benchmark (Bangladeshi students overtook them in 2001).

The impact of changes to the benchmark measure of attainment has been especially harsh for Black Caribbean students. A clear pattern can be seen whereby, over time, Black Caribbean students begin to narrow the gap to their White peers but the introduction of a new benchmark restores the inequality to historic levels.

Mixed Race (White/Black Caribbean) students tend to achieve a little better than their Black Caribbean peers but worse than other groups throughout the period.

Black African students first appear as a distinct pupil group in official data in 2004. During the research period Black African children's likelihood of attaining the key benchmark has closed and, in the most recent data, overtaken the White British group.

Separate data for Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi students first appeared in the Youth Cohort Study (YCS) in 1991.

Indian students achieved better results on average than their White British peers (and the other main 'Asian' groups) throughout the whole research period. The gap between Indian and White students' grew steadily throughout the research period but was reduced by the changes in the benchmark (in 2006 and 2011).

Changes to the benchmark definitions, therefore, benefitted White students by closing gaps to the group that out-performed them *and* widening gaps to those behind them.

Bangladeshi students were known as the lowest achieving of the main ethnic groups at the start of the research period but they have steadily improved throughout; they overtook Pakistani achievement in 1995 and White British achievement toward the end of the research period.

Pakistani students in general achieve less well than their White British peers and have been the lowest achieving of the principal 'South Asian' groups since the mid 1990s. The gap to their White British peers widened during the 1990s but steadily narrowed from the mid 2000s.

Exclusion from School

Overall there has been a significant reduction, of more than fifty percent, in the proportion of young people permanently excluded from school; from 19 per 10,000 students in 1997 (the first year for which national ethnic monitoring was introduced) down to 7 students per 10,000 in 2013.

Despite a reduction in the number of exclusions, significant ethnic inequalities have persisted throughout the research period. In particular, the rates of permanent exclusion for **Black Caribbean** and **Mixed Race (White/Black Caribbean**) students significantly exceed the White rate.

Black Caribbean students experience the highest rate of exclusion throughout almost the entire period. The rate of over-representation has fluctuated, including a peak of more than 4 times the likelihood of

White exclusion in 2010, but at no time have Black Caribbean students been less than three times more likely to be permanently excluded than their White British peers.

'South Asian' students are generally significantly *less* likely to be excluded than their White British counterparts; the only exceptions have been in 1997, when Pakistani and White British students had the same rate of exclusion, and in 2011, when White British were excluded at a rate of 0.07 compared with 0.08 for Mixed Race (White/Asian) students.

Longitudinal data on the incidence of fixed period and permanent exclusions reveals an additional cumulative dimension to the problem of Black over-representation. Around *one in three* Black Caribbean (and Mixed Race: White/Black Caribbean) students is excluded from school at least once during their last three years of secondary schooling compared with less than one in five for White British students.

CONTRASTING EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS: The Qualitative Dimension

The Lawrence Case: Memory, Hindsight and Insight

Initially there was no sign that the murder of Stephen Lawrence would become a landmark case in British race relations. Several interviewees, both stakeholders and policy makers, recall that when they heard of the murder it seemed like another in a long list of Black young men meeting a violent death in London.

As the racist nature of the murder became evident, the Lawrence case was seen by stakeholders as part of a general pattern of racist attacks and police incompetence and/or indifference.

Interviewees identify numerous factors behind the emergence of the Lawrence case as standing out from the crowd, including the campaigning qualities of Stephen's parents, the skill of the Lawrence's legal team, and the changed policy mood with the election of the first New Labour government. Notably, people inside policy place great store by the intervention of the *Daily Mail* – something that happened by chance but carried great weight inside Whitehall.

The presentation of the case as a *family-oriented* campaign is viewed as important by several minority ethnic interviewees (from both stakeholder and policy backgrounds). This is viewed as helping create empathy across race lines.

The lack of a wide-spread critique of race politics, however, is viewed by stakeholders as part of the reason that the murder became emblematic of a struggle against individual race-hatred rather than a more general issue of systemic race inequity.

Interviewees inside the policy process, especially White people, are generally much more positive about the case as having generated widespread and lasting changes in public perceptions about race and racism.

How Did Race Become a Policy Issue?

Stakeholders, particularly long-time anti-racist activists, tend to refer to governments historically being *driven* to focus on race by external pressures; in particular they speak of the need for governments to be *seen* to do something in the face of high profile cases (e.g. the Macpherson Inquiry).

Interviews with people inside the policy process provide an interesting contrast; policy insiders tend to stress factors internal to the policy machine. For example, some name other insiders (sometimes MPs, sometimes civil servants) whose commitment and/or understanding had proven influential. The availability of better quality quantitative material was also stressed as a crucial factor by some, who

regarded a robust statistical evidence base as having driven initiatives such as the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG), London Challenge and City Challenge.

It is noticeable, and significant, that policy-insiders use the term 'data' exclusively in relation to *quantitative* material. This is especially problematic in view of the tendency, over recent years, to collect less detailed data on ethnic origin and rely on relatively crude aggregate categories and free school meal data (as a proxy for social class). Where 'data' are important in moving forward agendas within the policy machine, the less sophisticated the data the more likely it is that uncritical taken-for-granted assumptions will shape policy.

Race: The Forgotten Inequality?
The overwhelming view among stakeholder interviewees is that race inequality is no longer taken seriously as an issue by national government: as Doreen Lawrence put it, 'race isn't on the Government agenda, they don't address race whatsoever…'

This retreat from race is viewed in quite complex ways by our interviewees. Several noted what might be called a 'post-racial fallacy', i.e. the idea that society has now moved beyond the point where race matters. In this way both stakeholders and policy-insiders comment that 'race' talk is now often viewed as crude and reductionist.

Activist stakeholders argue that the situation is made worse by those who oppose antiracism and who take the position that any mention of race is itself potentially racist (against White people).

Within policy-circles there is a pronounced contrast between some white people who describe a progressive narrative of improved equity and efficiency, versus other Whites and people of colour who, despite being inside policy, voice strong concerns about the lack of political will and understanding on race equality.

There is a strong collective agreement, across stakeholders and policy-insiders, that race has been systematically downgraded as a policy concern since the election of the Coalition Government in 2010.

As the research period drew to a close it is sobering to realise that the ethnic group most often in the headlines is White students and, in particular, the repeated trope of 'White working class' failure. The frequency with which policy-insiders (including ex-Ministers) cite the 'White working class' as *the* under-achieving group is striking. Nowhere is there any evidence among policy-makers of sensitivity to the fundamental misreading of data that uses Free School Meal figures (relating to a minority of students) to fuel a belief in widespread White failure per se.

> '…I think that post-Stephen-Lawrence phase was a period of awareness. And I think we've gone back since then. We might even be in a worse place.' (Civil servant, anon.)

INTRODUCTION

> 'The senseless killing of Stephen Lawrence in 1993 was a tragedy. It was also *a moment that sparked monumental change in our society* - change that has been brought about by the tireless efforts of Stephen's family in challenging the police, Government and society to examine themselves and ask difficult questions. I believe that many of those questions have been answered...'
> Prime Minister David Cameron [1]

> 'I frequently get asked whether life has improved for black Londoners over the 20 years I have been campaigning ... The straight answer is no, not really ... they are still more likely to be marginalised from society, to be stopped and searched, to be excluded from education, to earn less or to be unemployed than their White counterparts.'
> Doreen Lawrence [2]

The 2013 Society for Educational Studies (SES) national research award marked the 20th anniversary of the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence, an event that is frequently hailed as a landmark in British race relations. Following years of campaigning for an official inquiry into the police's handling of the investigation, the publication of *the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report* (Macpherson 1999), and the subsequent Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, represented a high point in policy discussions of 'race' and racism in the UK. The report propelled the concept of *'institutional racism'* to the top of the political agenda and the 2000 Act placed unprecedented duties, to pro-actively monitor and pursue race equality, on all publicly-funded educational institutions (from nurseries to universities). But subsequent years have seen fundamental changes in how race and race equality are viewed in policy and practice. Successive governments (from New Labour through to Coalition and now Conservative) have watered down and reinterpreted equalities legislation. Education policy and debate have come to be dominated by a fixation on the position of the 'White working class' (although, as we will demonstrate, the interpretation and use of that phrase is highly problematic).

The Society's decision to fund a major research project on this topic, therefore, was extremely important. This project offers a rare opportunity to take stock of the reality behind the rhetoric and to make a decisive contribution to research on race and education that will have international significance and remain relevant to policymakers, practitioners and equality advocates for years to come. Our research illustrates the complex and changing nature of race inequality in education; although David Cameron's claim of 'monumental change' (above) is wildly overstated, it is undoubtedly true that the Lawrence case *has* had lasting impact although its consequences are by no means as simple and predictable as most commentators assume.

Our Research Questions
Our detailed research questions were taken directly from the Society's original call for proposals:

- How much has changed in education as a result of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry and related debates? (RQ1)

- What is the state of race equality in contemporary education? (RQ2)

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[1] Speaking at the 20th anniversary memorial service: emphasis added, https://www.gov.uk/government/news/stephen-lawrence-murder-sparked-monumental-change

[2] Quoted in the *London Evening Standard* (December 2013) : http://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/exclusive-stephen-lawrences-mother-doreen-says-lives-and-hopes-of-young-black-londoners-have-not-improved-since-her-sons-murder-20-years-ago-9000134.html

- Have we achieved a post-racial education system? (RQ3)

- Are we now in a post-racial state in which fundamental divisions, such as class and gender, have superseded a concern for race inequalities in education? (RQ4)

We have addressed the research questions using a mixed-method approach that combines two key strands of work:

- *quantitative data* have allowed us to explore the scale and nature of race inequalities across the system;

- *qualitative data* provided an insight into the underlying processes and perspectives of policy-makers and the experiences and strategies of race equality advocacy groups and minoritized communities themselves.

In this report we document the key findings to arise so far, taking each dimension (quantitative and qualitative) in turn. We then document the various outputs from the project to date, including written pieces, presentations, and initial signs of impact. We also supply a note on further planned outputs. The sheer volume of data, and the wide range of issues that are illuminated, mean that we are still working on the material and will be producing further research outputs for some time to come. In order to keep this report to a manageable length, and focus on the most interesting aspects of our findings, we have used appendices to summarise technical material about sampling and analytic frameworks.

Ethical Considerations

Throughout the research we have been guided by British Educational Research Association's Revised Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research and its fundamental concern to 'promote respect for all those who engage with [educational research]: researchers and participants, academics and professional practitioners, commissioning bodies and those who use the research' (BERA 2011: 3).

Before beginning our data gathering we secured final ethical approval through the usual procedures within the School of Education, University of Birmingham. We have been careful to keep in mind the professional and personal risks involved in research on such a potentially emotive subject. All interviewees were sent an information sheet in advance of the interview (see appendix 3); this set out some background to the project, described the interview process, and reminded interviewees of their right to withdraw from the project at any time.

No major ethical challenges emerged during the project. Most interviewees were extremely frank with us but some did make clear that parts of the conversation were 'off the record' and could not be quoted or used directly. We also explained to interviewees that, in view of the historical significance of the project, our preference was to use people's real names (to facilitate secondary analysis in the future). However, some interviewees requested that we disguise their identity and, of course, we agreed.

MAPPING RACE AND EDUCATION OVER 20 YEARS:
The Quantitative Dimension

Achievement at the End of Compulsory Schooling

Our analysis of the changing patterns of achievement in the 20 years following the murder of Stephen Lawrence reveal numerous fascinating, and sometimes disturbing, findings. In this section we begin by looking at the headline statistics on educational achievement at the end of compulsory schooling (when students are aged 15/16). **Figure 1** (below) compares the official rates of achievement, judged by different 'benchmark' measures, since the introduction of the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in 1988.

Figure 1: Overall Rates of Achievement at Age 16 (1988 – 2013): All Pupils, England & Wales.
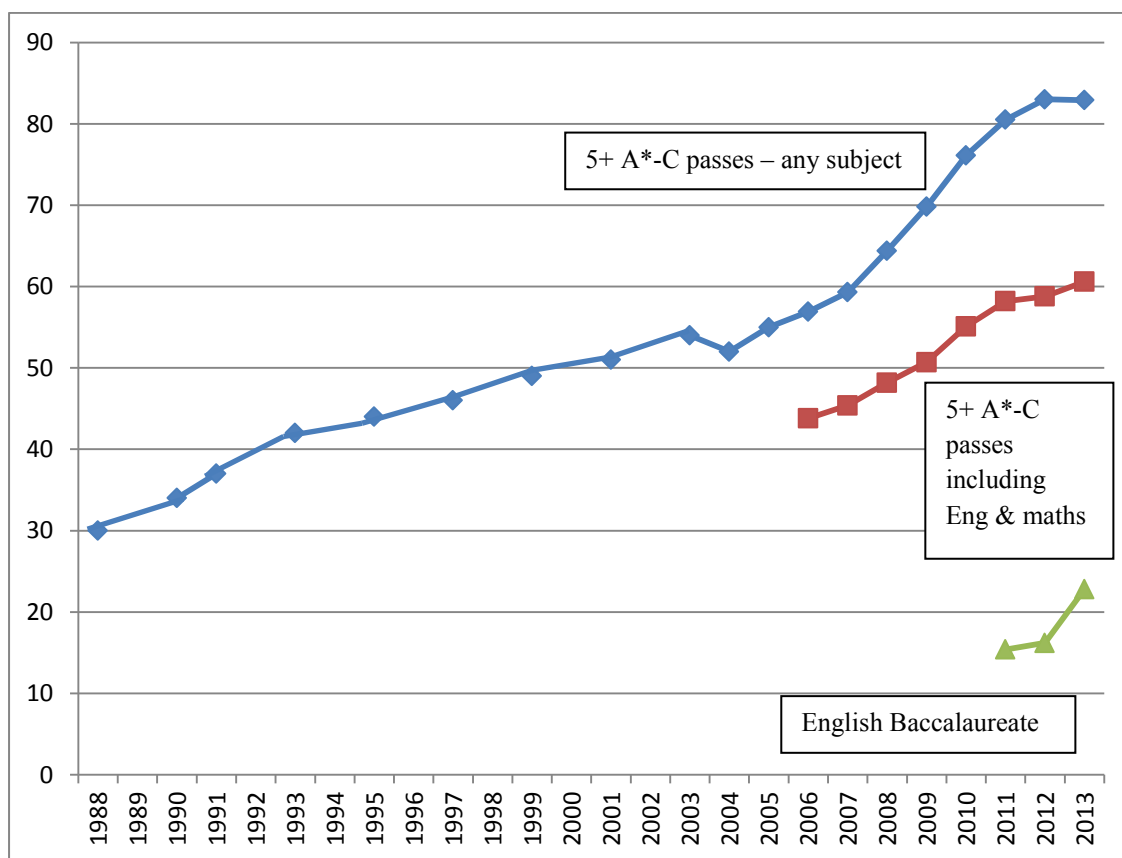
It is clear that, overall, rates of achievement at age 16 have been consistently rising throughout the period covered by our research; the proportion of students achieving at least five higher grade GCSE passes almost doubled between 1993 and 2013 (from 42% to 82.9%). There is only one cohort where the overall rate does not improve (2004) and that coincides with a major change in the type of statistics reported and so this may be an artefact of the methodology rather than a 'real' fall in attainment.[3]

Figure 1 also illustrates the significance of changes in the definition of educational success over time. Governments have not been content to measure achievement in a consistent way. In particular, there have been important changes in the degree to which governments have specified that certain subjects

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[3]   The data changed from a nationally representative sample of children in England and Wales (including those in private schools), to all children in maintained schools in England (see Appendix 2 for further details).

must be included in a students' portfolio of achievements. In 2006 the New Labour government, headed by Tony Blair, adopted what it called the *'Gold Standard'* measure of five or more higher grade passes *including English and mathematics*. This new measure quickly became the automatic benchmark by which achievement was judged. By specifying that students must include higher grade passes in English and mathematics, the Gold Standard was more difficult to achieve and attainment in the new measure was significantly lower (by 13.1 percentage points) in the year of its introduction (56.9% compared with 43.8%). As Figure 1 shows, although the proportion of students achieving the Gold Standard has continued to rise, it remains a more selective measure than its predecessor of five higher grades in any subject.

In 2011 the Conservative/LiberalDemocrat Coalition government introduced another new measure, the English Baccalaureate. The 'E. Bacc', as it became known, further specified a range of subjects that must be included in what the government described as 'a broad set of academic subjects' (DfE 2010: 11). Initially requiring higher pass grades in English, mathematics, *two* sciences, a modern or ancient foreign language and either history or geography, the E. Bacc raised the bar considerably and, as Figure 1 illustrates, is achieved by a much smaller proportion of school leavers. In 2011, when the E. Bacc was introduced, attainment in this new measure was 42.8 percentage points lower than the Gold Standard and 65.1percentage points lower than the 'any subject' benchmark that was in operation in 1993 when Stephen Lawrence was murdered.

Judging educational achievement in the years following Stephen's murder, therefore, is not as straightforward as might be imagined. In particular, we have found that *the introduction of more selective attainment measures has a particularly negative impact on some minority ethnic groups* (see below). This is very important;

- First, our data demonstrate that race inequity has been made worse for some minority ethnic groups because changes in the benchmark measure of achievement have had a disproportionate impact on them;

- Second, this suggests that further changes to the benchmark, in the future, must be scrutinized for their likely racist impacts *before* any changes are made, otherwise similar worsening of race inequities will again result.

Throughout our analyses of statistical data we focus on the principal ethnic groups in the school population, i.e. those with at least 5,000 students in each cohort. This has the advantage of making the analyses more robust (they are less susceptible to small sample-size issues) and yet still identifies the most pressing issues. At the start of this project the distinct ethnic groups with at least 5,000 students in the cohort at the end of compulsory schooling were, in descending size order, White British, Pakistani, Black African, Indian, Black Caribbean, Bangladeshi, and Mixed/Dual Heritage (White/Black Caribbean): together these groups accounted for 89.7 per cent of the age group (DfE 2012: table 2a).

Moving the Goalposts: 'raising standards' and widening inequalities
Figure 2 (below) shows the changing shape of the Black/White gap in educational achievement; specifically the blue line indicates the attainment of White British students and the red line shows the achievement of students categorized as 'Black' (prior to 2004) and Black Caribbean (in data from 2004 onwards). The lines show the proportion of students who met the requirements for the 'benchmark' levels of achievement at each point throughout the period, i.e. five or more higher passes in any subject (1988 – 2005), five or more higher grade passes including English and maths (2006 – 2010), and the English Baccalaureate (from 2011 onwards). The figure also includes the same data in numeric form and includes an **Odds Ratio** (OR) calculation, that is, the odds of achieving the relevant benchmark level of qualification for White British students relative to Black students. Hence an odds ratio of 1 would indicate that White and Black students were equally likely to achieve the benchmark; an OR greater than 1 shows that White students are *more* likely to achieve the benchmark, and an OR *less* than 1 shows that White students are less likely than their Black peers to attain the benchmark.

