RUNNYMEDE

Did They Get It Right?

A Re-examination of School Exclusions and Race Equality

Edited by Debbie Weekes-Bernard

Runnymede: Intelligence for a Multi-ethnic Britain

Runnymede is the UK's leading independent thinktank on race equality and race relations. Through high-quality research and thought leadership, we:

- **Identify barriers to race equality and good race relations;**
- **Provide evidence to support action for social change;**
- **Influence policy at all levels.**

Runnymede
7 Plough Yard, London, EC2A 3LP
T 020 7377 9222 **F** 020 7377 6622
E info@runnymedetrust.org

www. runnymedetrust.org

Contents

Foreword

Exclusions only affect a small number of school age children each year. Their number is not, however, proportionate to the significance of what they tell us about the school system, its attitude to difference, and its structures for dealing with the most marginalized and disadvantaged. Exclusions from school (temporary or permanent) are a totemic issue, as they represent the apex of exclusionary practices in schools and are usually pre-dated by a series of confrontations, lower level punishments, and disciplinary measures that suggest poor relationships between school and pupil over a longer period. Understanding the patterns of exclusion and what works in intervening in a failing relationship between school and pupil is crucial to working out how racial stereotyping, teacher expectations, and students' forms of oppositional defiance, combine to narrow the space for learning and achievement.

This is why Runnymede has returned to look at this issue over ten years since our last publication on exclusions from school. The intervening years have seen many policy developments in relation to exclusions. New Labour made some attempts to bring down the total numbers of exclusions, initiated some reforms to the appeals process to make it more transparent, and funded a number of in-school responses for children vulnerable to exclusions. The facts remains, however, that the burden of exclusion falls disproportionately on children from Black groups, both boys and girls; and that an exclusion from school is a turning point in a young person's life that puts them at considerable risk of underemployment and negative interaction with the criminal justice system. The new Coalition government has been less concerned with reducing the number of excluded and its early statements have been more aligned to allay teachers' fears that they no longer have the freedom to exclude due to what is perceived to be an over bureaucratic appeals system. Given this changing focus, and the squeeze on education budgets, it is possible that we could see the numbers of exclusions rising once again. It will not be surprising if that rise in numbers impacts disproportionately on Black boys and girls.

This collection of papers updates what is known about exclusions from school and brings together voices from academia, the chalk face, community organizations and teaching unions to reflect on how best to respond to the needs of pupils and address the disproportionate impact of this practice on Black children.

In a period of reform, we should be particularly mindful of the most marginalized – whether in the creation of new academies, dropping of a national curriculum, or development of 'free schools'. Both the level of exclusions and the groups of people who are most likely to be excluded are not fixed. These papers seek to sketch out the considerations that need to be borne in mind when developing any intervention that would seek to create change. Exclusions from school may be seen as a marginal issue for many, but if we judge our schools not only on the number of top exam grades they can achieve, but also on how they treat those most vulnerable to exclusion we might learn more about the character of our educational institutions and begin to redress some of the persistent inequalities that currently dog our education system and labour market.

Dr Rob Berkeley
Director, Runnymede

1. Introduction

Debbie Weekes-Bernard
Runnymede

School exclusions and race inequality have remained persistent bedfellows over many years, underpinning the concerns and debates repeatedly raised about educational underachievement among specific groups of young minority ethnic people. It is now well known that individuals from some (but not all) minority ethnic groups in England are disproportionately represented within school exclusions figures. In 2007/8 Black Caribbean pupils were three times more likely to be permanently excluded from school than their White counterparts, and although this represented a reduction in exclusions for pupils from this ethnic group (they were approximately 3.9 times as likely to be excluded in 1998/9), this disproportionate level of exclusions has remained consistent now for a number of years. In 2006, following a review of the nature of school exclusions among Black pupils in England, the then Department for Education and Skills announced plans to conduct pilot preventative work with a number of schools around the country, addressing many of the recommendations raised in the Department's earlier published document. This work is ongoing but detail regarding its progress is limited.