Figure 2

25 Years of the Black/White Gap: Changing Benchmarks, 1988 – 2013

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
White/White British	30		35	37		43		45		47		50		52		55	52	55	44.2	45.8	48.4	50.9	55.3	15.3	15.9	22
Black/Black Caribbean	18		19	23		21		23		29		39		36		34	36	42	29.2	32.7	36.4	39.4	43.9	7.6	8.0	14.0
Odds Ratio	1.95		2.3	1.97		2.84		2.74		2.17		1.56		1.93		2.37	1.93	1.69	1.92	1.74	1.64	1.59	1.58	2.2	2.17	1.73

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The Black/White Gap in Educational Achievement

Things have changed in the twenty years since Stephen Lawrence was murdered. Some of the changes are positive, for example, *the odds of White success relative to Black students have narrowed somewhat;* from almost 3 times the Black rate (2.84) in 1993 to just under twice the Black rate (1.73) in 2013.

Nevertheless, *inequality of attainment is clear throughout*; White students are never less than half as likely again to reach the benchmark; the smallest OR is 1.56 in 1999.

Generally the picture for Black Caribbean students is far from positive. During this period they became the lowest achieving of all the main ethnic groups in terms of the headline benchmark (Bangladeshi students overtook them in 2001: see below).

The impact of changes to the benchmark measure of attainment are also negative for Black Caribbean students. *A clear pattern can be seen whereby, over time, Black Caribbean students begin to narrow the gap to their White peers but the introduction of a new benchmark restores the inequality to historic levels*.

- The introduction of the 'Gold Standard' in 2006 restored White odds of success to 1.92 (almost double the Black rate) and roughly equivalent to the rate in 2004;

- The introduction of the E. Bacc, in 2011, restored White odds of success to 2.20 (more than double the Black odds) a rate not seen since 2003. *Effectively erasing eight years of progress overnight.*

The odds of Black success relative to White peers in 2013, twenty years after Stephen's murder, were no better than they had been back in 2007.

In terms of the *original* benchmark (5+ higher grade passes in any subject) the Black/White gap has almost closed in the 25 years for which data are available (from 12 percentage points in 1988 to 2.3 percentage points in 2013. The good news is that this is clear evidence (if it were needed) that there is nothing inherent in the motivation, ability, support or family background of Black students that means they cannot achieve on a par with White students; the bad news is that the most dramatic and consistent improvements came *after* this measure was replaced as the headline benchmark (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: The Black/White Gap (5+ higher passes in any subject)
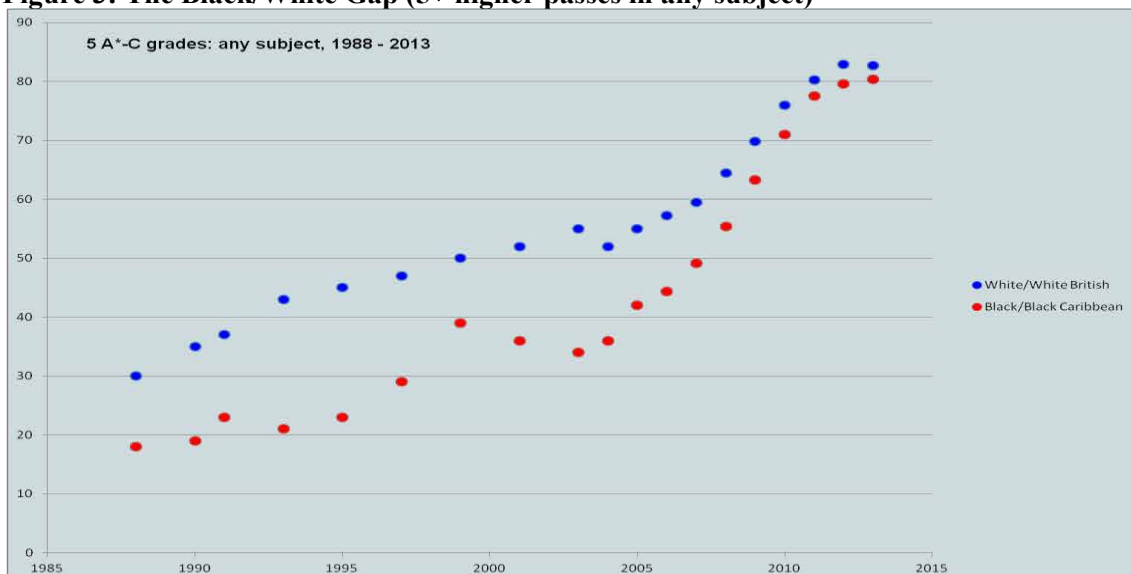
Mixed Race (White/Black Caribbean) Student Attainment

As already noted, our research focuses on the principal minority ethnic groups, i.e. those with at least 5,000 students in the annual cohort of school leavers. Only one group of 'Mixed race'/dual heritage students is large enough to qualify for inclusion, those with one parent of Black Caribbean ethnic heritage and one of White British background. This group first appear in the data as a separate category in 2004.

In general mixed race (White/Black Caribbean) students tend to achieve a little better than their Black Caribbean peers but worse than other groups throughout the period.

The odds of success for White students relative to their Mixed Race (White/Black Caribbean) peers hovers at around 1.5 throughout the period (ORs not shown).

- The largest gap coincides with the introduction of the E.Bacc, in 2011, at 1.78

- The smallest gap is 1.41 in 2009.

Figure 4: Mixed Race (White/Black Caribbean) Student Achievement (2004 – 2013) England.
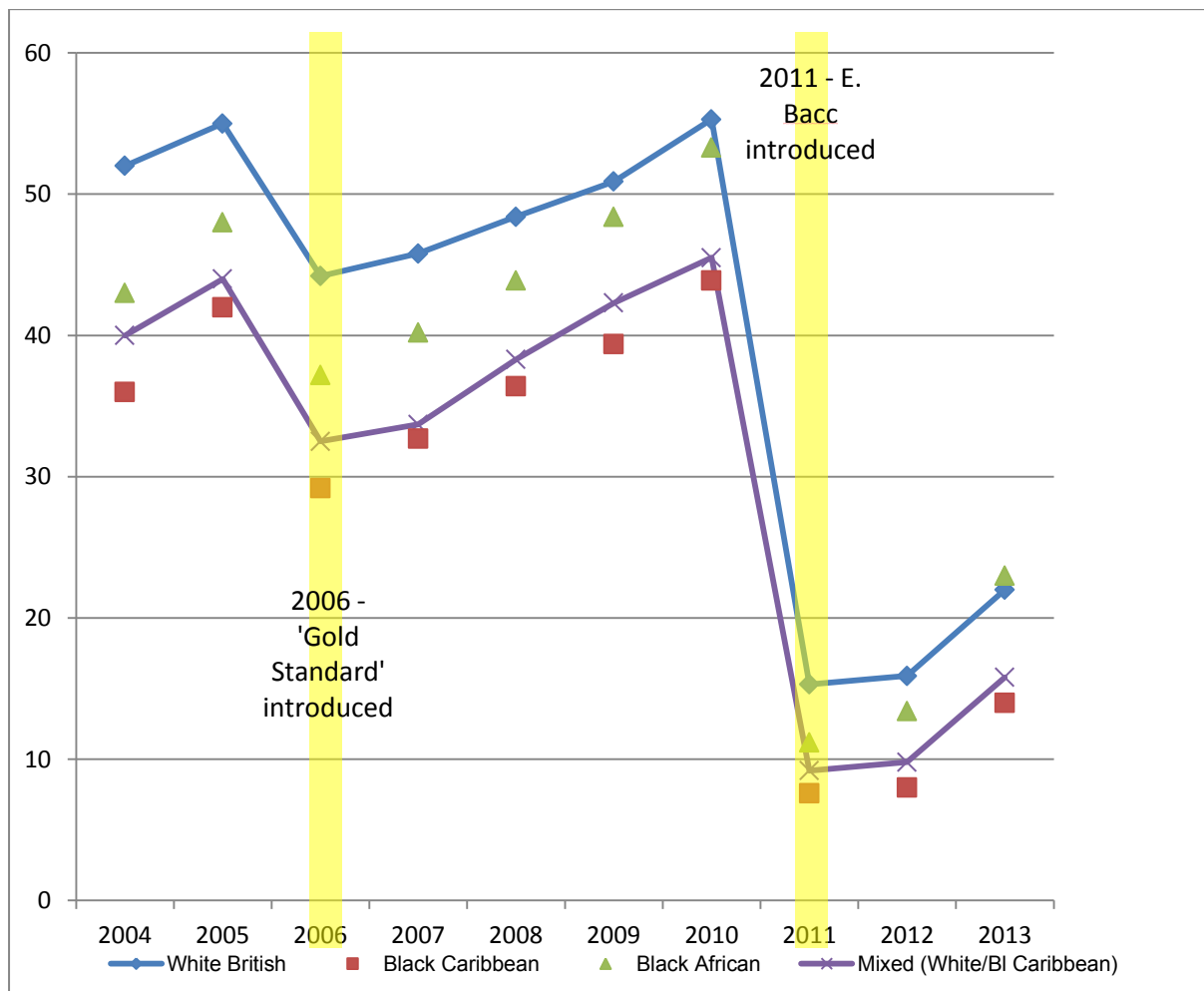
Black African Student Attainment

Black African students first appear as a distinct pupil group in official data in 2004.
During the research period Black African children's likelihood of attaining the key benchmark has closed and - in the most recent data - overtaken the White British group (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: Black African Student Achievement (2004 – 2013) Changing Benchmarks

- The introduction of the E Bacc briefly restored the gap to White students: the odds of 1.43 in 2011 were almost identical to the gap of 1.44 at the start of the period in 2004 (the biggest gap) – *wiping out 7 years of progress.*

- In relation to the original benchmark of 5 higher grades (any subject) Black African students overtook White British in 2009 (figure not shown).

All the ethnic categories used in official statistics are, by their nature, relatively crude. Within each group there is great variation; not only in terms of language, migration histories and socio-economic profile, but also in terms of national origins. This is especially true of the 'Black African' category which, in parts of the country, accounts mainly for refugee populations who face great economic hardship. In other parts of the UK the 'Black African' category is applied to populations from more wealthy backgrounds, for example, in West and Southern Africa (Bloom 2013).

The Principal South Asian Groups

Separate achievement data were available for the main South Asian ethnic groups for more than a decade before similar detail was provided for different 'Black' groups. Separate data for Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi students first appeared in the Youth Cohort Study (YCS) in 1991.

Indian students *achieved better results on average than their White British peers* (and the other main 'Asian' groups) throughout the whole period. The gap between Indian and White students' grows steadily throughout the period (represented by the odds ratio in Figure 6) but was *reduced* by the changes in the benchmark (in 2006 and 2011).

Figure 6: Indian benchmark achievement relative to White British (odds ratios) 1993-2013
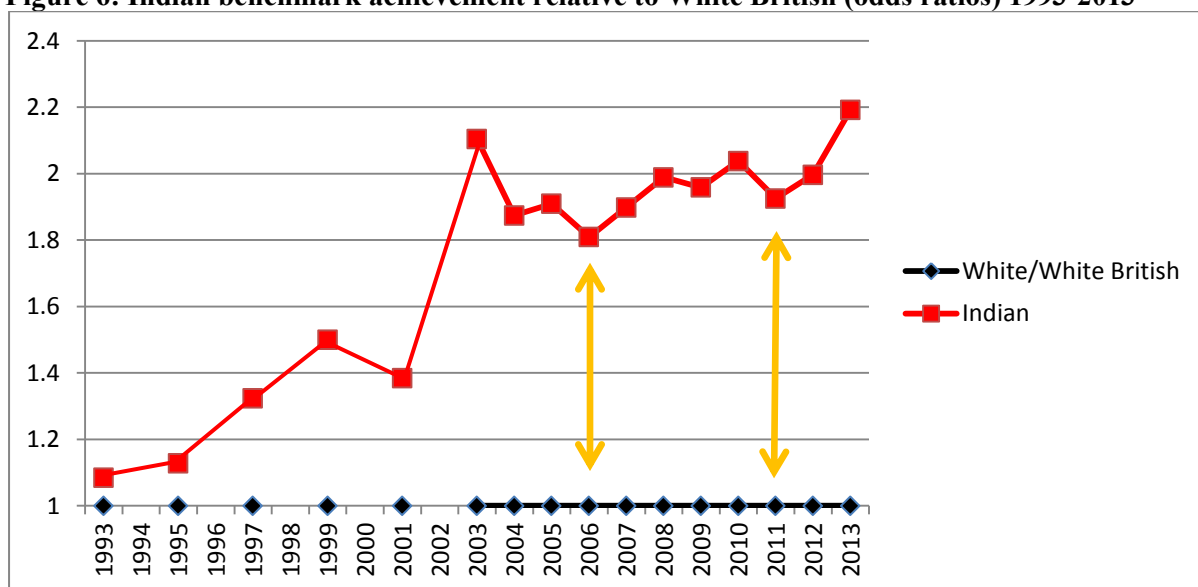
Bangladeshi students were known as the lowest achieving of the main ethnic groups at the start of the research period but they have steadily improved throughout:

- Bangladeshi students overtook Pakistani achievement in 1995;

- they overtook White British peers in 2011 (in relation to 5+ GCSEs incl Eng & maths) and 2013 (in relation to E.Bacc).

Pakistani students in general *achieve less well than their White British peers and have been the lowest achieving of the principal 'South Asian' groups since the mid 1990s*.

The gap to their White British peers widened during the 1990s but steadily narrowed from the mid 2000s.

Pakistani achievement relative to White British peers varies according to the measure used; as for most groups, the changing benchmarks had the effect of restoring wider gaps:

- 5+ GCSEs *any subject*: Pakistani students overtook White British in 2011.

- 5+GCSEs *incl Eng & maths*: Pakistani students have not caught up: 5 percentage points behind in 2013.

- E.Bacc: Pakistani students have not caught up, though the gap has narrowed.

Figure 7: Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and White British Achievement (1991 – 2013), England.
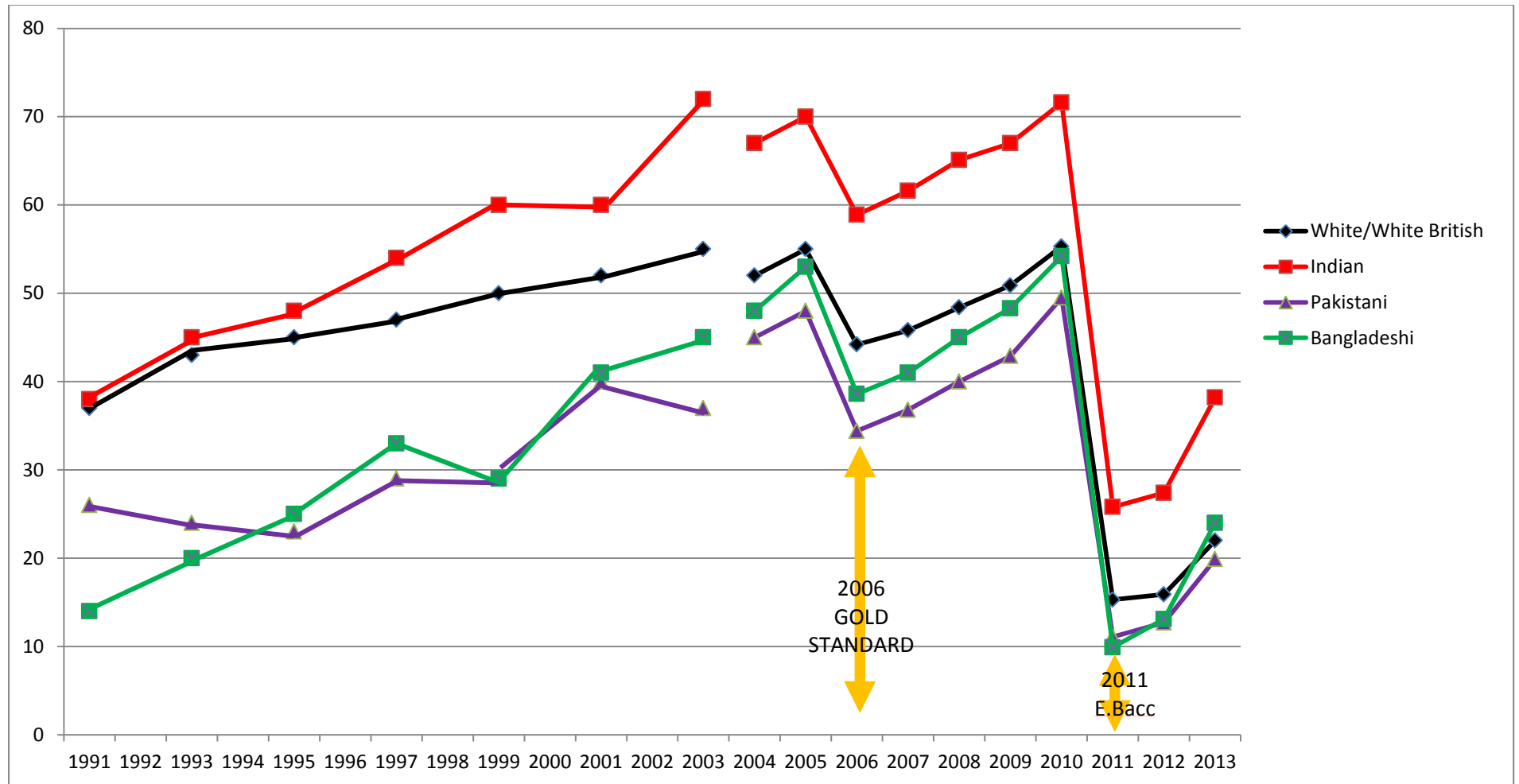
Exclusion from School

The disproportionate exclusion of Black students has been one of the key issues in the field of race and education for many decades. Exclusion from school is the most serious sanction available to headteachers, including temporary exclusion (also sometimes known as suspension) and permanent exclusion (expulsion) where a student is removed from a school's roll. The latter is known to have an enormously detrimental impact on many young people. Students excluded from school are much less likely to achieve five higher grade GCSEs than other groups – just one in five young people compared to more than half overall in the mid 2000s (Gillborn 2008). More than four times as many young people excluded from school fail to gain any qualifications at age16 compared with those not excluded. Being out of school is a major risk factor for juvenile offending. Research has found an almost direct correlation between youth crime rates in an area and the 'out of school' population. Young people excluded from school are more than twice as likely to report having committed a crime as young people in mainstream school (Equalities Review 2006; Gillborn 2008).

Exclusions have become one of the most controversial areas of inequality so far as race and education are concerned. The over-exclusion of Black students frequently emerges as one of the top priorities in the eyes of Black teachers, parents and students (See John 2015; GLA 2003; Richardson 2005).

Historically Black students have been over-represented in permanent exclusions whenever relevant data have been broken down by ethnicity. In the mid 1980s, for example, 'Afro-Caribbean' students accounted for 14% of London school children but made up more than 30% of all exclusions in the capital. This problem became even more pressing during the 1990s when the total number of exclusions increased dramatically: the figure for 1995/96 was 12,476: four times the number recorded at the start of the decade (Gillborn 1998). In the mid 1990s new data, based on official school inspections, suggested that nationally Black Caribbean children were excluded from secondary schools at almost *six-times* the rate for White students (Gillborn 1998).To this point, however, there were no national data on race and exclusions; all attempts to understand the scale of Black over-representation, prior to the late 1990s, relied on research that adopted some form of geographical and/or school-specific sampling.

Table 1 presents an ethnic breakdown of all permanent exclusions in England from 1997, the first year in which national data were available by ethnic origin. The percentages shown in the table refer to the proportion of students in that ethnic group who were permanently excluded; hence, the figure of 0.06 Bangladeshis in 2005 represents 6 students in every ten thousand, and 0.39 for Black Caribbean students represents 39 in every ten thousand. The years 1998 to 2001 are shaded in Table 1 to indicate the period where government policy explicitly targeted a reduction in the overall number of permanent exclusions.[4] In 1998 the first report of the newly created *Social Exclusion Unit* focused on exclusions and truancy from school. The unit's recommendations were taken up by Government and committed them to drastically reduce the number of permanent exclusions by a third from 12,700 in 1997 to 8,400 by 2002. The Government abandoned this target in 2001, arguing that the reduction had all but been achieved (at 8,600 in 2000) and that no new targets were necessary. Perhaps predictably, the following years saw a rise in the number of students being permanently excluded until another period of falling numbers from 2007.

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4   No separate target for reductions in exclusions for specific ethnic groups was ever introduced.

Table 1: Permanent Exclusions by Ethnic Origin, England, Maintained Schools (1997 – 2013)

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	*2002	*2003	*2004	*2005	*2006	*2007	*2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013
White British[**]	0.18	0.18	0.15	0.12	0.13	0.13	0.12	0.14	0.13	0.13	0.12	0.12	0.09	0.08	0.07	0.08	0.07
Black Caribbean	0.78	0.77	0.6	0.46	0.38	0.41	0.37	0.41	0.39	0.41	0.38	0.36	0.3	0.34	0.23	0.24	0.22
Black African	0.31	0.3	0.21	0.17	0.17	0.15	0.12	0.16	0.14	0.16	0.13	0.16	0.11	0.11	0.09	0.07	0.07
Indian	0.06	0.07	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.02
Pakistani	0.18	0.13	0.1	0.07	0.06	0.09	0.08	0.07	0.08	0.08	0.09	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
Bangladeshi	0.1	0.1	0.07	0.08	0.07	0.11	0.06	0.09	0.06	0.08	0.08	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.03	0.04	0.02
Mixed: White/B. Carib.	na	na	na	na	na	na	0.29	0.37	0.41	0.36	0.36	0.32	0.25	0.24	0.22	0.22	0.19
Mixed: White/B. Afr.	na	na	na	na	na	na	0.26	0.23	0.24	0.18	0.20	0.17	0.1	0.14	0.11	0.11	0.09
Mixed: White/Asian	na	na	na	na	na	na	0.11	0.12	0.09	0.06	0.11	0.08	0.08	0.06	0.08	0.05	0.05
TOTAL (all pupils) including groups not shown above	0.19	0.19	0.16	0.13	0.13	0.12	0.13	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.13	0.12	0.1	0.09	0.08	0.08	0.07

Notes

* Estimated data: For some years the department reported 'estimated' data because not all local authorities made returns.

** The data here are reported for 'White British' wherever that category is available. However, only a general 'White' category was used until 2003.

na = data not available

Comments

Permanent exclusions are shown as a percentage of the school age population in each ethnic group. For example, a rate of 0.13 is equal to 13 pupils in every 10,000.

The years 1998 – 2001 are shaded to indicate a period where the government placed a great deal of emphasis on reducing the overall number of permanent exclusions (following the first report from the Social Exclusion Unit in 1998).

Table 2: Permanent Exclusions, England, 1997 – 2013 (White British and Black Caribbean students)

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
White British	0.18	0.18	0.15	0.12	0.13	0.13	0.12	0.14	0.13	0.13	0.12	0.12	0.09	0.08	0.07	0.08	0.07
Black Caribbean	0.78	0.77	0.6	0.46	0.38	0.41	0.37	0.41	0.39	0.41	0.38	0.36	0.3	0.34	0.23	0.24	0.22
Odds Ratio (Black Caribbean r. White British)	**4.36**	**4.3**	**4.02**	**3.85**	**2.93**	**3.16**	**3.09**	**2.94**	**3.01**	**3.16**	**3.17**	**3.01**	**3.34**	**4.26**	**3.29**	**3**	**3.15**

Figure 8: White & 'Black' Groups: Permanent Exclusions 1997 – 2013, England.
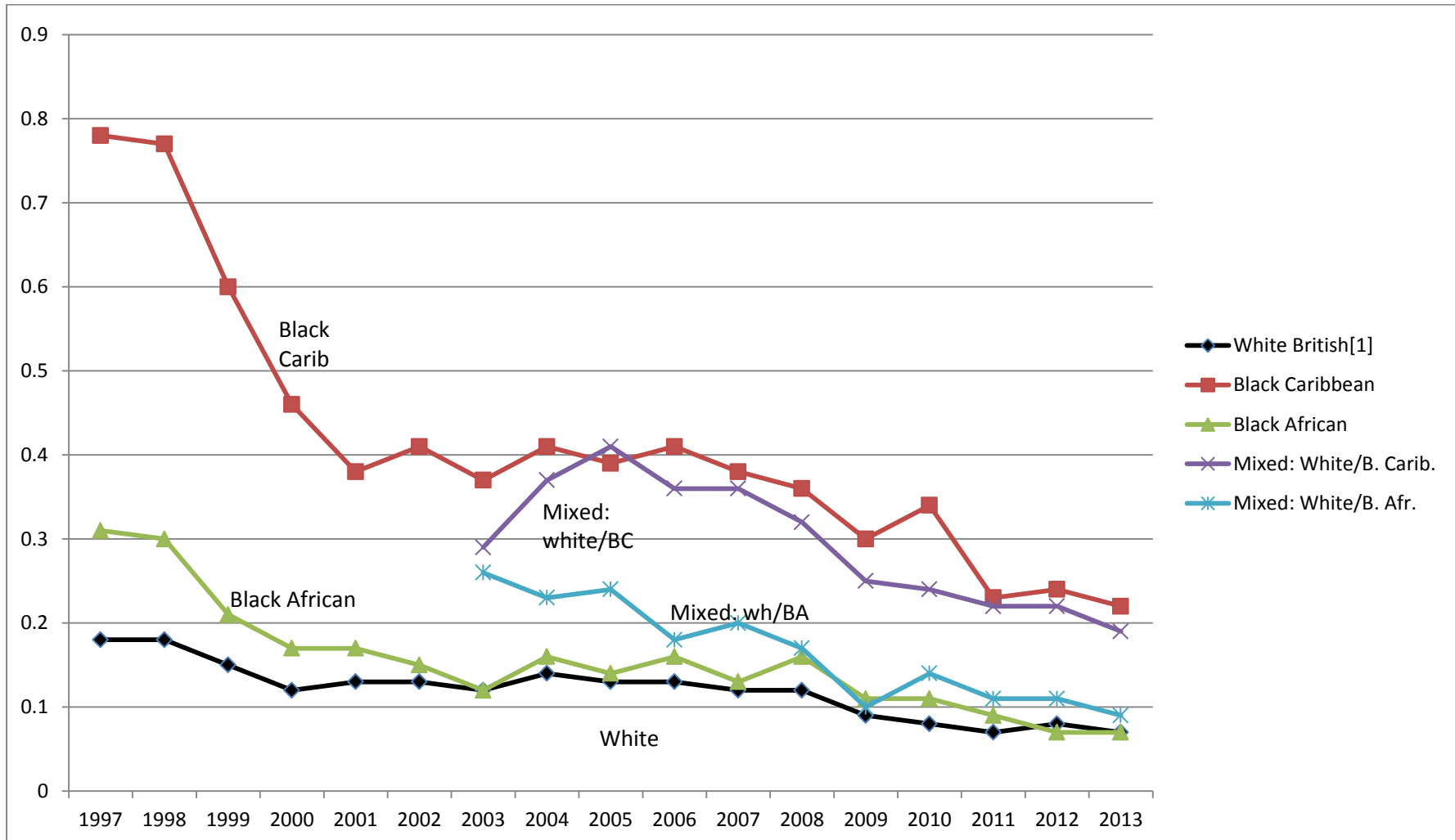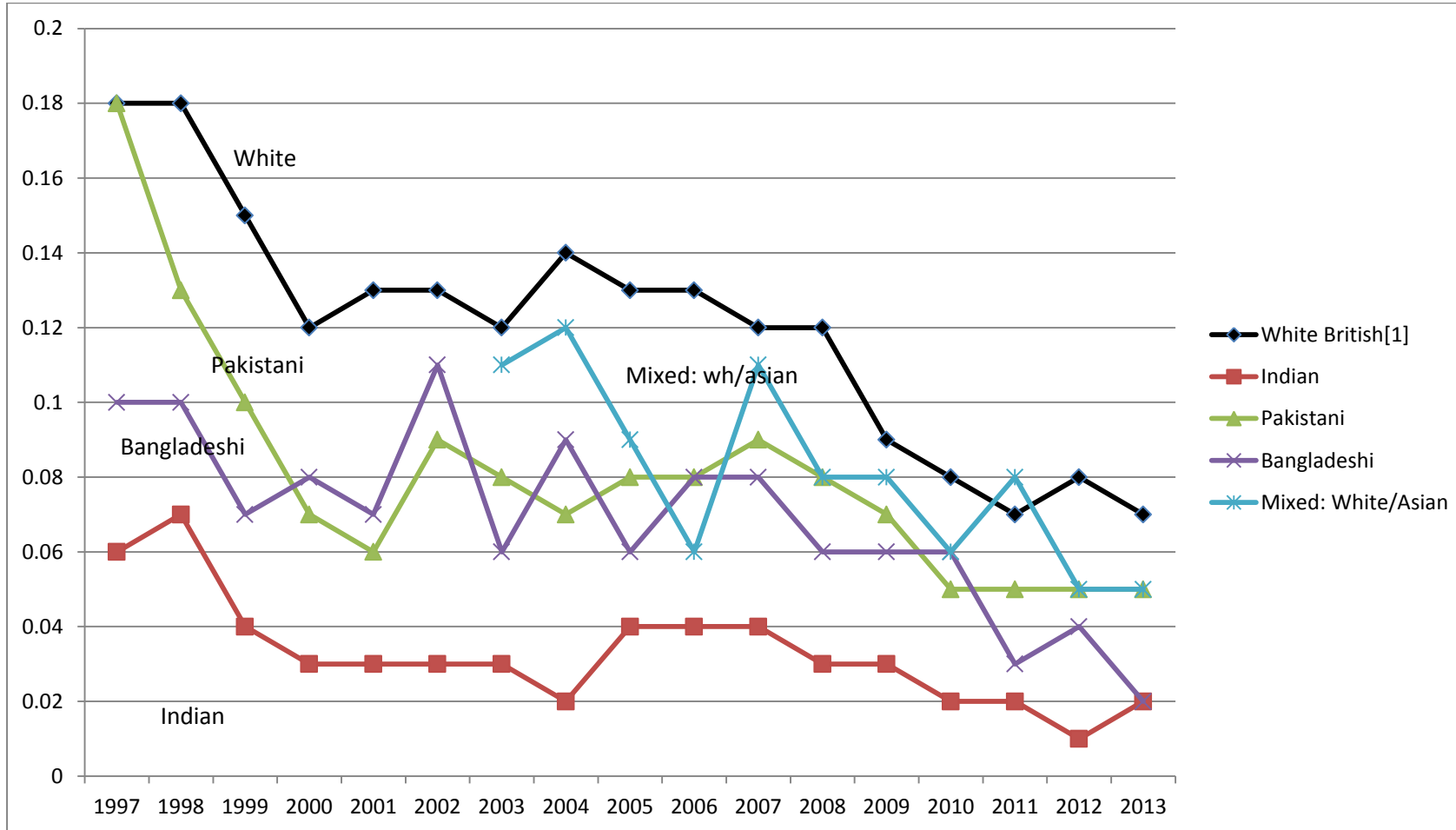
Figure 9: White & 'South Asian' Groups: Permanent Exclusions 1997 – 2013, England.

Overall, it appears that *students in each of the principal ethnic groups shared to some degree in the overall reduction that occurred in the late 1990s* (between 1997 and 2000 inclusive) and Black Caribbean students saw the greatest proportionate reduction. Nevertheless, as **Figure 8** illustrates, after a sharp fall in the proportion of Black Caribbean students excluded between 1998 and 2001 (from 0.77 to 0.38) the rate of exclusion once again rose. Indeed, compared with their White peers the over-exclusion of Black Caribbean students has been remarkably consistent throughout the period. This is shown dramatically in **Table 2** which uses odds ratios to compare the likelihood of exclusion for Black Caribbean students relative to their White British counterparts. The odds ratio of 2.93 (in 2001) is the lowest rate of over-representation; *the rate has fluctuated, including a peak of more than 4 times the likelihood of White exclusion in 2010, but at no time have Black Caribbean students been less than three times more likely to be permanently excluded than their White British peers.*

Black Caribbean students experience the highest rate of exclusion throughout almost the entire period; the exception being in 2005 when the rate for mixed race (White/Black Caribbean) students reached 0.41. As Figure 8 illustrates, a pattern emerges over the period where the rates for Black Caribbean and mixed race (White/Black Caribbean) students remain persistently higher than the White rate, whereas the rates converge for students categorized as Black African and mixed race (White/ Black African).

Figure 9 shows that students of 'South Asian' ethnic heritage are historically *less* likely to be excluded (as a percentage of their ethnic group) than their White and Black counterparts; the only exceptions being in 1997, when Pakistani and White British students had the same rate of exclusion, and in 2011, when White British were excluded at a rate of 0.07 compared with 0.08 for mixed race (White/Asian) students.

These data are extremely important. Indeed, the *Times Educational Supplement* recently featured the material in Figure 8 as the centerpiece for a cover story about the problem of bias in the education system – giving full credit to the project and the SES as sponsors (Creasey 2016). However, the topic of exclusions also demonstrates further the unique insights that this project can generate through applying a critical lens to longitudinal data on the experiences of minority ethnic students.

Exclusions: the Longitudinal Dimension
The data examined to this point (above) offer a description of what has happened to groups of students at certain distinct points in time. In this way, official statistics present a useful 'snapshot' of the situation at a certain date. However, the picture that they offer is somewhat *static*. For example, the exclusion statistics that we have examined to this point tell us only about the number of students excluded in a certain year. The statistics for the following year tell us whether students in the same group are more/less likely to experience exclusion but we have no way of knowing whether the same *individuals* are involved. This is where *longitudinal* studies become useful. Think of students' educational careers as if they were moving on a conveyor belt; at certain points there is a flash of light as they are photographed for inspection (at the end of a key stage; as they take their GCSEs; as they are excluded from school etc). The images are processed and provide an account of the students at that point in time. But longitudinal studies return to the same individuals over a longer period, effectively following them as the conveyor moves forward. We have begun to analyse data in the main longitudinal studies that relate to students in England, the **Youth Cohort Study** (YCS) and the **Longitudinal Study of Young People in England** (LSYPE), (see Appendix 2 for further details). These studies offer a view of exclusions that has not previously been analysed; in particular, by looking at the occurrence of exclusions (both permanent and fixed period) we are able to build up a picture of the *cumulative* force of these sanctions on certain minority ethnic groups as they approach the end of their compulsory schooling and the all-important GCSE examinations. The data are presented in **Table 3** and represented graphically in **Figure 10.**

Figure 10: The Cumulative Impact of Exclusions by Ethnic Origin (fixed period and permanent)
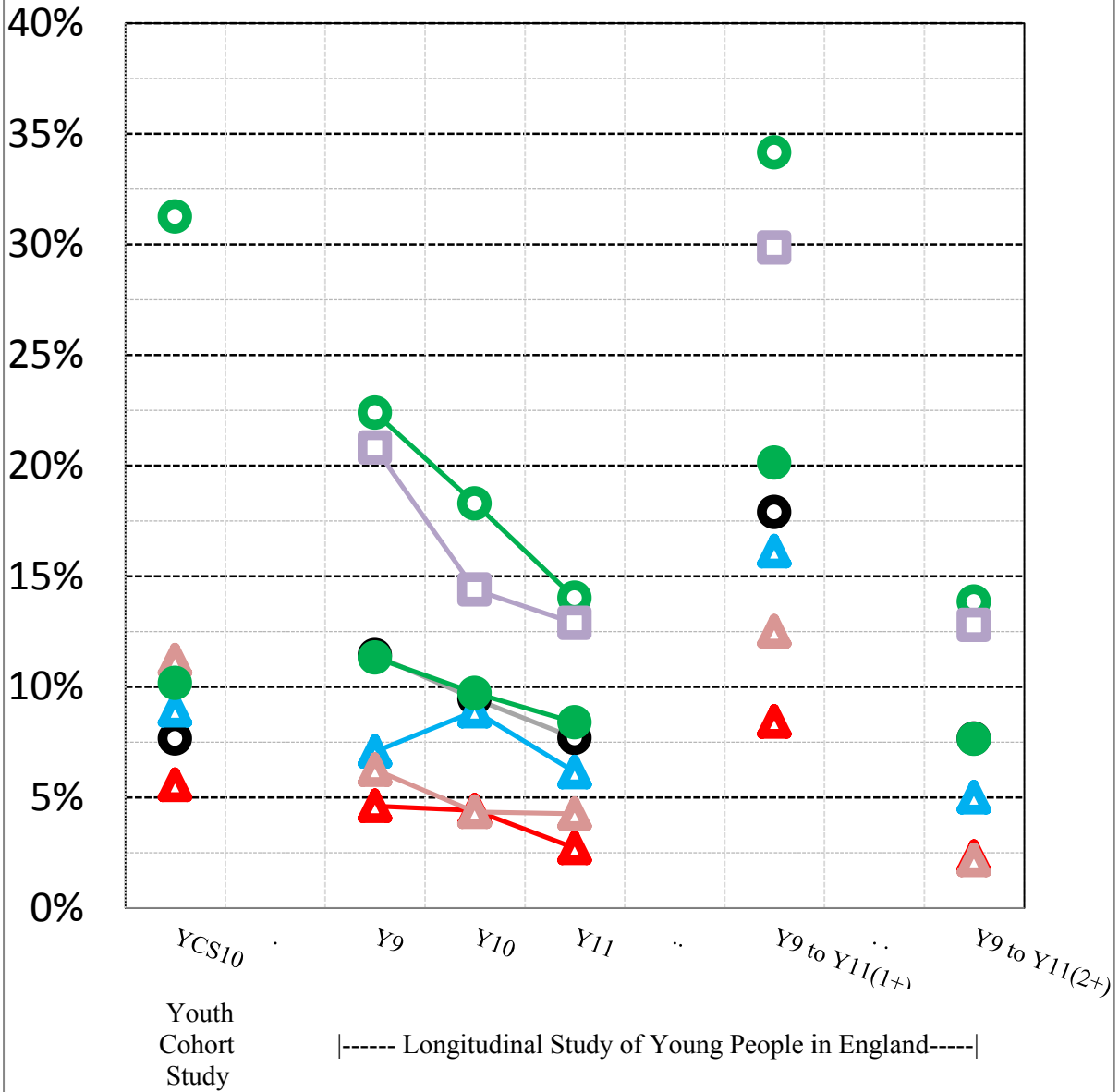
Legend:
- Black Caribbean
- Car / WH
- Black African
- White
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Indian

YCS #10: Born in 1982/3, these students were in primary school when Stephen was murdered; they finished secondary school in 1999, the year of *the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report* (Macpherson 1999).