This Runnymede report is based in part on the need to reflect growing interest in the outcomes of this work but also in order to re-examine more broadly some of the many, and indeed in some cases, persistent issues that relate to the thorny problem of race and school exclusions. This re-examination is necessary for a number of reasons. These include recent policy statements made about exclusions – the increased number of exclusions of children from primary school, for example, together with Conservative party proposals to improve the power of headteachers to exclude pupils. Even more importantly, however, this re-examination will be used to assess more generally the current picture surrounding education policy and race equality.[1] This picture has become clouded of late with debates about the White working classes and the impact that a general lack of policy attention has had on the abilities of young males to do well educationally (Collins, 2006). Interestingly, this has re-ignited debate about race and education, but only in a way that presupposes competition between ethnic groups for access to educational support resources, despite the gap in educational achievement persisting for specific minority ethnic groups. School exclusions, together with the gap in educational achievement between ethnic groups, remain ongoing areas of contention for the families of Black children, and Black Caribbean boys specifically (Abbott, 2003). It is not as clear, however, whether this concern is mirrored at the level of policy development. Indeed we will suggest here that it appears to have fallen from the policy radar completely.

The Policy Picture

The numbers of children who currently experience an exclusion from school – be this of a temporary nature or involving removal to another educational institution altogether – are small in comparison to the wider school population. There were 8130 permanent exclusions in 2007/2008 which represents approximately 0.11 per cent of all pupils while 5.14 per cent of the school population experienced temporary or fixed term exclusions during the same period.[2] Overall exclusions themselves have reduced in number over the years. However, despite a decrease of 6.4 per cent in the number of exclusions from the year 2006/7 to 2007/8 the following facts remain in 2007/8 (DCSF, 2009) - see Figure 1 for the complete picture:

• Black Caribbean pupils were three times more likely to be permanently excluded from school than their White counterparts;

• Boys represented 78 per cent of the total number of permanent exclusions (3.5 times the number for girls);

• Whilst White boys represented 0.18 per cent of the permanently excluded school population the same figure was 0.53 per cent for Black Caribbean boys;

• There are considerable regional variances in permanent exclusions across the country. In England, Black Caribbean boys represent 0.36 per cent of the excluded school population, whilst in the South West the figure was 0.79 per cent and in the South East, 0.18 per cent;

• Pupils on Free School Meals are three times more likely to be excluded than those who are not;

Figure 1: Permanent exclusions by ethnic group
Primary, Secondary and Special Schools (1)(2)(3)
Number of Permanent Exclusions by Ethnic Group and Gender (4)(5)
England, 2007/08 (Estimates) (6)

	Boys		Girls		Total	
	Number	Percentage of school population (7)	Number	Percentage of school population (7)	Number	Percentage of school population (7)
White	**4950**	**0.18**	**1410**	**0.05**	**6360**	**0.12**
White British	4720	0.18	1350	0.05	6070	0.12
Irish	40	0.29	10	0.05	40	0.17
Traveller of Irish heritage	20	0.82	x	x	20	0.53
Gypsy/Roma	40	0.82	10	0.29	50	0.56
Any other White background	140	0.13	30	0.03	170	0.08
Mixed	**350**	**0.30**	**100**	**0.09**	**460**	**0.20**
White and Black Caribbean	180	0.47	60	0.16	240	0.32
White and Black African	40	0.30	x	x	40	0.17
White and Asian	30	0.12	10	0.04	40	0.08
Any other Mixed background	100	0.25	30	0.07	130	0.17
Asian	**270**	**0.10**	**30**	**0.01**	**310**	**0.06**
Indian	40	0.05	x	x	40	0.03
Pakistani	160	0.15	10	0.01	180	0.08
Bangladeshi	50	0.11	10	0.02	60	0.06
Any other Asian background	30	0.07	10	0.01	30	0.04
Black	**550**	**0.37**	**150**	**0.10**	**700**	**0.24**
Black Caribbean	250	0.53	80	0.18	330	0.36
Black African	220	0.26	50	0.06	270	0.16
Any other Black background	80	0.50	20	0.12	100	0.32
Chinese	**x**	**x**	**x**	**x**	**x**	**x**
Any other ethnic group	**70**	**0.16**	**10**	**0.04**	**80**	**0.10**
Unclassified (8)	**160**	**.**	**50**	**.**	**210**	**.**
Minority Ethnic Pupils (9)	**1470**	**0.20**	**350**	**0.05**	**1830**	**0.13**
All pupils	**6350**	**0.19**	**1760**	**0.05**	**8110**	**0.12**