LSYPE: Born in 1989/90, these students' schooling careers were contained within the 20 year period covered by this project; they entered school shortly after the murder and left compulsory education on 2006.

Table 3: The Cumulative Impact of Exclusions by Ethnic Origin (fixed period and permanent): Youth Cohort Study #10 & LSYPE

	YCS10	LSYPE				
		Y9	Y10	Y11	Y9 to Y11(1+)*	Y9 to Y11(2+)**
White	7.6%	11.4%	9.5%	7.7%	17.9%	7.7%
Indian	5.6%	4.6%	4.4%	2.7%	8.4%	2.3%
Pakistani	8.9%	7.1%	8.9%	6.1%	16.1%	5.0%
Bangladeshi	11.2%	6.3%	4.3%	4.3%	12.5%	2.2%
Black Caribbean	31.3%	22.4%	18.3%	14.0%	34.1%	13.8%
Black African	10.2%	11.3%	9.7%	8.4%	20.1%	7.6%
Mixed Race (White/Black Caribbean)		20.8%	14.4%	12.9%	29.9%	12.8%

* at least one exclusion (fixed period & permanent) in the last three years of secondary school (Years 9, 10 and 11).

** at least two exclusions (fixed period & permanent) in the last three years of secondary school (Years 9, 10 and 11).

Longitudinal data have the disadvantage that the material reports what happened several years ago. The government ceased funding bi-annual cohorts and so the most complete data (the LSYPE) refer to students who left compulsory schooling in 2006. Nevertheless, the data reveal some disturbing patterns; the data from the LSYPE are especially significant. They show that exclusion is more common during Year 9, before most students begin their two-year GCSE courses (in Years 10 and 11). Nevertheless exclusion continues for many students even during their GCSE studies. Indeed, *for Black Caribbean and Mixed Race (White/Black Caribbean) students the figures never fall below double-digits*. This confirms the findings of qualitative research into the experiences of Black students which portray the relationship with school as frequently characterized by tension, mistrust, heightened disciplinary surveillance and low academic expectations on the part of schools (Gillborn 2008; Rollock et al 2015).

In addition, the data in Table 3 and Figure 10 show that exclusion from school is not a sanction that only affects a small group of students who repeatedly fall foul of their schools' disciplinary systems. The final two columns in Table 3 show the proportion of students who, during their last three years of secondary education, experienced at least one and two or more exclusions respectively. In both cases the groups most likely to be excluded are students of Black Caribbean and Mixed Race (White/Black Caribbean) ethnic heritage. The cumulative impact of these processes has not been recognized in quantitative research before; the impact is such that *around one in three Black Caribbean (and mixed race: White/Black Caribbean) students is excluded from school at least once during the last three years secondary schooling*.

A Note of Concern: the Deteriorating Quality of Official Statistics on Race and Education
In compiling our various quantitative databases we have been struck by the worsening quality of official statistics in relation to race and education. There is cause for concern in relation to both the annually compiled education statistics and the less frequent, but more detailed, longitudinal studies.

Annual education statistics, such as the National Pupil Database, increasingly use crude aggregate ethnic categories. In 2015 the DfE adopted a distinction between 'major' and 'minor' ethnic groupings (DfE 2015a). Major groupings are defined as White, Mixed, Asian, Black and Chinese. With the exception of Chinese students, all of these 'major' groupings are crude composites that combine numerous groups with very different social, historic and economic profiles. No official

rationale has been offered to justify the changes and it is difficult to perceive any logic in the moves. For example, there are six times more Indian than Chinese children in English schools and yet Chinese students are considered a 'major' grouping while Indian students are subsumed within the broad 'Asian' category. Academics and community advocates working with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities frequently complain that their children are subject to racist discrimination, and yet the new categories include Gypsy/Roma students within the majority 'White' group.

Longitudinal studies have become the main source for detailed statistical data on young people's educational experiences, achievements, motivations and perceptions. The LSYPE has become a major source for educational researchers and, as we have shown above in relation to the cumulative weight of exclusions for some groups, the unique person-centred focus of longitudinal studies can be invaluable. However, there are simply too few high quality longitudinal studies. At the start of the research period, in the early 1990s, new YCS cohorts were being studied every two or three years. But the YCS has been replaced by the LSYPE (now re-named 'Next Steps') which follows students born in 1989/90 and so its members are now in their 20s. The lack of new longitudinal cohorts means that we have lost the detailed insight that was offered by the YCS and are more reliant than ever on the increasingly crude data provided by the annual school statistics.

CONTRASTING EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS:
The Qualitative Dimension

We interviewed 35 people who had played an active role in shaping and/or observing the shifts in race and education during the period 1993 to 2013 (a complete list of interviewees and relevant background material is included in appendix 3).

We approached people in two broad categories. First, those we view as direct *stakeholders* involved in race equality politics as community advocates, campaigners and/or working with third sector equality groups. The history of race and education policy, on both sides of the Atlantic, suggests that this group plays a huge role that usually goes entirely unrecognized in formal 'histories' of policy and politics (Bell 1980; Gillborn 2008; Tomlinson 2008).Our second group of interviewees included those involved in the policy-making process as '*insiders'* (politicians, advisors, civil servants). Rather than rely on the public record, we wanted to explore the human side of the political processes that lay behind the headline shifts in policy.

We are extremely pleased to have interviewed such a wide-ranging and fascinating group of people despite our preference for using real-names (which was made clear in our pre-interview materials) and the time commitment required for the interview (most lasted in excess of an hour). The quality of our analysis is enhanced by our ability to include the views of key race equality advocates and politicians who have been at the heart of government as Education Secretary (Blunkett, Morris & Shephard) and/or Home Secretary (Blunkett & Straw). A full list of interviewees is provided in Appendix 3

We are currently working on a series of detailed papers for publication and/or presentation at academic and stakeholder conferences (details below). In this part of the final report, we review the key findings to emerge in relation to interviewees' perceptions of the shifting status of race and racism within education and the wider public space between 1993-2013. The discussion includes a consideration of the significance of the Lawrence murder case; the extent to which politicians and policy makers *understand* race and racism in different ways; and the availability of a public language for discussing race in constructive ways.

The Lawrence Case: Memory, Hindsight and Insight

Education policy in 1993

Teleology is the curse of historical research - and research based on retrospective interview accounts is particularly vulnerable. So it is important to begin by qualifying the idea of the murder of Stephen Lawrence as a 'marker'. Stephen's murder in April 1993, and the multiple failures of the police's investigation, led eventually to the Macpherson Inquiry (1998, report 1999) and to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, both of which impacted in various ways upon the education sector. However, that does not, in itself, afford us an insight into the landscape of race equality or education policy in 1993. In fact, a number of the interviewees referred to the staggered route by which the Lawrence murder case impacted on race relations and social policy.

Stephen's murder did not have an immediate impact on government policy, and certainly not on the education sector. So where was education policy in 1993? This was mid-term in John Major's beleaguered Conservative administration (remember that in July 1993 Major was forced to seek a vote of confidence). Capital spending on schools had fallen to less than half what it had been in the mid-1970s and the education sector saw the continuation of market-led reforms (Tomlinson 2008; Gillard 2011). In 1992 the Education (Schools) Act had established Ofsted. In the same year the Further and Higher Education Act removed FE and sixth form colleges from local authority control. Education Secretary Chris Patten laid out a commitment to expanding selection in the secondary school system, to providing 'choice' and 'diversity' for parents and to addressing falling standards in literacy and numeracy. These principles formed the basis of the Education Act (1993), which introduced special measures for failing schools, and laid the way for greater selection in grant maintained schools (Tomlinson 2008; Gillard 2011).

In 1994 Gillian Shephard became the new Education Secretary. The Department for Education was renamed the Department for Education and Employment. Key policy developments between 1994 and the fall of the Conservative government in 1997 included: the Dearing Review of the National Curriculum (1994); Dearing's subsequent review of 16-19 provision (1996); the 1996 Education Act (which consolidated all Education Acts since 1944); and the 1996 School Inspection Act. The Education Act (1997) included new responsibilities for school governors in relation to school discipline, raised the limits for periods of exclusion, provided for baseline assessment schemes, made changes to pupil referral units and introduced the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA).

Reflecting on race and education during the early 1990s, Sally Tomlinson (2008) concludes that the period saw setbacks for BME communities and for multicultural approaches in education and social policy. Shifting away from the approaches suggested in the 1980s by Scarman (1982), Rampton (1981) and Swann (1985), the Major government tended to subsume race equality under generic issues of *disadvantage*. Anti-racist work was deemed outside the remit of the National Curriculum and when the Teacher Training Agency was set up in 1994, it offered no special provision for teaching and learning in a multicultural society (Tomlinson 2008). Local government funding to BME community organisations declined (Warmington 2014).

In schools there was some improvement overall in the achievement of BME pupils but disparities in different BME communities' educational experiences became increasingly apparent, with African-Caribbean and Pakistani pupils having markedly poorer outcomes than those of Indian and Chinese pupils (Modood & May 2001). Disproportionate levels of exclusion among African-Caribbean children persisted; it was apparent too that the 'failing schools', which had become the object of media and policy scrutiny, were 'predominantly attended by minorities, special needs children, second language speakers and refugees' (Tomlinson 2008: 123).

Remembering Stephen Lawrence

How then did the Lawrence murder case enter the public space? In the project interviews several participants, both stakeholders and policy makers, recalled initially hearing of Stephen Lawrence's murder. *What was noteworthy was that they began by commenting on its 'typicality', rather than the*

exceptional nature of the case as it later came to be understood. It was 'typical', first, insofar as it concerned the violent death of a young black man in London:

> I heard about it was because it had been in the newspapers, but it wasn't reported as anything exceptional…   (Trevor Phillips)

> …it was another black young man being murdered … So I'm afraid at the time …he was murdered – it got in the papers - there wasn't much, as I recall, said about it (Jack Straw)

Trevor Phillips is former head of the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) but in 1993 was editor of the current affairs show *The London Programme*. In interview Phillips recalls that Stephen's murder became a news story at the point that it began to be understood as a *racist* murder - the result of a racist attack. However, Phillips also notes that this set it apart from the main debate about the policing of black communities which were then (and which continue to be) dominated by issues of stop and search (EHRC 2010):

> …for all of my lifetime pretty much, the important issue has still been the treatment of black people, particularly men, by the police. Stop and search. Still the case. And… the Stephen Lawrence story was not really quite part of that story. It's not really quite the same point. It's not really quite the same issue.   (Trevor Phillips)

For Phillips, Stephen's murder was not initially understood as indicative of wider institutional racism. Moreover, Phillips suggests that the Lawrence case has often been misrecognised/ misremembered and that the subsequent Macpherson Inquiry has led to it being too readily aligned with an ill-defined concept of institutional racism. However, it should be noted that other interviewees remarking on the typicality of the Stephen Lawrence murder case suggested that, from early on, the case was understood in terms of wider community discontent over policing. It was a 'typical' case of police failure of black communities. Interviewees such as Heidi Safia Mirza (an academic) and Maxie Hayles (activist and campaigner) refer to the history of racist policing and miscarriages of justice (e.g. the New Cross 13; Scarman Inquiry, the case of Winston Silcott):

> …the police force hasn't changed very much in its make up, we still have huge issues to do with racism in the police; look at Mark Duggan and other cases that triggered the riots in 2011 and ongoing issues to do with racism in the police. (Heidi Safia Mirza)

Gargi Bhattacharyya (an academic and race equality campaigner) referred off-mic to attending meetings in the early 1990s in which the Lawrence family were 'just one of many families' campaigning for justice, following mistreatment from the criminal justice system;

Becoming a landmark case

How then did Stephen Lawrence's case become 'exceptional', registering nationally, not only in black communities but also with politicians and policy-makers? Interviewees pointed to the particulars of the case: e.g. the combination of legal muscle and the fortuitousness of the personal link between the Lawrence family and *Daily Mail* editor Paul Dacre. These factors helped create a momentum in which government had to be seen to act. Previous analyses of the Lawrence case tend to view the election of Tony Blair's 'New Labour' government as *the* decisive factor. But the picture from 'inside' the policy machine makes clear the significance of support from a traditionally right-wing source: former Home Secretaries Jack Straw and David Blunkett both point to the support of the *Daily Mail* for the Lawrence family's campaign, following the failure of their private prosecution:

> One element that made a difference in public perception of what happened to Stephen Lawrence was the fact that Neville [Lawrence, Stephen's father] had done some work for Paul Dacre, the editor of the *Daily Mail*, and the attitude change of the *Daily Mail* to this case… because you would not have thought that the *Daily Mail* would have taken this on. But because of that human contact, and we should never underestimate that we are human beings,

and therefore systems/processes/ policy changes have to be seen in the light of us being human beings – that contact made a big difference to *The Mail* throwing its considerable public weight behind the campaigning and the demand for change. (David Blunkett)

Academic Heidi Mirza (who was also a member of Blunkett's government Task Force on Standards in Education, 1997) reflects on how the Lawrence family's campaign, one of many waged over decades by black families, became iconic. Mirza attributes the impact of the campaign to its highly organised legal team:

> How I see the Lawrence thing and why the Lawrences are remembered as opposed to many, many others and we're sitting here… where the New Cross massacre was just down the road in 1980… you got lawyers, very eminent lawyers involved in the Lawrence case. Again, that whole progressive liberal well educated middle class lawyers who acted as conduits for that civil rights movement and I think it's really important to say that's what made the Lawrences distinctive. They had the evidence, the lawyers got the evidence in order to shift that ground and the state could not say 'this did not happen', the evidence was too overwhelming and the Lawrences got them with their pants down! (Heidi Safia Mirza)

Jack Straw was the Home Secretary who ordered the Macpherson Inquiry. In his interview Straw offers detailed comments on the Home Office's role in initiating the inquiry. His reflections also offer an insight into the arc of the murder case, from local tragedy to national landmark. Straw comments on the effectiveness of Doreen and Neville Lawrence as campaigners and the involvement of leading human rights lawyer, Imran Khan:

> We live in inner London in Lambeth. So I'm afraid at the time …he was murdered – it got in the papers - there wasn't much, as I recall, said about it. And, of course, that was partly because of the way the police had treated the murder - as if the victim was partly responsible for his murder …It was only from July '94 when Tony Blair became the Leader of the Labour Party, and he made me Shadow Home Secretary that I really, you know, got more interested in the subject. But it wasn't really until Doreen and Imran Khan and others came to see me, which I think was in '96 that it started really to feature on my radar. (Jack Straw)

The politics of empathy

Both Heidi Mirza and Gargi Bhattacharyya point to the importance of the (symbolic) representation of the Lawrence family as a family with whom the media and the general public could *empathise*:

> …within the campaign and within the media …it's racialised and class tropes going way back about the deserving and the undeserving, so Winston Silcott was [viewed as] undeserving and Stephen Lawrence is deserving (Heidi Safia Mirza)

Bhattacharyya refers to the Lawrence campaign being *strategically* pitched (within an endemically racialized/ racist public space) to produce 'an empathetic vision of the black family which does touch ordinary British families of different ethnicities in some way…' She refers to teaching cultural studies sessions around the time of Stephen Lawrence's murder, and focusing specifically on:

> constructions of the family and popular representation - what that does and how that positions us as audience and what kind of work that does in order to talk about why the Lawrence campaign …and also …family campaigns more generally, as a very particular way of telling the story of racist violence in a way that can make human connections across communities. (Gargi Bhattacharyya)

Her comments bear comparison with Trevor Phillips' reference to the empathy produced by the Lawrence campaign and the positioning of the Lawrence family. This was, says Phillips, exceptional and unprecedented:

For the first time in my lifetime, the majority community heard a story about black life with which they could empathise. And I don't mean sympathise. *Empathise.* And that was to do with who the Lawrences were, how they handled themselves … their dignity in their persistence. Incredibly powerful story and that in itself, I think, changed attitudes quite dramatically. (Trevor Phillips)

Bhattacharyya's reference to the family campaign (a *family-oriented* campaign) as a very particular way of addressing racist violence carries complex implications. Elsewhere in her interview she explains that the empathetic discourse of family and family loss is one that has been adopted (albeit with less attention) by numerous black campaigners:

… how do you tell an individual's story to show people a human while also saying it's not just me, that to also always be pointing to structural racism to say that this is a bigger picture. And I think that a lot of nineties politics was about that, about saying well, that you start from the very, very local, from the person, from the family. (Gargi Bhattacharyya)

However, Bhattacharyya also argues that it was a tactic adopted, in part, because of the lack of a critical public language around race and racism:

…there is no black political space, so to create the black political space you have to organise around the things which are very much the immediate things on the ground about what's happening to this person … This is how you will understand the structure of global racism, by what they're doing to your neighbour here (Gargi Bhattacharyya)

Signifying what?
One consequence of this family-focused discourse, and its adoption by news media, is that the Lawrence murder case has tended to be remembered as an example of a race hate crime. It has not always been remembered as a campaign around *policing* and wider structural *racism* within criminal justice:

…another thing happened very, very quickly in terms of the remembering and understanding of the case …In the *Daily Mail* …it very quickly ceased to become a story about police racism and incompetence and the history of police racism towards black communities and it became about, oh some terrible killers who committed an awful murder. You know, let's get them. (Gargi Bhattacharyya)

The narrative around identifying and convicting the killers – the pursuit of *individual* justice – then produces what, in CRT terms, might be described as *a contradiction-closing case*: i.e. a landmark case where the state's preferred national narrative (of racial harmony and fair play) is entirely contradicted by the facts of systemic racism. This contradiction can be closed by a public show of support for the victims and grand claims that the country will never be the same again (see Gillborn 2008):

…it becomes a whole other thing but it's probably connected to what has silenced discussion of racism because then there is a popular outcry and what we must do is cleanse and cleanse our society of these horrible racists because they're not like us, look they do these extreme things …no connection between the numbers of black men killed by police officers. That's a different story …there's no compassion for that. (Gargi Bhattacharyya)

The remembering of Stephen Lawrence's murder primarily in terms of race hate was apparent in a number the interviews, particularly among policy-makers. For example, Sir Michael Barber (Chief Adviser to the Secretary of State for Education on School Standards, 1997-2001; Chief Adviser on Delivery, 2001-2005, reporting directly to PM Tony Blair) commented on what he saw as the long term impact of the Lawrence murder case. In stark contrast to the typical stakeholder view, Sir Michael (sitting at the heart of the policy machine in Whitehall) saw things very differently, stating that Stephen's murder led to a fundamental change in public attitudes:

I think those basic assumptions (about) what is assumed to be wrong, just common knowledge about what is wrong - racism is considered to be wrong …That doesn't mean people don't have racist – clearly they do, some people harbour racist views… but I do think there's been progress and I do think some of that is down to Stephen Lawrence and Macpherson and the Lawrence family and the way that's been kept going as a story. (Sir Michael Barber)

Jack Straw identifies further reasons for success lying within the policy machine itself; i.e. Lord Macpherson's credibility as an experienced high court judge ('he wasn't a …twenty four carat gold member of the British establishment … but …a very good judge - people couldn't …dispute his findings') and the operational backing given by the Home Office machinery to the Macpherson Inquiry:

I also knew from my experience, and from observing what hadn't happened over Scarman, which was the inquiry into the Brixton riots, [was] that unless you – the person in the hot seat, the Home Secretary - set up a machine for pushing things and for checking progress, the whole thing would just disappear …just because of inherent inertia in the system. So that's why I set up this steering group and made sure that Doreen and Neville were on it. (Jack Straw)

Considered historically, in the context of the campaigns for justice fought by black families and communities in the UK, Stephen Lawrence's murder contained many all too recognisable elements; a racist murder, police failures and miscarriage of justice. It appears that several factors, possibly in a unique combination, made the impact of the case exceptional; the leadership and shape of the campaign, its legal teamwork, sympathetic media coverage and the opening of channels between the Lawrence family and policy-makers.