Source: DCSF, 2009: Table 12.
(1) Includes middle schools as deemed. (2) Includes city technology colleges and academies (including all-through academies). (3) Includes maintained and non-maintained special schools. Excludes general hospital schools. (4) Includes only pupils of compulsory school age and above so totals shown here will not match those given previously. Excludes dually registered pupils. (5) Ethnic group is as the time of the January 2008 School Census. See Notes to Editors 7. (6) Figures relating to permanent exclusions are estimates based on incomplete pupil-level data. See Notes to Editors 5. (7) The number of excluded pupils expressed as a percentage of the school population of compulsory school age and above in each ethnic group. (8) Includes pupils whose ethnic information was not sought or was refused or could not be determined. (9) Pupils who have been classified according to their ethnic group, excluding White British. x less than 5, or a rate based on less than 5 exclusions. . Not applicable. *Totals may not appear to equal the sum of component parts because numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.*

• Of the permanently excluded school population, 0.56 per cent were Gypsy/Roma, 0.53 per cent of the same group were Travellers of Irish Heritage;

• Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) (both with and without statements) were over eight times more likely to be permanently excluded than pupils with no SEN. The actual figures could be higher as SEN needs may not have been recognized in excluded pupils.

In 2006 the then Department for Education and Skills published a long awaited review (DfES, 2006) of the statistics relating to school exclusions and ethnicity and the assessments made here were damning. For those researching and working in the area of race and education, however, the points raised were not particularly surprising. These assessments included the point that excluded black pupils, particularly those of Caribbean, or mixed White and Caribbean descent were less likely to fit the same sorts of characteristics as other excluded White pupils and as a result were less likely to have attendance problems, to have experienced a higher number of previous exclusions, to have special educational needs or criminal records.

The government review also noted that given these research findings and the existence of a persistent year on year exclusions gap, there was evidence that an ethnicity 'X' factor could potentially explain this inequity. It was the level of candour expressed within this particular document that proved surprising, as did the assertion that schools and other educational structures would need to address the existence of institutional racism and its likely effect on practice. Following the government review, a programme of preventative work was announced by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (now renamed the Department for Education) that would involve those schools with large Black Caribbean or African pupil populations, as a means of addressing the many recommendations raised in the document.

At the time of going to press, this work is still ongoing and wider information about its progress is scant despite its clear importance in view of the content of the publication on which it was based. This is not a point lost on many of our contributors and in part prompted our own interest in the development of this work. It has been suggested that raising the issue of institutional racism within the government review, as occurred within the report of the Stephen Lawrence enquiry itself, has become an important event in and of

itself (Parsons, 2008a). Carl Parsons (2008a) has argued that due to the omission of the term from the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) and its implication that 'fault' where it occurs lies external to the individuals which make up an institution instead attributing 'cause to the depersonalized operation of a system' (Parsons, 2008b), the wider impact that the concept has had on exclusions, for example, has been poor. Parsons suggests that given its lack of 'teeth' in this respect the claims to institutional racism made within the important and indeed necessary government review, may be unlikely to ultimately make any notable impact or change.

The Labour Government issued a wide range of supportive guidance for schools in relation to behaviour management and the recent Steer Report (Steer, 2009) highlights the importance of early prevention and the processes for responding to and reducing 'poor' or bad behaviour. This wider policy response to the issue of school exclusions has occurred in an attempt to address a range of concerns including, for example, the hours of education that can potentially be missed whilst a child remains at home. The impact of missed days in this respect on the educational progress of pupils can be detrimental for the specific child or young person, but clearly the longer term effect of continuous time away from education does not fit well within the wider drive for increased standards at school level. Schools are now legally obliged to provide educational support for children excluded for more than six days which has impacted upon some schools, though not all, in their decisions to give children longer fixed term exclusions (Ofsted, 2009). The wealth of government advice available to schools also relates to the broader concerns that surround links between children missing education and the risk that they may become involved in criminal activity, together with the larger economic costs surrounding the propensity of an excluded individual to experience wider educational underachievement and unemployment.

We highlight the 6-day policy issue here in order to raise a number of broader questions. The 2006 Education and Inspections Act noted that young people excluded for up to five days had to be supervised within the home, by a parent or guardian during that period – a penalty notice would be served on the parent of any child found outside. The impact of such a policy announcement on the parents of those children more than likely to disproportionately experience

an exclusion from school, together with the added complication that at least half of all parents of Black Caribbean or mixed Black Caribbean and White children are lone parents, suggested inequitable impact on those parents. Further Ofsted research on the way schools have met their requirements to provide educational assistance to excluded pupils from the sixth day onwards has noted that schools have used a reduced number of fixed term exclusions lasting more than six days. Shorter fixed term exclusions fell only slightly, however, though it was noted that there was a greater use of onsite units to replace the need to exclude for six days or more. However, it is less clear how onsite units generally are used. They are a short term measure, used as part of a wider process of behaviour management in schools, but it is not clear how far these units are monitored in relation to ethnicity/gender, how long on average pupils remain within them or the level of educational provision young people receive in them. It is also increasingly possible that their increased use has contributed to the reduction in number overall of school exclusions.

Further assessment also remains to be made on the issue of the difference in number of exclusions from certain types of school. Research (Curtis et al., 2008) indicates that some academies are excluding pupils at a higher rate than state secondary schools. In 2007 academies permanently excluded pupils at a rate of 0.47 per cent compared to an average in other state secondary schools of 0.23 per cent. Excluded pupils are therefore pushed out to surrounding schools but academies may then not then take on excluded pupils from elsewhere. The proportion of children attending academies who are eligible for free school meals fell from 45 per cent of all pupils in 2003 to just 29 per cent in 2008. It is the case that academies tend to take on often challenging pupil populations from the schools they are replacing. However is it possible that they are in actual fact attempting to boost their examination results – which for many have continued to be disappointing since opening – through simply excluding the more difficult children in order to welcome more affluent children and families?

As an attempt to explore some of these and other related issues, we held a roundtable of experts in the field of race and education, education policy and school exclusions in late 2009, specifically to aid us in our assessment of the existing picture surrounding race equality and school exclusions. In February 2010, we broadened out the debate surrounding race equality and school exclusions by holding an online conference (Runnymede Trust, 2010) where our contributors raised issues in relation to onsite units and the lack of monitoring that occurs within them, but also the continuing relevance of the concept of institutional racism when understanding why and how the exclusion of Black pupils occurs, the extent to which academies exclude more pupils than state schools and the 'out of school' factors which may or may not be contributing to disproportionality. Both of these events demonstrated the strength of interest in the wide variety of issues which surround exclusion, many of which extend beyond school gates to take in family life, the over and often stereotypical focus on young Black males to the exclusion of young Black women, and the risk of reinforcing their status as socially problematic.

A proportion of the delegates at the 2009 expert roundtable (the full list of those attending can be found in the Appendix) have written opinion pieces which are represented here. What these short pieces demonstrate is not only the ongoing concerns surrounding race and exclusions, but also the increasing disquiet about the persistence and circularity of the problem.

Taking *Getting It. Getting It Right (DfES, 2006)* – the most recent Government response (under the previous Labour administration) to the issue of exclusions among young Black people – as the starting point for debate, our contributors explore where the recommendations made within it have taken us, both at the level of policy and more practically in respect of the experiences that young Black boys in particular continue to have in English schools. Diane Abbot MP comments that the full and incendiary claims regarding the impact of institutional racism on Black pupil school experiences have not drawn as urgent a response as they should have, which poses important questions for the direction that a meaningful debate about race equality in education can now go. Gerry German continues this view by noting the lack of real progress made, not only since the Government's Priority Review on race equality and school exclusions, but since the introduction of the myriad of policy directives that have emerged from all education departments since 1986.