Reconstructing the past

But if the Lawrence case has become an iconic marker, what precisely does it mark? Has the case, as Barber suggests, shifted public attitudes to racism? Has it, as Mirza argues, provided proof positive of police racism? Does the Lawrence case mark a new, more effective approach to black community campaigning? Among the interviewees, Trevor Phillips takes an heretical line, emphasising what he argues has been the misrecognition/ misremembering of the Lawrence murder case. First, Phillips queries Macpherson's definition of institutional racism ('Macpherson never really understood what institutional racism was actually. And the definition they used was partly unintelligible but also vulnerable to misinterpretation.'). However, Phillips also suggests that Macpherson's mis-definition was embedded in a fundamental misrecognition of the case itself, and of the basic nature of the police failures:

Because the point about Stephen, the point about the investigation, was that it wasn't just about that [the police] are all a bunch of racists who didn't care about a black kid. Actually what Macpherson showed more than anything else was that they were old-fashioned, incompetent, slow; they were badly organised. And it wouldn't really have mattered too much - I don't know what was in the investigating officers' hearts - but actually wouldn't have mattered if they were, you know, a super squad of the most right on Black Panthers. They were just hopeless. They didn't know what to do. And, you know, I think the reason I'm going this way around it is because I think there's a series of responses which are based on what we now - the story we have told ourselves about this whole episode - which don't actually relate to what happened. (Trevor Phillips)

Phillips' comments reflect his current position on the problems with 'institutional racism' as a concept and, like all the interviews, may include an element of retrospective justification (note, for instance, how in Phillips' quote managerialist language - 'old fashioned', 'incompetent' – replaces the language of institutional racism). However, the interviewees' attempts to recall their contemporaneous

responses to Stephen Lawrence's murder are a worthwhile starting place because they alert us to the ambiguities involved in remembering historical 'landmarks' and 'shifts', in contrasting 'now' and 'then', and in judgements about the nature and extent of changes around race and education over a twenty year span.

One reason for beginning this section with an analysis of interviewees' reflections on the Lawrence murder case is to draw attention to the complex role of memory and hindsight in interview-based research - to acknowledge the mediated nature of interview accounts and the contested nature of the historical accounts produced. The other reason is the complex role that the Lawrence murder case, and the subsequent Macpherson inquiry, played in interviewees' accounts of shifts in race and education policy over the past twenty years. The next sections consider the rise and fall of 'race' and 'racism' as key issues in education policy.

How Did Race Become a Policy Issue?

Race: now and then

Fairclough's (2000) version of critical discourse analysis emphasises the ways in which narrative accounts of policy and of political shifts are organised around particular discursive constructions, such as 'equivalents' and 'oppositions'. Our interviewees do not present a simple contrast between idealised previous eras of policy, as Bhattacharyya puts it, race 'was always a fraught space'. Nevertheless, it is useful to consider the oppositions that people draw between periods, in which (to paraphrase Joy Warmington) policy was '*doing*' race equality and the current period in which policy-makers imply that we've '*done*' (or are 'done with') race equality. What do interviewees believe drove these changes in direction? Where did political momentum come from and how/why was it lost?

External events and politic responses

Stakeholders, particularly long-time anti-racist activists, tend to refer to governments historically being *driven* to focus on race by external pressures. Maxie Hayles, for instance, refers to the series of landmark conflicts between black communities in major cities in the 1980s and to the cycle of local disturbance followed by government response that led to key inquiries such as Swann, Rampton, and Scarman, and to the funding of community projects and anti-racist initiatives.

> …under Thatcher - and I call them the *disturbances* of the 80s, I didn't call it riots -…during 1976 to 1981, I think at least 34 black people were murdered in this country and nothing was done …Also we had during that time we had the Deptford fire, whereby 13 black youngsters perished. We had a situation then when 20,000 people marched Downing Street… black youngsters were saying enough is enough and basically what they did, they riot; they took to the streets in the disturbance. Now BRAMU, Birmingham Racial Attacks Monitoring Unit, came out of that same period, that same era, and as I said earlier, the Tories, the education of black people then became more to the fore and policies begin to be made because they knew they had problems. (Maxie Hayles)

Referring to more recent history, Ted Cantle views his report on community cohesion as a (Labour) government response to disturbances in northern England in 2001. Cantle refers specifically to the Blair government's decision to commission a policy review (led by those with backgrounds in urban regeneration and community relations), as opposed to a judicial review.

A number of interviewees spoke of the murder of Stephen Lawrence, the family's legal campaign and the initiation of the Macpherson inquiry in these terms: as *external* events that impinged on government, demanding a policy response. One civil servant (anon.) states that DfES' concern with race equality:

> …really reached its crescendo after Stephen Lawrence was killed. And, of course, governments – at least, that's the impression I got – they need to respond to that. You can't –

you know, they can't just ignore it. They need – because it was such a major event, there was a need to respond to that.

<div align="right">Civil servant (anon.)</div>

However, even within these terms, some former ministers note that education was not initially a priority in government responses to Lawrence/ Macpherson. For Estelle Morris, former Education Secretary, the Macpherson Inquiry and the RRAA(2000) were regarded as being within the *Home Office's* remit, rather that of DfES. A former Conservative Education Secretary, Gillian Shephard, agrees that the initial focus was on Home Office issues, especially policing:

> …certainly the kind of education focus that came out of the whole Lawrence affair seemed to me to start very much after the public enquiry, because they spoke also about the health service and education, whereas up until then it had been seen very much as a *policing* issue. (Gillian Shephard)

Insiders and instigators

The depiction of governments needing to be *seen* to do something, to respond to events, was repeatedly voiced by stakeholders. There was rarely a sense that race equality work stemmed from inherent government commitment or principle. As Ted Cantle puts it:

> We do absolutely nothing to present a positive view of the advantages of diversity. The only time we've ever attempted to do it was when we put forward our bid for the London Olympics.

However, interviewees (policy-makers and those whose backgrounds combined both activism and policy work) did refer to the importance of particular policy insiders whom they felt had, at pivotal moments, shown a grasp of key issues around race. Jack Straw was named by several interviewees, as were David Blunkett, Estelle Morris and Cathy Ashton (Baroness Ashton, appointed Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State in the Department for Education and Skills in 2001).

> …Jack Straw who was Home Secretary at the time [of Macpherson] …because he was MP for Blackburn he knew what the issues were …but obviously he had to temper the issues with a political realism …he too obviously was facing White hostility.   (Sally Tomlinson)

In broader terms Michael Barber and Charles Clarke were referred to as insiders whose proactive approach to education research created space for innovative work (e.g. Peter Wanless' report on school exclusions). Within DfES civil servants, such as Peter Housden, were regarded as showing leadership in education research.

Data-driven action?

The depiction of governments responding either to widespread social disturbances (as with Scarman, Swann, Cantle) or to specific, often tragic, high profile cases (Lawrence, Burnage – but not New Cross) falls into a narrative model common among stakeholders and activists. However, among policy-makers and civil servants whom we interviewed, another factor was repeatedly identified as helping drive race equality work in schools: pupil performance data.

The early 1990s saw the increased availability of more nuanced performance data (although it was gathered at uneven rates across the UK). The importance of performance data in developing a case, or targeted work, on race and education was discussed extensively by, for instance, Tim Brighouse, Inderjit Dehal and Michael Barber. *They regarded a robust statistical evidence base as having driven initiatives such as the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG), London Challenge and City Challenge.*

Sir Tim Brighouse recalled his work as Chief Education Officer in Birmingham (1993-2002), emphasising that by the early 1990s the local authority had access to detailed data on performance by ethnicity and gender:

> The period where I went to Birmingham - so that's '93 - by that time, in Birmingham …we had rich data about how well different groups were performing. Now nationally we hadn't and I distinctly remember when I was in Birmingham saying, 'Hey, come on, I've got a problem with African Caribbean boys' - and girls - but particularly boys and particularly poor boys …Incidentally when I [went] to a school and ask[ed], 'How are African-Caribbean boys doing in your school' - and I knew the answer - the leadership of the school were surprised that I was asking the question and [they] clearly hadn't thought about it. …So I think that the driver to get interested in all the issues from about that period on was because by the time I left Birmingham, then all that data was available. (Sir Tim Brighouse)

Here Brighouse describes Birmingham as being ahead of many other local authorities in collecting ethnic performance data and this observation is confirmed by the research team's experience of looking at LEA data in the mid-1990s, where Birmingham's material was by far the most advanced and detailed of any we saw (Gillborn & Gipps 1996). Brighouse speaks about the data as giving him leverage to open up questions about racial inequality that many individual schools had not yet begun to acknowledge:

> …we set up two groups then finally a third when I left - just small groups which I personally attended every meeting - on African Caribbean achievement, on the achievement of kids from Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds and a group finally, at my pushing and we never really got it going in any meaningful way, of White working class poor kids. (Sir Tim Brighouse)

Later in the interview Brighouse describes how New Labour built a national approach to generating and monitoring pupil performance data:

> I do think that that was something the Labour Government did, that's to say they insisted that the data was made available to them and then they insisted that the data were made available to different authorities and since then, of course, we've become preoccupied with these data. (Sir Tim Brighouse)

From 2002-2007 Brighouse was Schools Commissioner/ Chief Education Officer for London. Under Brighouse the London Challenge was initiated in 2003. It focused on resourcing and programmes in secondary (and later primary) schools across London, concentrating on leadership, school partnerships, buildings and environment, students' experiences and performance. Brighouse describes how in planning the London Challenge strategy, data became both a lever to prompt action in schools and a way in which he, as education chief, was held to account:

> …once you looked at the data, you began to say, 'Well, whatever it is we're doing up to now isn't working and therefore what else should we do?' …every year I would have a third degree whole afternoon interview with my senior colleagues, from the city counsellor who was in charge of equalities and personnel. Data coming out of everybody's ears with accusations flying at me about have I done enough, you know what I mean. (Sir Tim Brighouse)

Inderjit Dehal, who worked within DfES on London Challenge (and the subsequent City Challenge roll out in Greater Manchester and the Black Country) made a forceful argument about the ways in which the availability of detailed performance data encouraged targeted approaches to addressing race equality in schools.

…the then Labour administration …develop[ed] the first national strategy on tackling the under-achievement of certain ethnic minority groups. So that's where we started. The landscape at the time was that schools were fairly recent in their introduction to using performance data …and so with the introduction of better and more finely graded data we were able to demonstrate the things that we already knew. So we already knew that, for example, black Caribbean boys were excluded at several times the average rate, we knew that their performance was worse than their peers, but it was all anecdotal. What we were able to do for the first time was to show …time series data which demonstrates the degree of the gap …and using that data we were able to get Ministers for the first time to take note of it. (Inderjit Dehal)

These interviews offer a fresh perspective on the role of quantitative data in the policy process. It is easy to discount the use of statistics as a malleable resource used cynically to support whatever is the preferred political view of the time. But our interviews with people *inside* the policy process offer a different perspective. The interviews with Tim Brighouse and Inderjit Dehal are especially important; neither held elected office but they were inside the policy machine with an interest in social justice and both argue that data was vital in making progress; e.g. when challenging schools to act on inequalities (Brighouse) and persuading Ministers (Dehal). Two further observations are useful at this stage. First, note that 'data' (in all of these exchanges) is universally and exclusively assumed to relate to *quantitative* material. Qualitative material is not mentioned explicitly but, perhaps, lurks in the background reference to *anecdotal* evidence.

Second, the emphasis on data as a driver for attention and action, among policy insiders, highlights the wider importance of a change that we pointed out earlier (and which we emphasized in our evidence to the Education Select Committee in 2014), i.e. the *worsening* quality of education statistics in relation to race. As fine-grained data become less common, it is harder to make a convincing case, using quantitative material, that demonstrates the need for action on race inequity. The reliance on crude free school meal data (as a proxy for social class) and the DfE's adoption of broad aggregate ethnic categories are revealed as key problems. Where 'data' are important in moving forward agendas within the policy machine, the less sophisticated the data the more likely it is that uncritical taken-for-granted assumptions will shape the agenda.[5]

Ministers take note: a national issue
For Dehal, the performance data provided the kind of evidence that meant that race equality could be understood in terms of the dominant standards and achievement agenda of the Blair-Blunkett-Barber period:

So it became a national issue, the whole notion of gap-closing …it registered with ministers. It also registered with schools because we were then able to shine a light on individual school performance and individual pupil performance and we were able to go to schools and say 'look, do you know that if you look at Key Stage 4 there's a 30 percentage point gap between how black Caribbean boys do in your school as compared with how everybody else does in your school' …for the first time we were able to have those intelligent conversations …and to get schools and ministers to do something about it. (Inderjit Dehal)

Dehal refers here to the strategic value of performance data: firstly, in moving conversations with ministers and schools beyond the anecdotal (a way of substantiating 'things that we already knew') and, secondly, in developing a national conversation around race and educational achievement. Performance data had political purchase; it provided an evidence-base, a rationale for targeted action around achievement:

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[5]   We should be clear, however, that there is no automatic association between the 'sophistication' of quantitative analyses and a radical interpretation of equity issues. Indeed, we have argued that all statistics are socially constructed artefacts and that, in the absence of a critical race conscious analytical framework, numbers frequently obscure, rather than illuminate, race inequity (Gillborn 2010; Gillborn, Demack & Warmington 2016).

Ministers weren't really interested until we were able to show them the data …how do different groups do within those national averages - and when they were able to see, or when we pointed out the extent of the difference, it was then that they started to do something about it. (Inderjit Dehal)

Dehal's estimation of the role of data coheres with that voiced by Michael Barber, who (as Head of the Standards and Effectiveness Unit, and then Blair's Delivery Unit) pioneered the central role of statistics within the New Labour policy machine:

> …overall I think that the education system is more sensitive to and effective at dealing with race differences than it was 20 years ago… and I think one of reasons for that is that there's individual student level data available at school and system level. So you see it more, the patterns are clearer sooner …that [performance] database started, which we talked about in 1997, and I think it wasn't ready until the year 2000 or so …getting individual student level data and being able to track it. (Sir Michael Barber)

David Blunkett also alludes to the priority that his office placed on building the kind of evidence base described by Brighouse, Dehal and Barber:

> …because I worked so closely with Michael Barber and Connor Ryan, they did always want me to have an evidence base for what I was doing, and to examine what we were doing relative to international knowledge. (David Blunkett)

Targeted policy

As we note (below) a common theme amongst our interviewees was that policy no longer focused on race equality in the ways that it did, immediately following the Macpherson report in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Interviewees such as Dehal, Brighouse and Wanless pointed to a series of targeted strategies that had aimed in the 1990s and 2000s to improve achievement among BME pupils. These included DfEE's Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG), London Challenge and City Challenge. It is also important to note that interviewees with long history of activism in the field (Maxie Hayles, Joy Warmington, Tim Brighouse, Sally Tomlinson) made reference to the ways in which the initiatives of the 1990s and 2000s built upon the pioneering work in the 1980s by bodies such as ILEA, some urban regeneration projects and, not least, the work of community stakeholders and independent BME education projects.

In 1999 the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant replaced Home Office Section 11 funding, which had been introduced as far back as 1966. The EMAG was allocated to local authorities on the basis of numbers of pupils from 'underachieving' BME groups and numbers of pupils with English as an Additional Language (combined also with an FSM indicator). Its specific purpose was to narrow achievement gaps (NALDIC 2011). Dehal argued that the introduction of the EMAG represented a significant victory in arguments over ethnically targeted measures and laid the ground for the subsequent London Challenge (2003-2011) and City Challenge strategies (2008-11).

> Well a lot of it goes back to before London Challenge …a lot of the ground had been won in developing …the Ethnic Minority Achievement Strategy. So a lot of the ground had been won there …ministers and senior officials' awareness had been raised significantly. Because of that we were able to take that into the London Challenge. The other interesting thing about the London Challenges was the reason that they were set up was that there was a recognition that the universal national strategies hadn't worked in those areas. They hadn't worked for anybody, not just minority ethnic communities, they hadn't worked for White working class communities or communities as a whole. (Inderjit Dehal)

London Challenge was initiated in 2003. Contemporaneous DfES circulars stressed the aim of 'high performance; high equity' (DfES 2003), i.e. focusing both on raising general achievement and

reducing achievement gaps. This entailed drilling down from universal provision to focus on the performance of BME communities in general, and to focus on the particular BME groups whose outcomes were poorest. In this spirit London Challenge provided individualised support to 70 of the most disadvantaged schools and intensive work on reshaping secondary school provision in key London boroughs. It was subsequently expanded, via the City Challenge programme, to schools in the West Midlands/ Black Country and Greater Manchester, running up until 2011.

Sir Michael Barber also reflected on the success of London Challenge, compared to other achievement strategies:

> On education policy, the way I think about it is all the stuff that we worked on in the first Blair term, like dealing with school failure, dealing with bad boroughs – we intervened in Southwark, Hackney, Islington and maybe somewhere else – so we put pressure on the national literacy strategy, the national numeracy strategy, so I think all of those were good things. Education Action Zones was a good attempt but it failed. Excellence in Cities was a better attempt and it did better and then we got to London Challenge …I think the London Challenge has been fantastically successful but I just think it's an interesting thing, particularly in the 20 years history that successful policies are often based on the experience of previous failure.