In Section 2, both Uanu Seshmi and Tony Sewell argue that attention must be re-directed to focus on the sorts of experiences that young Black men are having outside of the school environment, and the impact of this on their emotional development,

if the issue of exclusions is to be tackled more fully. However whereas Uanu suggests that schools need to be aware of the hurdles that many Black boys are continuously faced with in order to address any behavioural difficulties, Tony suggests that attention must be directed away from schools towards the out-of-school factors that contribute to antagonistic relationships that Black boys can often formulate in schools, either with staff or each other. He looks critically at government attempts to address school exclusions and early criminal activity by young Black men and suggests that both the (then) Department for Education and Skills' priority review of race and exclusions and the Community and Local Government commissioned REACH report (CLG, 2007) seemed only to externalize the issue, failing to look at the relationships with family, and more specifically, the absence of father figures, in the lives of young boys which he believes leads them to seek out often problematic alternatives.

In the same section, Tracey Reynolds suggests, however, that looking at family relationships in this way is simplistic as it ignores the myriad ways that Black fathers form family nurturing relationships with their children. She notes that a focus solely on out-of-school factors may not contribute helpfully to a debate on addressing the persistence of exclusions among Black boys in schools, and simply reinforces a stereotypical notion that there is something particularly deviant about Black Caribbean family structures. Deborah Tucker's contribution also focuses on the family but suggests that a more realistic response to the high rates of exclusions among Black pupils needs to be made. She remarks that where exclusions occur, they do so around an event, behaviour or interaction, and regardless of the way this has been interpreted, by staff or pupil, something clearly has taken place, and there needs to be a more realistic analysis of this by all adults involved.

Cecile Wright's contribution continues with this family theme, highlighting the integral role that families, community organizations and other related support agencies currently play in the transitional experiences of Black pupils who are excluded and out of school. She notes that young excludees are often able to resist the stigma associated with exclusion by working with their families to develop coping strategies to aid interactions with school staff and peers.

Both Val Gillies' and Audrey Osler's pieces, in Section 3, take a look behind common perceptions about school exclusion. In Val Gillies' contribution, she points to the complex ways that race implicitly informs the often fraught nature of relationships between school staff and Black pupils who are at risk of exclusion. By drawing on the implied commitment to anti-racism of staff who have chosen to teach in inner city schools, she attempts to untangle the subsequent impact of classroom interactions with pupils which can often be based on implicit race signifiers – the removal of hoods in class, the misunderstandings surrounding staff instructions and the deep personal hurt experienced by staff when an accusation of racism is made. Audrey Osler on the other hand questions the way that policies that either respond to indiscipline or address the aftermath of an exclusion, are based on a response to the behaviour of boys which excludes the very different ways that girls report negative school experiences. She notes that not only are girls punished more harshly for indiscipline in view of definitions of what may constitute appropriate female behaviour but that service provision for excluded pupils is built around supporting disengaged boys rather than girls.

Finally, contributions from Alison Ryan, Saurav Sarkar and Mike Griffiths outline the position taken towards the issue of the exclusions of Black pupils from school from three of the major teaching unions, The Association of Teachers and Lecturers, the National Union of Teachers and the Association of School and College Lecturers.

Overall, this report aims to raise further questions for debate:

• What has been the aftermath of the (then) Department for Education and Skills review of the disproportionate exclusions of Black pupils? A pilot study of preventative work was set up in 2006 yet there is great uncertainty as to how this work has progressed and/or what impact it has had to date.

• Structure versus culture: Can the persistent rates of disproportionate exclusions, which particularly affect Black Caribbean boys, solely be attributed to institutional racism?

• Does focusing, as we are doing, on the dis-proportionate exclusions of Black Caribbean boys, negate the educational success of other Black pupils?

• On the issue of family, the new *Parent Guarantees*, which can be found at http://publications.teachernet. gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/8357-DCSF-Parent%20 Guarantee.pdf, note that parents will be expected to be aware of the consequences should they not support schools in addressing any behavioural difficulties their

child may have. In view of this, can parents of children at risk of exclusion expect to experience a far more punitive relationship with schools?

• Is it time now to argue for the complete removal of exclusions and towards the existence of zero exclusion schools, or is this unworkable and idealistic?