So in policy terms initiatives that kept race equality on the national agenda during the 1990s and 2000s might include EMAG, London Challenge, City Challenge and, less successfully, Peter Wanless' *'Getting It; Getting It Right'* report on black exclusions. From 2000 onwards, there were measures stemming directly from the Lawrence/ Macpherson case and the range of duties defined in the RRAA (2000). At local level particular local authorities (notably Birmingham under Tim Brighouse) explicitly addressed race when focusing on educational achievement and school leadership. The focus on race equality as a key policy concern in the early 2000s, however, did not survive the decade.

Race: The Forgotten Inequality?

The project team's presentation at the SES Annual Seminar 2013 was titled 'Race and education: the forgotten inequality?' Our theme reflected many years of anecdotal evidence suggesting that experienced stakeholders and activists in the UK have come to regard critical work on race, education and social policy as having slipped from the policy agenda. Our study of race and education policy in the two decades following the murder of Stephen Lawrence affords the opportunity for systematic exploration of views among educators, activists, academics and policy makers. Our analysis suggests that this trend to de-racialize policy has been extensive:

> There have …been critiques of education and social policy in both the USA and Britain that suggest not so much a post-racial field but a field in which education and social policy discourses have been de-racialized. In the late 1990s Manning Marable argued that there had been a profound de-racialization of public policy discourses in the USA, claiming that what used to be termed race issues had now been 'subsumed under a murky series of policy talking points, such as affirmative action, minority economic set-asides, crime, welfare reform and the urban "underclass"' (Marable1998: 1). In the UK an equivalent set of policy items for the 1990s and 2000s might be catalogued, including community cohesion and academic underachievement. (Warmington 2014: 127)

Interviewed in the current SES project, Baroness Doreen Lawrence was among those who referred to the absence of race in public policy. Publicly lauded for her campaigning work around racial justice, Baroness Lawrence was emphatic, stating:

> *'race isn't on the Government agenda, they don't address race whatsoever…'*

Those of us who work in the field of race equalities regularly encounter this view. In a sense, they comprise a counter-narrative to the image of 'progress' (in education, achievement and social mobility) offered by successive UK governments (DfE, 2014; Garner, 2014).

This idea of 'de-racialisation' or 'de-prioritisation' also harks back to much earlier debates on the targeting of education and social policy. Commenting on UK social policy during the 1970s, American academic David Kirp (1979) argued that the British preference was to speak in terms of language and poverty, rather than race. Troyna (1992) subsequently took issue with Kirp's distinction between 'explicit' and 'inexplicit' efforts by the state to address race/racism in education. Troyna (1992) argued instead that the salient issue was what educational policies were explicit or inexplicit *about*. Explicitly racialized discourses may be explicit about, for instance, links between race and immigration but silent about the corrosive effects of racism (Warmington 2014). Moreover, *race does not simply disappear from policy discourse; ostensibly colour-blind policy may still rest upon deeply racialized notions of poverty, class and social agency, even if it does not name race and racism*. The project interviews illuminate the dialectic between silence and naming in public debate; interviewees' reflections illustrate that colour-blind policy can exist alongside deeply racialized (but inexplicit) discourses and practices. In this, they run counter to contemporary 'post-racial' narratives.

'We've done the equality stuff': the post-racial fallacy

In her interview Sally Tomlinson, the sociologist of education whose decades in the field have included work with seminal figures such as John Rex and Bernard Coard, was succinct in her judgement on the current standing of race equality work in the UK, noting simply that, 'Race is out of fashion.' So has race slipped from the policy agenda? As previously stated, it is important to note the wide range of speakers who commented on the retreat of race equality in public policy. Baroness Lawrence, in many ways *the* public face of race equality (Olympic symbol, elevated to the House of Lords, member of government working groups), states:

> I've said publicly that race isn't on the Government agenda, they don't address race whatsoever and I think that you find that within schools …within the court system, the whole thing … I don't think there's any accountability around that. There isn't any accountability. (Doreen Lawrence)

Among 'stakeholder' interviewees, grassroots community activists are often vehement in arguing that public/ policy debates around race are now beset by complacency and denial. Maxie Hayles, veteran Birmingham-based community activist, speaks of a post-racial *fallacy*:

> There's a fallacy that we live in a post racial era and that's dangerous. It's dangerous because racism is not *if* or *but*; it's an inevitable process and we're not going to get utopia.

> …just before Tony Blair came out of power, he ordered a report into equalities in Britain and the document was 120 pages and the word 'race' was only mentioned once …That's why I use the term 'relegate'. How can you talk about equality and you've got to mention, no matter how good a writer you are, are you going to mention race within that document once?

> …I'm not very optimistic in terms of race relations because… consecutive governments lack the will because for all different reasons, political reasons… (Maxie Hayles)

Joy Warmington, CEO of the Birmingham human rights organisation *brap*, also speaks about the dominance of post-racial assumptions:

> It's almost like we felt as a society that we'd done the equality stuff, we'd done the race equality stuff… (Joy Warmington)

Both Hayles and Warmington comment on the lack of legacy associated with supposedly 'landmark' policy of the 1980s. Hayles criticises Scarman's failure to name institutional racism explicitly; Warmington refers to the apparent lack of long term impact of Rampton and Swann on teacher training. The academic Heidi Safia Mirza also addresses the rise of a post-racial rhetoric, wherein a concern with race and racism is made to signify a backward-looking, regressive mentality:

> I think people are shy and embarrassed to talk about race now, including my black friends… people that I might mix with outside of academia. They want to say that racism isn't something that they've experienced or know about anymore because it means that you are not progressive. So what I'm saying is that post-race discourse has established itself so strongly in our psyche, in our discourses, that we ourselves can't see race in an everyday way … we now don't talk about race in the same way. We're seen as having achieved certain status, like President of USA and civil rights has had its day. It's done its work. (Heidi Safia Mirza)

'To name race is racist': loss of a language

Several commentators, on both sides of the Atlantic, have noted that one impact of the deracialization of policy debate has been to render any talk of race as suspect (cf. Gillborn 2015). Similarly, Mirza refers to a current discursive trope, wherein to speak publicly about racism renders the (anti-racist) speaker themselves open to accusations of racism:

> So there is this sense in which, you know, race is something that only the bitter and twisted talk about, only the disillusioned, only those who want a special handout, only those who want special favours, you know. So I think that's the commonsense kind of way in which it works out: that we're kind of post equality because we've achieved equality. (Heidi Safia Mirza)

This point is echoed in our interview with academic, trade unionist and community activist, Gargi Bhattacharyya:

> …the discourse of anti-essentialism and the constructive-ness of race have been so effectively taken over by the other side that to name racism becomes the racist … I think in every area, especially trade unionism … The first person to name race is the racist. If you say this is racism that means all you can see is race. I don't see race. You see race because you're a racist. (Gargi Bhattacharyya)

While Bhattacharyya cautions against the dangers of idealising earlier periods of anti-racist activity ('I suspect it was always a fraught space') she speaks in terms of a retreat in the face of 'the other side': the determined opposition to anti-racism. Perhaps most importantly, she argues that this affects not only formal discursive contexts, where policy is publicly debated, but also restricts the scope for joint action between different advocacy groups and communities:

> I would say that after many years of intensive activity and a great deal of quite heroic work by ordinary people in ordinary communities, somehow the work of the other side seems to have succeeded in - I hope temporarily - just squashing almost any public discussion of race, so that things which even ten or fifteen years ago… we were able to say to each other …somehow the discourse about what can count as racism, about how racism can be articulated, has flowed in such a way that now it's much, much harder for communities to come together and say what is happening to us is racism and this is how we can have a shared understanding and do something about it. (Gargi Bhattacharya)

Bhattacharyya argues that structural conceptions of racism have been trumped by those who prefer to define racism *only* in narrow terms of crude personal prejudice:

…the script has been very effective in terms of silencing discussion of racism in a whole range of spaces and I think [that] has been very eagerly taken up by people in authority in a different range of spaces because it allows… things to be returned to interpersonal relations and racism to not be spoken about and nothing about institutional practice to be spoken about. (Gargi Bhattacharyya)

Silent and invisible: marginalising race quality

Bhattacharyya and Mirza are among a number of interviewees who span several roles, combining activist experience with policy work. Another interviewee (anon.) is a civil servant who also has a range of practitioner experience. This interviewee (anon.) named specific moments and settings in which race equality was relegated from the policy agenda. The interviewee refers to working on a New Labour-era DfES focus group with a group of influential headteachers:

> … in those days they used to have groups of headteachers …that used to come and advise the Government on education issues… I think they must have been started in the days of David Blunkett …like focus-group-type people ...who'd come for particular – different types of issues and give advice and, you know, meet with ministers …and so on. And there was one made up of headteachers that used to come and advise. I remember this conversation where the feeling was amongst the headteachers in that focus group …that they felt that race wasn't such a big issue. Things had 'changed'. Things were changing sufficiently and it wasn't such a big issue. (Civil servant, anon.)

This interviewee perceives a retreat since the period of Lawrence, Macpherson and the RRAA (2000), suggesting that the terms of public debate have been radically reordered in ways that severely constrain the possibilities of addressing BME communities' continued experiences of racism and inequality:

> …I think that post-Stephen-Lawrence phase was a period of awareness. And I think we've gone back since then. We might even be in a worse place. Because before Stephen Lawrence, black people were visible as the possible recipients of racism. Now they're actually invisible as the possible recipients of racism... Now it's like… you know, black people are integrated. They're settled. They're British. So now the racism that black people experience cannot even be seen, whereas in the past, before Stephen Lawrence, you could talk about people being racist towards black people, and black people might actually nod their head in agreement. Now it's like, 'No, no, no, no. Now it's the Eastern Europeans that have the problem.' Interesting where the problem is located. (Civil servant, anon.)

It is noteworthy that the perception of policy retreat from addressing race and racism is not only held by the 'usual suspects', i.e. 'grassroots' activists and stakeholders with backgrounds in/ allegiance to what might be termed 1970s/ 80s black left politics. Note, for example, comments by Derek Bardowell (Esme Fairbairn Foundation) who refers to a *comfort zone*, in which past anxieties about addressing race and racism are displaced by an insistence that things are much better than they used to be:

> that comfort zone… says 'we're not really comfortable with race, we're not really comfortable talking about it unless it's in these really generic, fine terms which say, 'Things are better, so we're kind of happy with that' and it seems to be either of the two extremes – 'Things are better, so we're comfortable with that' or the other extreme which is 'Oh …we can't deal with that, you know, that doesn't exist, it's not apparent anymore.' (Derek Bardowell)

Katharine Birbalsingh, Head of Michaela Community School, a new free school, gained national attention at the 2010 Conservative Party conference, through her outspoken comments on academic standards, low expectations and poor behaviour in state schools; 'Black children underachieve

because of what the well-meaning liberal does to him'.[6] She now speaks in terms of a wider public indifference to education and social mobility among political parties, media commentators and, she asserts, many in black communities:

> …I don't write anything anymore. You know why? Because it doesn't make any difference. I was writing all these articles, writing books, trying to do all this stuff, saying, 'I'm going to get people marching in the streets. I'm going to get things to change.' Nobody cares. Doesn't matter what I said to people. (Katharine Birbalsingh)

Sir Michael Barber's comments on race in education (above) and social policy might be read as evidence of the tendency that Bardowell identifies. Barber tends towards a progress narrative, in which the education system in general is 'more sensitive to and effective at dealing with race differences than it was 20 years ago.' He refers to this effectiveness in technicist terms (the importance of nuanced achievement data) and in terms of the positive outcomes of London Challenge ('Hackney, just for an example, exceeds the national average on primary and secondary schools, which is incredible.'). Barber feels that in regions that have only recently experienced new migration, schools might be 'like a decade or two behind the debate on race', but he is confident that, in national terms, there have been fundamental shifts in attitudes, naming the Lawrence murder case as a factor in shifting public views ('…attitudes are generally much different from 30 years ago …racism is considered to be wrong'). Former Education secretary Gillian Shephard also perceives fundamental generational shifts in attitudes, at least at the personal level:

> I just think our young people are living in a much more multi-racial world and you – you think about pop music. You think about the Olympics. You know. There is no way that young people can…really can be racist now. (Gillian Shephard)

From New Labour to Coalition: backwards steps?
In discussing race and education policy, not all policy insiders are as optimistic. Several comment explicitly on the de-prioritising of race in government policy in recent years. Among them are figures who had worked with DfES on major policy initiatives and research projects. They include Sir Tim Brighouse (London Challenge; City Challenge; Education Chief Education Officer, Birmingham, 1993-2002); Inderjit Dehal (DfES, EMAG, London Challenge, City Challenge); and Peter Wanless (author of *Getting It; Getting It Right* – 2006 special report on school exclusions).

Peter Wanless describes himself as having been fortunate to work at DfES (under Peter Housden, and with the supportive influence of Michael Barber's Standards Unit) during a period when DfES was receptive to 'sophisticated', community-driven research agendas (e.g. around school exclusions). However, he remarks that this approach become squeezed, in the latter part of the Blair government, by the overriding focus on literacy and numeracy within the school improvement strategy. He suggests that his own report on black Caribbean children and school exclusions (*Getting It; Getting It Right*), while enthusiastically received by parents and activists, had been marginal to emergent DfES work on achievement and school improvement and did not benefit from the 'intensive kind of follow-through' needed to embed policy:

> …it wasn't sufficiently connected to a central drive of Government policy and priorities, I suppose, to be elevated to the position that if the report had been on doubling A grades at maths, you know…politicians would have leapt all over [it]. (Peter Wanless)

For Inderjit Dehal, who worked at DfES for some twelve years, the retreat from targeted policy on race and education was not entirely initiated by the Conservative/Lib Dem government (Dehal referred to the slow erosion of the influence of Macpherson under New Labour) but it was hastened

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6 2010 Conservative Party Conference. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XekkQ3HG2lg

by the Coalition from 2010 onwards. The Coalition, he argues, combined small state convictions with a technicist approach to school improvement and a complacency around improved BME attainment:

> I think we've taken tremendous steps backwards [since 2010]. So, you know, I'm not trying to paint it in just party lines because… it's not all about the Labour/Conservative divide but [under Labour we had been] progressively able to do more on the race equality agenda. You know, we were able to get it on the table, we had to get schools to start addressing it… taking account of different needs of BME communities and it became a focus. I'd say over the last five years that focus has completely gone, you know, there is no focus. You still hear bits and pieces about the paucity of young people from certain minority ethnic communities going on to Russell Group universities or whatever. You don't really hear anything more than that and I think that's been down to two things. One has been the approach that the Tories have taken where, you know, race just isn't – or any type of equality – just isn't a factor. But the second part of it is how kind of pseudo-scientific school improvement has become. (Inderjit Dehal)

Dehal was among the most explicit critics of shifts - 'steps backwards' - in education policy under the Coalition. For Dehal, the focus on race equality has 'completely' slipped from the Department of Education's agenda. Sir Tim Brighouse, former Chief Education Officer in Birmingham, Oxford and London, also says that the Coalition largely retreated from race equality as an issue:

> …if you looked back at the 1960s and 70s and wherever you were then, you would say we are further on than then, but we have been further on than we are now… Gone up and dipped and gone up and dipped. And I would say at the moment it's dipping. (Sir Tim Brighouse)

In his interview Brighouse talked of the need to understand race as a permanent social issue ('I don't believe racism will ever be cracked at all. I don't …it's something you've just got to keep returning to'). He is particularly critical, therefore, of what he perceives as the government's failure to address issues such as Islamophobia and a general failure to maintain a focus on equalities in education.

Diversity and citizenship

Another marker of the loss of policy focus on equalities was the fate of the citizenship agenda, prioritised by the last New Labour government in Sir Keith Ajegbo's (2007) *Diversity and Citizenship - curriculum review*. In his interview Ajegbo depicted the Coalition as breaking with New Labour's strategies around citizenship and cohesion. For Ajegbo, Gordon Brown had already begun to reshape the citizenship agenda into a much more conservative form (one concerned with promoting *Britishness*) than that envisaged in *Diversity and Citizenship*. However, under the Coalition the relationship between citizenship, community cohesion and issues of race equality was severed and, very significantly, Ofsted's focus on race equality was removed. Ajegbo discusses the marginalisation of his own role and his sense that schools, anticipating the impending shifts in national government and the inspectorate, largely jettisoned his area of race equality work:

> …we wrote the report, came out in 2007, and it was part of Ofsted inspection, and because it was part of Ofsted inspection, schools were incredibly interested in how do you get those things around community cohesion into your school, so when you're inspected… you can get outstanding?

He describes being very busy, 'rushing all over the place, doing lots of lectures, talking to people about the report' but that changed dramatically after the Coalition came to power:

> Directly it became evident that the Coalition weren't going to have that as part of Ofsted, and that it was no longer so important for schools, and other things were going to become more important as the Coalition's thinking, then those invitations dried up. (Sir Keith Ajegbo)

Later in the same interview Ajegbo underlines his point about the radical shift in attitudes to citizenship and diversity, and emphasizes the pivotal role that Ofsted inspection now plays in determining schools' priorities:

> …it died – absolutely died – when the Coalition came in... it completely went, once it went out of Ofsted… citizenship and community cohesion were New Labour words that the Coalition were not interested in. (Sir Keith Ajegbo)

Ted Cantle, author of the key 2001 report on community cohesion depicts a similar scenario, suggesting that the Coalition government narrowed and then abandoned work on diversity and community cohesion in social policy:

> the [Coalition] Government then took [community cohesion] out of the Ofsted agenda, and they're now trying to bring it back in a very partial way… …Michael Gove, I think, personally, didn't understand; secondly, didn't believe it; thirdly, and the reason he gave, was that he wanted schools to concentrate on the key performance targets – maths, English, science – and any of this wider education stuff should be ditched. So he created a very, very narrow agenda … (Ted Cantle)

Like Ajegbo and Brighouse, Cantle suggests that the Coalition's commitment to a narrow version of the performance/ attainment agenda squeezed out concerns about the wider social context of schooling. Cantle names Michael Gove as the principal agent of this narrowing of focus, and reshaping of Ofsted's inspection criteria.

The ministers

Among the project interviewees were a number of former government ministers, both Labour and Conservative. These included three former education secretaries; one former home secretary; one MP who had been home secretary *and* education minister; and one former minister for higher education. Some ex-ministers also suggested that race equality had been largely excised from the political agenda since New Labour's 2010 defeat. While it must be noted that these critics were Labour MPs, who tended to locate the decline of race in education and policy with the Coalition government, their comments on the post-Lawrence/ Macpherson landscape should be noted.