Postscript

The new coalition Government has yet to make a formal statement in relation to the issue of exclusions, though in opposition the Conservative party did propose both the ending of the right of excluded pupils to appeal to independent appeals panels as well as the right of children excluded for more than 6 days to receive educational support from schools (Conservative Party, 2008). The current proposal to expand the number of academies to include those schools rated as outstanding which can apply for 'fast-tracked' academy status, may have grave implications for those children at risk of exclusion from school. As Gillborn & Drew (forthcoming, 2010) note, the current rate of exclusion from school for Black Caribbean pupils attending Academies is 3.6 times that of White children in local authority maintained schools and it will be essential, given the likelihood that the pupil demographic of the newer academies will change in view of the existing academic success of these schools, that the rate of exclusions for all ethnic groups be monitored closely.

Notes

1. An additional piece of work exploring race equality and widening participation is also forthcoming in early 2010.

2. Although it should be noted that this latter percentage will include those who had received more than one such sanction.

References

Abbott, D. (2003) 'Institutional Racism in Education Must be Tackled', *Socialist Campaign Group Newsletter*. URL: http://www.poptel.org.uk/scgn/archive/articles/0701/p5.htm

Collins, M. (2006) 'Sinking... Poor White Boys are the New Failing Class', *Times Online.* URL: http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/article641312.ece

Communities & Local Government (2007) *REACH: An Independent Report to Government on Raising the Aspirations and Attainment of Black Boys and Young Black Men.* URL: http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/reach-report.pdf

Conservative Party (2008) *Giving Power back to Teachers: Working Paper on Behaviour and Schools.* London: Conservative Party.

Curtis, A., Exley, S., Sasia, A., Tough, S. and Whitty, G. (2008) *The Academies Programme: Progress, Problems and Possibilities – A Report for the Sutton Trust.* London: Institute of Education/The Sutton Trust. URL: http://www.suttontrust.com/reports/AcademiesReportFinal2.pdf

Department of Children, Schools and Families (2009) *Statistical First Release*, 30 July 2009.

Department for Education and Skills (2006) *Getting It. Getting It Right*, Priority Review on Exclusion of Black Pupils. London: DfES. URL (accessed 8 June 2010): http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ethnic minorities/resources/PriorityReviewSept06.pdf.

Gillborn, D. and Drew, D. (forthcoming, 2010) *Exclusions, Academies and Appeals.* London: Runnymede Trust.

Ofsted (2009) *Day Six of Exclusion: The Extent and Quality of Provision for Pupils.* London: Ofsted.

Parsons, C. (2008a) 'Race Relations Legislation, Ethnicity and Disproportionality in School Exclusions in England', *Cambridge Journal of Education* 38(3): 401-419.

Parsons, C. (2008b) 'Singled Out for Exclusion?', *The Guardian*, http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2008/apr/2/schools.pupilbehaviour/

Runnymede Trust (2010), *Are We Getting it Right Yet?: A Runnymede e-conference.* URL: http://www.runnymedetrust.org/events-conferences/econferences/econference.html

Steer, A. (2009) *Learning Behaviour: Lessons Learned. A Review of Behaviour Standards and Practices in our Schools.* URL: http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/_doc/13514/8208-DCSF-Learning%20Behaviour.pdf

SECTION I: SETTING THE SCENE: THE PERSISTENCE OF RACE INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION POLICY

2. The Aftermath of *Getting It Right*
Diane Abbott MP

I was alerted from inside the Department for Education and Skills that they had produced a report on black children and exclusions that was dynamite. The Priority Review into the disproportionate levels of black exclusions had come to the firm conclusion that this level of exclusion was due to institutional racism. This was an incendiary conclusion because the British educational establishment and teachers' unions in particular had always refused to contemplate the possibility that institutional racism was present in Britain's schools. Furthermore it potentially put Britain's schools in breach of the Race Relations Amendment Act. This report had been commissioned by the Department itself and it was impossible to ignore or dismiss. However the Department just sat on it. They hoped, perhaps, that if they did not publish it, the report could go away. But a copy of the hard-hitting report was smuggled out to me and I put down a series of written questions in Parliament. The report was then leaked to the newspapers and finally, very reluctantly, the Department published a watered down version of the report, nearly a year later, in 2006.