Former higher education minister, David Lammy, conceded that some aspects of the Coalition's social policy (and its localist agenda) lent themselves to consideration of diversity but suggested that the Coalition was uncomfortable with defining diversity issues overtly in terms of race:

> I mean, the backdrop of Britain circa 2014 is that we have a national government that is not committed overtly to a race strategy, does not like to define things in relation to race, which is different from the previous government …it's more comfortable with *diversity* in all its guises but less comfortable with *race*. The last government has a quite strong agenda around social cohesion coming out of reports like the Cantle Report and the riots in Bradford in 2001. [The Coalition] government seems …interested in integration but has dropped some of the language around social cohesion. So the national story on a kind of race specific agenda at this point in Britain is not present. (David Lammy)

Note that, like Cantle and Ajegbo, Lammy refers to the loss of the social/ community cohesion drive, to a lack of leadership around equality and diversity, and, like Gargi Bhattacharyya (earlier) to the loss of a *language* for critically discussing such issues. David Blunkett, former Education Secretary (1997-2001) and Home Secretary (2001- 2004), pointed to shortcomings of administrations on both sides of the political divide. In particular, Blunkett suggests that New Labour's citizenship agenda had never been fully realised:

…on citizenship, you're entirely right. The difference in what we wanted to do and the difference in what happened is one of my sadnesses, not least that we didn't get head teachers to really understand the significance of what they were doing. (David Blunkett)

Later in the interview Blunkett refers to what he sees as a continued failure to develop the community cohesion work initiated in the early 2000s and its enhanced significance in light of the growth of Islamophobia and other community tensions:

> We've got to learn lessons, and we don't always learn the lessons …If people now aren't looking at Herman Ouseley's report and they're not looking at Ted Cantle's report and reading the right things out of them, then God help us. (David Blunkett)

From race equality to the 'White working class'

Let's return to Tim Brighouse's comment on the ebb and flow of policy work around race and education ('…we have been further on than we are now… Gone up and dipped and gone up and dipped. And I would say at the moment it's dipping.'). If, as a broad range of interviewees suggested, critical approaches to addressing race and racism in the public space have ebbed, if they have 'dipped', then how (and why) do they think this has happened? Their explanations included media and political derision of multiculturalism; the refocusing of education policy around White working-class underachievement; and the dissipation of Macpherson and the RRAA (2000).

The (re)emergence in education policy of a discourse of 'White working-class' failure, and a parallel discourse of derision around multiculturalism, has been documented elsewhere (Gillborn 2010; Warmington 2014). Increasingly dominant since the early 2000s, this policy discourse holds that White working class children now have the worst educational outcomes – and that their position has been exacerbated by the supposed priority given to BME (under)achievement in the 1980s and 1990s; essentially, White children are proclaimed as the new race victims. Gillborn (2010) notes that this discourse relies on a conflation of the categories of *free school meal* recipients (FSM), around 15% of students nationally, and the '*working-class*', a term with which around 60% of the population identify; whether this misreading of the data is deliberate or not, the consequences for policy and wider debate have been profound.

In our interviews some policy-insiders (such as Brighouse, Barber and Dehal) recalled how in the early-mid 1990s the availability of detailed performance data had been key in convincing ministers to focus on the underachievement of BME groups. Interestingly, our interviews with former Minsiters find the same '*power of numbers*' argument mobilized to justify shifting *away* from targeted work with BME groups. Note, for instance, Gillian Shephard's response here to the interviewer's comment that they are frequently challenged about the need to prioritize White students:

> Interviewer: '…whenever I go into schools or local authority or other universities and talk about race inequality, virtually the first question is always, 'Why are you still looking at this? … 'Cause the White, working-class are the lowest achieving.'

> Shephard: 'Well, this statistically is often the case. And I can remember when I was secretary of state, the first evidence was coming out that it was poor, White boys who were the ones who were least attended to and most likely not to succeed. And…I can't remember what we did. I think we put Ofsted onto it, and this was when we did the initial literacy and numeracy pilot schemes.'

In Estelle Morris' interview, there was a similar exchange:

> Interviewer: 'How did we shift towards recognising White working class children as a group that needed to be targeted in –'

> Morris: 'Because of the data. Don't forget it was data rich… '

Later in the interview Morris traces the shift in policy focus to White working-class performance to the late 1990s.

> In terms of straight attainment, I think there was a gap between particularly Afro-Caribbean girls, Pakistani, Bangladeshi girls, Indian boys and girls, follow(ed) by Pakistani boys. I don't think the world and the system realised that they'd crept up and left the White working class absolutely behind. And I think that's why in the later 1990s, I think that's why it switched so much. (Estelle Morris)

Other policy-makers made similar claims:

> …they're still not doing a great deal with African or Caribbean boys, although I think they're doing better than some of the White working class boys nowadays, but that's not saying a lot. (Michael Barber)

> …we knew that when we were taking steps to dramatically improve literacy and numeracy, we were going to have an impact on those groups in the education system that had historically lost out. Not just ethnic minorities – although… any look at a place like Tower Hamlets shows just what an impact you can have if there's a focus - but also on White, working-class boys, which are really the minority now ...And that are affected most in terms of under-achievement. (David Blunkett)

The frequency with which policy-insiders (including ex-Ministers) cite the 'White working class' as *the* under-achieving group is striking. Nowhere is there any evidence of sensitivity to the fundamental misreading of data that uses FSM figures (relating to a minority of students) to fuel a belief in widespread White failure per se. Perhaps significantly, we presented these arguments to the Education Select Committee and were cited in their final report as testifying to the dangers of this position. Although our evidence was accepted, it was not sufficient to stop the committee recycling the exact same mistake in the rest of the report:

> The Centre for Research in Race and Education (CRRE) drew our attention to a mismatch between the proportion of children who were eligible for free school meals and the proportion of adults who would self-define as working class … The logical result of equating FSM with working class was that 85% of children were being characterised as middle class or above …

> Nevertheless, free school meals data is readily available, has the advantage of being easy to conceptualise, and has been consistently collected for many years … Pragmatism has led us to pursue analyses of free school meals data as an insight into the issue that Ofsted and others have raised. (House of Commons Education Committee 2014: 8 &10)

Straightforward populist racism?
In discursive terms these positivistic readings of performance data arguably served to 'de-politicise' the White working- class agenda, which could now be presented simply as a response to factual conditions. However, among BME stakeholders, in particular, the racial politics of this policy refocus were firmly critiqued. Patrick Roach, Deputy General Secretary of NASUWT, reflects on the shift in policy focus to White working-class underachievement and away from BME pupils, depicting it as a variation on a wider 'nativist' discourse:

> Well, I mean I think it comes back to these questions about a notion of displacement that somehow certain communities, migrant communities, have taken too much of the public resource… or public opportunity and whoever the 'we' is, we want it back.
> …so whether it's …a narrative which is say no to the EU or British jobs for British workers or, you know, White, working class underachievement in schools, it's all pretty much all part, you know, variations on a theme, it seems… is that a more palatable way of talking about

race? It's interesting you talked about class because I'm not entirely sure that it is a narrative about class. I think it's a narrative about race. (Patrick Roach)

Gargi Bhattacharyya also regards the current policy agenda around the White working-class pupils as a racialized political response to fears about resourcing – and about racial standing. She suggests that black communities' historical willingness to engage in organised struggles around schooling led to fears of White invisibility and to a nativist/ majoritarian backlash:

> White people are still being badly served because all regular people are being badly served but then that becomes available as a kind of counter rhetoric, in order to say oh look these… darkies taking up all the public space. They're getting more. Somehow they're getting more of something. And so much of the discourse around dispossession of White working class people is that we wouldn't mind but it's not fair, they are getting more of something. They are also poor but somehow they're getting more than us, they're getting another park …so it's about that kind of displacing of dissatisfaction to your near and other neighbour. (Gargi Bhattacharyya)

It is worth noting that David Blunkett is explicit about the fact that the relative position of White constituents has always been a concern for him and that he views it as an explosive issue:

> I've had to say to people in Sheffield, before the austerity measures – before 2008 – "Don't just fund this heavily ethnically diverse area; you've got to fund the neighbouring area as well because otherwise what you think is a really positive move will turn into a disaster."

Bhattacharyya went on to argue that the White working-class agenda was embedded in a racialized discourse about the 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor:

> I think rhetorically at a national level it works as a national story because, as a national story, you don't even have to have a neighbour. It's …there are really deserving people, the poor White people that are out there. You hear it in middle class circles all the time. And what about the White working class, that's why people are rioting, that's why there's extremism, all these things because we've not taken account of the White working class. You think well, what do you mean? What would it mean to take account of the White working class? Let's overthrow capitalism …And the other side of it …is that that discourse of the White working class 'un-classes' black people, as if we have no class. (Gargi Bhattacharyya)

This discourse, said Bhattacharyya, is a racialized project, and it is not one that politicians even bother to present in coded form, but rather is an example of 'straightforward populist racism.' Sally Tomlinson is also explicit in her view that public policy is currently constrained by racist political discourses:

> …the immigration debate has made any notion of discussing race, immigration, refugees, asylum seekers, whatever, it's a toxic brew and so I think at the moment we're really caught in that and those of us who have been in it a long time are, I think, …quite horrified… (Sally Tomlinson)

CONCLUSIONS

The Executive Summary (pp. 1-4) offers a précis of the main findings to emerge during the study. In this section we take the opportunity to relate those findings to the original research questions that the SES set out in its call for proposals as part of the 2013 National Research Award.

How much has changed in education as a result of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry and related debates?

It is not possible to definitively link changes in race and education to the Lawrence case, the Macpherson Inquiry and/or the reform of race relations law that followed. Our interviews with stakeholders and policy-insiders testify to the complexity of the policy process and the speed with which new agendas can sometimes emerge. Nevertheless, it is clear that the Lawrence case *is* widely seen as a landmark that raised fundamental questions about the reality of racial justice in the UK. The case undoubtedly led to major changes in how race equality was talked about within education but there is less agreement about its long-term legacy. Some policy makers, particularly ex-Secretaries of State, think the case continues to exert an important positive influence on race relations generally; some policy-insiders (particularly advisors and ex-civil servants) plus almost all stakeholders and activists are much less convinced of deep-rooted change.

In terms of educational achievement at the end of compulsory schooling, the 20 years following Stephen's murder witnessed a period of consistent improvement in attainment. Overall the proportion of students achieving at least five higher grade GCSEs almost doubled between 1993 and 2013.

To some degree these improvements have been shared among students in all the major ethnic groups. However, *minority ethnic groups have not drawn equal benefit from the changes*. Indian students remained the highest achieving ethnic group throughout the period and Bangladeshi students (who were known as the lowest achieving group in the early 1990s) are now *more* likely to attain the required benchmark than their White British peers. Pakistani students have narrowed the gap somewhat but remain less likely to attain the benchmark measure.

Among the 'Black' groups it is students of Black Caribbean (and Mixed Race: White/Black Caribbean) heritage who stand out as experiencing significant inequalities of achievement throughout the research period. Although ethnic inequalities have narrowed at times the overwhelming picture is one of persistent race inequities; White students have never been less than half as likely again to reach the benchmark compared with their Black Caribbean peers. A similar pattern of persistent inequality emerges in data on exclusions from school (both fixed period and permanent).

What is the state of race equality in contemporary education?

The overall picture is mixed. For some minority ethnic groups, notably Indian and Bangladeshi students, the period has seen consistent improvements; for Black Caribbean and Mixed Race (White/Black Caribbean) students the improvements have been tempered by significant and persistent race inequalities in attainment and exclusion from school.

One of our most important findings is that *the scale of race inequalities has been directly and negatively affected by changes in education policy and the redefinition of the required GCSE benchmark*.

Each time the government made the benchmark more demanding (in 2006 and 2011) there was an immediate and negative impact on race inequality. This impact affected each of the principal minority ethnic groups and was especially pronounced for Black students. For example, the introduction of the English Baccalaureate effectively wiped out seven years worth of progress in closing the gap for Black African students.

Our findings, therefore, explode the myth of steady incremental progress towards a position of race equality. Policy makers (from across the political spectrum) frequently reach for the platitude that

things are now much better than they used to be and, consequently, we are invited to assume that things will continue to improve. *But our analysis (using official data for a longer time period than any previous study) demonstrates that policy changes – usually delivered in the colour-blind language of 'raising standards for all' – have had an actively regressive and racist impact; every time the 'bar was raised' key race inequalities grew bigger.*

However, there are also positives to be drawn from the impact of policy changes. *The varying levels of achievement and exclusion provide firm evidence that long-standing patterns can be changed if circumstances and political will align*. For example, the Black/White gap has almost disappeared in terms of the measure used in the early 1990s (five higher grade GCSEs in any subjects). This would provide cause for celebration were it not for the fact that the benchmark level has changed (twice) and so *that* particular gap is no longer so important. It is undoubtedly significant that the gap closed fastest once that measure ceased to drive the published performance tables. This confirms that there was never any inherent reason why Black Caribbean students, for example, could not achieve as well as their White counterparts, and it draws attention to the need to focus explicitly on race equality and the processes by which students are selected for high-status subjects, teaching groups and examinations.

The case of exclusions from school is especially significant. Between 1998 and 2001 there was a concerted drive, led by firm government targets, to reduce the overall level of permanent exclusions. Although no separate race targets were set, all minority ethnic groups shared in the subsequent reductions to some extent and Black Caribbeans (the group with the highest overall incidence) enjoyed the largest proportionate fall. *And so we have firm evidence that even the most high profile and sensitive issues are malleable*; when schools had to reduce the number of permanent exclusions they did so and Black Caribbean students reaped the benefit. Once the political focus disappeared, however, the pace of overall reductions fell and Black over-representation has once again stabilized. *The lesson of the last 20 years is that, without concerted political will, historic race inequalities affecting Black students are likely to continue in a remarkably consistent fashion.*

Our mixed method approach reveals a further cause for concern, i.e. the deteriorating quality of official data on race inequalities in education. Our interviews with people inside the policy machine indicate that the availability of detailed, high quality quantitative data are widely seen as having played a vital role; former Secretaries of State and their civil servants independently testified to the importance of having 'data' that could indicate the scale and nature of the problems. In light of these views, *the deteriorating state of race in official statistics is an important political point, not merely a technical detail*. Annual education statistics, such as the National Pupil Database, increasingly use crude aggregate ethnic categories that obscure the scale of inequities experienced by some groups. For example, the DfE's new categories include a 'Mixed' group that combines one of the highest achieving groups (White/Asian students) alongside one of the lowest (White/Black Caribbean). Similarly, the lower average attainments and higher rates of exclusion experienced by Black Caribbean students are obscured by their being included in a general 'Black' group alongside Black African students. *These changes mean that the quality of official statistics now lags some way behind the material available a decade ago, when our interviewees tell us that data played an important role behind the scenes.*

Have we achieved a post-racial education system? Are we now in a post-racial state in which fundamental divisions, such as class and gender, have superseded a concern for race inequalities in education?
The idea of a 'post-racial' era was discussed by many of our interviewees. In general terms 'post-racial' is understood to denote a positive state of affairs where previous inequities associated with race/ethnicity are no longer meaningful and significant. In this sense our stakeholder interviewees almost universally condemned the idea as false. Indeed, community advocates, equality campaigners and academics tended to view the 'post racial' turn as not merely erroneous, but as a damaging smoke screen providing rhetorical cover for a period where policymakers and commentators can simultaneously ignore continuing race inequality while closing down race-conscious criticism as out-dated and pessimistic.

The publication of *the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report* (Macpherson 1999) signalled the start of a brief period where there was open and critical discussion of racism as a pervasive and sometimes subtle aspect of schooling. That period was short-lived. A focus on the 'White working class' has now come to dominate education policy debate and it is striking that, in our interviews, elected policy-makers (from both main political parties) genuinely see this as a more pressing problem for contemporary education; in contrast, stakeholders (including teacher union representatives, advocates and race equality campaigners) view these arguments as a means of sidelining race equality and closing down debate. Many stakeholder interviewees believe that it is now harder to have critical discussions about race equality in education than at any time since the Lawrence Inquiry report was published at the end of the last century.

PROJECT OUTPUTS

At the time of writing (March 2016) the project team has engaged in numerous activities to share our emerging research findings with a range of stakeholders, practitioners and policy makers. The wealth of the data produced, however, is such that there is more to do in drawing the maximum benefit from this unique study. We anticipate applying for dedicated ESRC impact acceleration funding, to help to support dissemination activities, and each member of the project team is leading on writing commitments that draw out specific aspects of the project for further debate. The following list, therefore, summarizes outcomes to date but will expand in the coming months.

Published Outputs

The following publications each include data and/or analyses generated as part of the research project.

Centre for Research in Race & Education (CRRE) at the University of Birmingham (2013) *Inquiry into Underachievement in Education by White Working Class Children. Written evidence to the Education Select Committee* (authors: D. Gillborn, N. Rollock, P. Warmington & S. Demack), our written evidence is published by the committee at http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/WrittenEvidence.svc/EvidenceHtml/2577. Our research is also cited in the body of the Education Select Committee Report (2014) *Underachievement in Education by White Working Class Children*, HC 142.

Gillborn,D. (2014) Racism as Policy: A Critical Race Analysis of Education Reforms in the United States and England, *The Educational Forum*, 78(1): 26-41. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00131725.2014.850982

Gillborn, D. (2015) The Monsterisation of Race Equality: How Hate Became Honourable, in Alexander, Claire, Weekes-Bernard, Debbie and Arday, Jason (eds) *The Runnymede School Report: Race, Education and Inequality in Contemporary Britain*. London: Runnymede Trust, pp. 6-9. ISBN: 978-1-909546-10-3

Gillborn, D., Rollock, N., Warmington, P. & Demack, S. (2016) Race and permanent exclusions from school. An initial analysis of our SES exclusions data was published exclusively in the *Times Educational Supplement*, 19 Feb, p. 30. Online at https://www.tes.com/news/school-news/breaking-news/exclusion-rates-black-caribbean-students-remain-disproportionately

Gillborn, D. (2016) Softly, Softly: Genetics, Intelligence and the Hidden Racism of the New Geneism, *Journal of Education Policy*, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2016.1139189

Presentations

Gillborn, D. (2014) *Race-ing Backwards? The assault on race equality*. Paper as part of the SES Annual Seminar 'Race and Education: the forgotten inequality?' London.

Gillborn, D. (2014) *Race Inequality and Education Policy: how the coalition has waged war on equity*. Public talk to the Campaign for State Education (CASE), UNITE Offices, Transport House, Birmingham.

Gillborn, D. (2014) *From Bad to Worse? Education Policy and Race Inequality*. Presentation at NASUWT National Conference, 2014 Birmingham, International Convention Centre.

Gillborn, D. (2014) *Making Racism: educational standards, White fear, and the creation of race inequality in education*. Keynote lecture for 'Where now for social justice? The marginalisation of young people in the UK', Two day Conference at Canterbury Christ Church University, Kent, UK.

Gillborn, D. (2014) Keynote Featured Panel: alongside Angela P. Harris (University of California Davis Law School), Daniel Solórzano (University of California, Los Angeles), David Stovall (University of Illinois at Chicago) & Margaret E. Montoya (University of New Mexico). Critical Race Studies in Education Association, 8th Annual Critical Race Theory Conference, Vanderbilt University Law School, Nashville, Tennessee, USA..

Gillborn, D. (2014) *Race, Rights and Education: a critical race perspective on Europe, xenophobia and everyday racism.* Invited public lecture for the Tom Lantos Institute (TLI) as part of its series 'From the courtroom to the street: creating a popular culture of human rights'. Lecture held at the Faculty of Law, Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE ÁJK), Budapest, Hungary.

Gillborn, D. (2015) *Education for a Democratic Society.* Laureate Panel Discussion at the Bi-Annual Convocation of *Kappa Delta Pi* Education Honor Society, Orlando, USA, October 2015.

Gillborn, D. (2015) *The Eugenicists' New Clothes: genetics, intelligence and colorblind racism.* Keynote presentation, Critical Race Studies in Education Association, 9th Annual Critical Race Theory Conference, Vanderbilt University Law School, Nashville, USA.

Warmington, P. (2015) 'We say race; they say class': CRT in England. Invited presentation to the ESRC seminar, *The Role of Intellectual Life in Struggles for Racial Justice*, Birmingham City University.

Forthcoming/In Preparation

Gillborn, D. '*White Lies: things we're told about race and education that aren't true'.* Keynote presentation at the 2016 National Conference on Race & Ethnicity in American Higher Education, San Francisco, USA.

Gillborn, D., Demack, S., Rollock, N. & Warmington, P. Twenty-five years of the Black/White Achievement Gap: education policy and the racial status quo' (working title). Paper to be submitted to the *British Educational Research Journal*.

Gillborn, D., Demack, S. & Warmington, P. (2016) *Magic Numbers? Education Policy, "Big Data," and a Critical Race Theory of Statistics*, presentation at the American Educational Research Association (AERA) annual meeting, Washington DC.

Gillborn, D., Rollock, N., Warmington, P. & Demack, S. '"I don't want to sound complacent but..": racism and deficit-thinking inside the policy machine' (working title). Paper to be submitted to the *British Journal of Educational Studies.*

Rollock, N. (2016) *Rationalizing the Past: A Critical Examination of Race in Education Policy*, presentation at the American Educational Research Association (AERA) annual meeting, Washington DC.

Warmington P., Gillborn, D., Rollock, N. and Demack, S. 'Bureaucracy, infrastructure and will: grassroots reflections on race and education policy' (working title). Paper to be submitted to the *Educational Review*.

APPENDIX 1: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

APPENDIX 2: QUANTITATIVE METHODS

> The emphasis on outcomes and performance within the new public management has seen the proliferation of performance indicators and various league tables of performance measures across the last two decades or so… (Rizvi & Lingard 2010: 122)

Much has changed in education during the twenty years covered by this project, not least the quality and availability of statistical data on educational achievement. This trend, however, does not reflect a simple pursuit of knowledge for its own sake; education systems across the globe have shared in a drive to measure educational performance as a means of exerting greater control - sometimes referred to as 'policy as numbers' (Ozga & Lingard 2007). In many ways England has been at the forefront of such moves, for example, Prime Minister Tony Blair's 'Delivery Unit' (2001-2005) was run by an education professor (Michael Barber – one of our interviewees) who developed his own system that put quantitative data at the heart of the policy process (Barber 2012). The increasing *quantity* of official data, however, does not necessarily denote an improvement in the *quality* of the material. Official statistics reflect the things that interest the government and ethnic diversity rarely features very highly on the educational agenda, despite the efforts of minority communities and their advocates (Tomlinson 2008). Since the introduction of national school performance tables, in 1992, there have been significant increases in both the amount of data gathered and the level of political and media scrutiny to which the data are subjected. However, it was only as part of the post-Lawrence Inquiry legislative reforms (*ten years* after the publication of the first national performance tables) that the government finally mandated that schools and local authorities should gather ethnically-based data on all school students. In our analyses we draw on the best available data from a range of official sources.

Data Sources

Our analysis draws on two principal types of official statistics, together they offer the most reliable and comprehensive indication available of the relative attainment of White British students and their minority ethnic peers at the end of their compulsory education (aged 15/16) and beyond. Our first source is the **Youth Cohort Study (YCS),** a series of longitudinal surveys that followed groups (cohorts) of young people for three years after the completion of their compulsory schooling. Funded by a range of government departments, the YCS recorded details of educational achievements and experiences plus young people's activities outside of education and employment. The first survey (YCS1) began in 1985 and was repeated periodically until the 2000s, when a new survey was introduced, called the **Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE).** Initially the LSYPE ran alongside, and complemented, the YCS but it has now replaced the older survey (DfE, no date). Originally funded by the Department for Education, in 2012 the LSYPE moved to funding by the Economic and Social Research Council and is currently managed by the Centre for Longitudinal Studies at the UCL Institute of Education, London. **Table A1** summarizes details of the various YCS surveys that we use in our analysis. The LSYPE gathers a great deal of additional information on its sampled students but, most significantly for our purposes, to date the LSYPE has only looked at two

cohorts of students (those who left secondary school in 2006 and 2015). In order to complete the 20 year analysis, therefore, we require an additional data source.

Our second source of official data on school attainment is the **National Pupil Database (NPD).** Introduced in 2002, and run by the Department for Education, the NPD has developed to include a wide range of statistical sources that provide a wealth of information relating to school-age students and young people in England. **Table A2** summarizes the various components that specifically relate to students at the end of their compulsory schooling ('Key Stage 4'). We use NPD data in our analysis from 2004 onwards, when the published data began to use a more detailed ethnic breakdown (see **Table A3**). This is a considerable advance on the YCS which was limited to a few composite ethnic categories. In addition, the NPD allows us to chart differences in attainment from year-to-year whereas the YCS rarely covered two successive annual cohorts.

Table A1:
Youth Cohort Study (YCS): Survey Details and Coverage

Cohort Study	Born in	Age 15/16 (Key Stage 4 assessments) in	Surveyed in	Weighted Sample (Sweep 1)*
YCS 1	1967/68	1984	1985	8,064
YCS 2	1968/69	1985	1986	14,430
YCS 3	1969/70	1986	1987	16,208
YCS 4	1971/72	1988	1989	14,116
YCS 5	1973/74	1990	1991	14,511
YCS 6	1974/75	1991	1992	24,922
YCS 7	1976/77	1993	1994	18,020
YCS 8	1978/79	1995	1996	15,899
YCS 9	1980/81	1997	1998	14,662
YCS 10	1982/83	1999	2000	13,698
YCS 11	1984/85	2001	2002	16,707
YCS 12	1986/87	2003	2004	14,003

Note
* The YCS was a longitudinal (cohort) study that followed representative samples of pupils over three or four years following the completion of compulsory education in Year 11. Key Stage 4 attainment details were collected during the first survey (sweep 1) of these cohort studies.

Sources
YCS1: Courtenay, G., Youth Cohort Study of England and Wales, 1985-1987; Cohort One, Sweep One to Three [computer file]. 2nd Edition. Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive [distributor], November 1997. SN: 3093, http://dx.doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-3093-1
YCS 2: Courtenay, G., Youth Cohort Study of England and Wales, 1986-1988; Cohort Two, Sweep One to Three [computer file]. Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive [distributor], September 1993. SN: 3094, http://dx.doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-3094-1
YCS3: Courtenay, G., Youth Cohort Study of England and Wales, 1987-1994; Cohort Three, Sweep One to Four [computer file]. 2nd Edition. Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive [distributor], March 1996. SN: 3012, http://dx.doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-3012-1
YCS 4 – 12: DfES 2005 (SFR 04/2005, Table A). Further refs for other cohorts and the data can be found at http://discover.ukdataservice.ac.uk/series/?sn=2000061

Table A2:
National Pupil Database (NPD): data sources relating to Key Stage 4 attainment and the academic years for which they are available (England, 2001/02 – 2012/13)

Data Source	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
School Census/ Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) Census									✓	✓	✓	✓
Alternative Provision							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Key Stage 4 Awarding Body data	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Key Stage 4 Performance Tables (PT) data	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Key Stage 5 Awarding Body data	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Key Stage 5 Performance Tables (PT) data	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Post-16 Learning Aims (PLAMS)							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Individualised Learner Record (ILR)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
National Information System for Vocational Qualifications (NISVQ) data	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Overall Level 2/3 indicators	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Children Looked After					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Children In Need								✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
National Client Caseload Information (NCCIS)										✓	✓	✓
Independent Specialist Providers (ISP)									✓	✓	✓	✓

Source: Adapted from Gov.uk (2014) *NPD data sources by year*, available at National Pupil Database: user guide and supporting information:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-pupil-database-user-guide-and-supporting-information#history

Ethnic Categories

Combining material from these two official sources (the YCS and the NPD), therefore, provides the best available picture of changes in the Black/White achievement gap over a 20 year period but there are important caveats that should be borne in mind. First, the changes in ethnic classification means that the key groupings are not the same at the beginning and the end of the period. Specifically, the early data compare students grouped in relatively crude composite categories; for example, using the term 'Black' to reflect common practice in the 1980s when the term 'African Caribbean' was widely used in the UK (by academics and community groups) as a means of describing people who would identify their family origins in Black Africa and/or the Caribbean. The NPD data use more detailed categories that mirror official guidance following the 2001 Census and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000; from 2004, therefore, our data consider students in more differentiated groups, e.g. 'Black Caribbean' and 'Black African' separately. The two datasets cover a great deal of similar ground but a further complicating factor is that there are key differences in coverage geographically and educationally. The YCS offered a nationally representative sample of students in England and Wales but, following the devolution of education policy to the constituent parts of the UK, the NPD refers to England only. In addition, the YCS included students who attended private schools whereas public analyses of exam performance at age 16 in the NPD are restricted to students attending state-maintained schools only. In view of these differences between the YCS and NPD, in our charts we use a break in the data lines (at 2004) to signify the change in statistical coverage.

Table A3:
Ethnic Classifications in the Youth Cohort Study and National Pupil Database

Youth Cohort Study	National Pupil Database
White	White
	White British
	Irish
	Traveller of Irish Heritage
	Gypsy/Romany
	Any Other White Background
	Mixed
	White and Black Caribbean
	White and Black African
	White and Asian
	Any Other Mixed Background
Asian	Asian
Indian (from YCS6)	Indian
Pakistani (from YCS6)	Pakistani
Bangladeshi (from YCS6)	Bangladeshi
Other Asian (from YCS6)	Any Other Asian Background
Black	Black
	Black African
	Black Caribbean
	Any Other Black background
	Chinese
Other Ethnic Group	Any Other Ethnic Background

In 2015 the Department for Education issued new guidance about its use of so-called 'major' and 'minor' ethnic groupings. The detail of the groupings is summarized in **Table A4**. These changes do not affect the calculations that we present in this report; however, their likely consequences, in terms of rendering official statistics more crude and less useful, are discussed in the main body of our report, including our conclusions.

Table A4: DfE 'Major' and 'Minor' Ethnic Groupings (2015)

Major Ethnic Grouping	Minor Ethnic Grouping
White	White - British White – Irish Traveller of Irish Heritage Any Other White Background Gypsy/Roma
Mixed	White and Black Caribbean White and Black African White and Asian Any Other Mixed Background
Asian	Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi Any Other Asian Background
Black	Black Caribbean Black – African
Chinese	

Adapted from DfE (2015a) *Statistical First Release, GCSE and equivalent attainment by pupil characteristics, 2013 to 2014 (Revised). SFR06/2015* and Table 1 in DfE (2015b) *Quality and Methodology Information: Pupil Characteristics & Geography Information.*

APPENDIX 3: QUALITATIVE METHODS

The Participants

In total 35 interviews have been conducted for this study (see **Table A5**); many more people were contacted but either declined to be interviewed or did not respond to the team's repeated approaches. The selection of interviewees followed a 'key informant' model. Interviewees were selected because of their particular types of involvement in race equality/ education work during the relevant period. The selection drew on the research team's extensive and longstanding networks of contacts with policy-makers, advisors and race equality advocacy groups. Given the number of people nationally that might potentially have fit our key informant' criteria, our 'sample' is inevitably small in scale and its bias difficult to gauge.

A key criterion in our selection of participants/ interviewees was that they should cover a range of (professional) roles. Initially, we conceived of interviewees as comprising (a) policy-makers and (b) stakeholders. However, this binary does not quite reflect the range of interviewees. So, for instance, 'policy-makers' included former ministers and also civil servants (e.g. from DfES). 'Stakeholders' included campaigners, academics and educators. There were also several interviewees who combined roles: Sir Keith Ajegbo was a former head teacher who had worked extensively as a government advisor; Sir Tim Brighouse was a former chief education officer (in London, Oxford and Birmingham) but also an academic; Max Farrar was an academic and also a veteran community activist in Leeds.

The Interviews and the Interviewees

As regards format and structure, the interviews were semi-structured and in-depth, lasting between 40 minutes and 90 minutes. Organising themes included interviewees' perceptions of landmarks in race equality policy and race relations since 1993; the impact of Lawrence and Macpherson; understandings of concepts such as institutional racism and anti-racism; emerging issues in race and education. Interviewers tailored their questions to encompass the particular roles and histories of the interviewees. Thus each interview also had a historical/ biographical approach. In advance of every interview, we sent interviewees an information sheet that explained the background to the project and recapped their right to withdraw from the research at any time (see below).

Broadly speaking, the analysis of interview material adhered to the 'qualitative'/ 'interpretive' principles suggested by Miller & Glassner (1997). Thus it is necessary to acknowledge the forces mediating interviewees' voices: the interview form itself, power relationships, managed self-presentation and, in particular, the retrospective nature of interviewees' accounts. However, such factors notwithstanding, our analytic standpoint was that qualitative interviewing provided access to the ways in which the interviewees experienced their material, social and cultural worlds, and access to the meanings that they ascribe to work around race and education.

The interviews were analysed using a constant comparative method to identify recurrent constructs (Thomas 2009). The analysis also drew upon Fairclough's (2000) model of critical discourse analysis, in that the interviews were examples of 'researching upwards', that is examining the accounts of 'powerful' actors (e.g. politicians, policy-makers and civil servants). Fairclough argues the need to analyse the policy narratives that such actors construct and the ways in which their sense-making and their rationalisation of policy turns are organised around discursive equivalents and oppositions (e.g. the way in which a speaker such as Keith Ajegbo 'opposes' his approach to citizenship with that of Gordon Brown or Michael Gove; the opposition that Jack Straw constructs between Scarman and Macpherson; the equivalence that Tim Brighouse makes between his work in Birmingham and in London).

Table A5. Interviewees and their roles

SURNAME	FIRST NAME	ROLE
Ajegbo	Keith	former headteacher, government advisor on Diversity & Citizenship, Vice Chair of the Stephen Lawrence Trust.
Barber	Michael	Chief adviser to Secretary of State for Education on School Standards, Head of the Standards and Effectiveness Unit (1997 – 2001), then Head of Prime Minister's Delivery Unit (2001 – 2005). Currently Chief Education Advisor to Pearson.
Bardowell	Derek	former Grants Manager, Education at the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, also worked at the Stephen Lawrence Trust.
Berkeley	Rob	former Director, Runnymede Trust.
Bhattacharyya	Gargi	Academic & Trade Unionist.
Birbalsingh	Katharine	Headteacher of Michaela Community School, a free school in the London Borough of Brent. Former education blogger. Came to public prominence as a speaker at the 2010 Conservative Party conference criticising the state education system.
Blunkett	David	Secretary of State for Education (DfEE) 1997-2001 (in Shadow government 1994-97); Home Secretary 2001-2004.
Bourne	Jenny	Academic and writer, Institute of Race Relations.
Brighouse	Tim	Former Chief Commissioner for Schools leading on the London Challenge, Chief Education Officer Birmingham 1997-2002.
Cantle	Ted	Authored the 2001 Cantle Report on Community Cohesion, set up the Institute for Community Cohesion in 2005.
Crook	Jeremy	Director, Black Training & Enterprise Group (BTEG)
Dehal	Inderjit	former Head of Ethnic Minority Achievement Unit, DfES.
DfES civil servant		Anonymous ex-civil servant.
Farrar	Max	Academic, volunteer, advocate and consultant.
Garg	Samidha	Policy, National Union of Teachers
Hayles	Maxi	Founder, Birmingham Race Action Monitoring Group.
Henry	Elizabeth	former CEO, Race on The Agenda.
John	Gus	Academic, activist, writer.
Lammy	David	Labour MP for Tottenham, former HE minister.
Lawrence	Doreen	Race Equality Campaigner.
Mirza	Heidi Safia	Academic and member of New Labour's first 'Standards Task Force' (as described in *Excellence in Cities*, Cm 3681 (1997).
Morris	Estelle	Secretary of State for Education 2001-2002.
Ofsted inspector		Anonymous
Phillips	Trevor	Journalist, Commentator, former chair of the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC); former chair of the Runnymede Trust.
Policy advisor		An advisor on race and diversity issues for a nationally prominent politician.
Richardson	Brian	Activist, Editor *'Tell it like it is'*.
Roach	Patrick	Deputy General Secretary, NASUWT.

Robinson	Robin	Education consultant, campaigner and former chair of the Runnymede Trust.
Sewell	Tony	Education consultant and advisor to the Mayor of London.
Shephard	Gillian	Secretary of State for Education (1994 – 1995); Secretary of State for Education & Employment (1995 – 1997). Member of the House of Lords and currently Deputy Chair of the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission.
Straw	Jack	Home Secretary at time of Lawrence Inquiry.
Tomlinson	Sally	Academic and equality campaigner.
Wanless	Peter	Civil Servant, Author of *'Getting it, Getting it right'* Special Report on Race and School Exclusions.
Warmington	Joy	Director of brap (an equality think tank) formerly Birmingham Race Action Partnership.
Whitty	Geoff	Academic and Education Consultant, former Director, Institute of Education, University of London.

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

SES
Society for Educational Studies

SES National Research Award: 2013-15

About the project

Funded by the Society for Educational Studies National Award 2013, the *Race, Racism and Education* project comprises a landmark study in the field of race equality and education. The research project is being conducted by the *Centre for Research in Race and Education* at the University of Birmingham. Its aims are to examine the changing status of race equality in education and to chart how black and minority ethnic students have fared in the twenty years since the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence. The Lawrence case was a turning point in race relations in the UK – and included in Lord Macpherson's subsequent inquiry report were specific recommendations to improve race equality in education. Since the Lawrence case, however, wider shifts in UK race relations have also influenced education policy, sometimes unpredictably.

Our research

The project combines two elements: analysis of statistical data on educational achievement and experience, and in-depth interviews with key stakeholders about the development of race equality policy in education. We appreciate your provisionally agreeing to participate in these interviews, particularly given work and time pressures.

Your interview

Do please note the following standard ethical procedures. Firstly, it is important that we make a faithful record of your interview; this means audio-recording all interviews and typing up transcripts. Full transcripts will be kept at the School of Education, University of Birmingham and will remain confidential to the research team.

However, the final project report and subsequent publications will include some quotations from interviews. These quotes will not usually be anonymised. Thus there may, on occasion, be specific things said on the day that you do not wish to be transcribed. Please let the researcher know where this is the case. In addition, you may later decide that you do not want your contributions to be included in the project. It is your right to withdraw from the project at any time. If you choose to withdraw, please let the research team know as quickly as possible.

Questions and comments?

If you have any queries or comments about participating in the project, please contact Professor David Gillborn:
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