Even in its watered down form, the conclusions of the report were clear. It said that the disproportionate levels of Black pupils being excluded from school could not be attributed solely to things like culture, class background or home life. Rather the report said that what happened in school was the key to the levels of exclusion. In particular it pointed to teachers' (sometimes subconscious) attitudes to black children. The report itself had clear recommendations. It wanted the department to set targets for bringing down black exclusions and in particular to focus on the 100 schools with the worst record for excluding black children.

As soon as the report was published I went to see the then Schools' Minister Lord Adonis to ask what was going to happen about implementation. Lord Adonis tried to be helpful but the officials looked uncomfortable. I knew something was wrong when I asked if they were going to publish the league table of black exclusions. The officials looked aghast. I pointed out to Lord Adonis that my Government was committed to giving parents vital information and for black parents this information was certainly as vital as GCSE results. He saw my point and the officials reluctantly agreed to look into the matter. But that information has never been released.

I went on to question them about implementation. They said vague things about a pilot project. Their answers about the pilot were so unsatisfactory that I asked Lord Adonis if I could have a follow-up meeting with officials to try and establish some details. He readily agreed.

But the follow-up meeting did nothing to reassure me. The pilot was going to be driven by National Strategies. The National Strategies programmes are delivered by the outsourcing company Capita and they had rejected the idea of concentrating on the 100 worst schools, for reasons they would not explain. Instead their pilot was going to focus on a group of Local Education Authorities chosen apparently at random but it later transpired that these were LEAs who had volunteered. Many of them were in areas containing hardly any ethnic minorities at all. Furthermore they were not going to work directly with schools. They were going to communicate with LEAs and rely on them to contact schools. And there were going to be no targets of any kind. I left the meeting so suspicious of their pilot that I decided to set up my own project tracking the progress of the pilot to see what, if anything, it achieved.

The first problem my research found was that, rather than choosing Local Education Authorities in areas with a poor record for excluding Black students, the Department allowed LEAs to volunteer themselves for the project. This led to two types of LEA being involved – those with a

low proportion of Black and ethnic minority pupils, and those with a high proportion of Black and ethnic minority pupils who were already involved in robust work around exclusions. The schools that would really benefit from being involved in work on exclusions – those with a high proportion of Black and ethnic minority pupils who were not focused on the issue, or whose LEA was not focused on the issue – were missed out. Furthermore, with no targets, there would be no way of judging the effectiveness of the pilot.

Eleven LEAs volunteered themselves for the pilot. They received funding for taking part. Some LEAs received resources (i.e. paperwork and DVDs) designed to help lower the Black exclusions rate, but some got nothing. Some LEAs had regular meetings with the Department's National Strategies group, others did not. My researchers spoke to 10 of the 11 LEAs taking part in the pilot. Initially some of them did not even know that they were involved. The pilot was supposed to start at the beginning of the school year in 2007, but many were not contacted until later.

None of the LEAs using the resources that they were given were particularly impressed. A few commented that the resources their schools were already using were more effective. You might have thought that the first step in the pilot would have been to hand out copies of the report that it was based on. In fact some resourceful LEAs had already been using the Priority Review report to guide their work. But, whilst some LEAs said they had been given the report by National Strategies at the beginning of the pilot, others knew nothing of the existence of the review and were never given a copy.

Another flaw in the pilot became apparent early on. Even though their LEA may have signed on (and pocketed the funding available) there was no means of making schools in the area get involved. So, whilst some LEAs had from five to ten schools involved in the pilot, others only had three. So the suspicion must be that at least some schools with high levels of black pupil exclusions would simply have opted out.

More than one LEA was disappointed with the lack of contact communication they had with other LEAs on the pilot project. There was little evidence of best practice-sharing meetings and some of the LEAs did not even have regular communications with National Strategies.

The National Strategies group, who were responsible for rolling out the pilot project, initially tried to stop me talking to the LEAs about it. It seems the focus was on persuading LEAs to join the project and to remain involved, rather than actually doing anything about reducing the level of black exclusions.

In May 2007, before the pilot began, the Ethnic Minorities Achievement Unit at the Department for Children, Schools and Families wrote to me about it. The letter stated:

> Working with a range of local authority, voluntary sector and partner organisation stakeholders we have developed a strategy for implementing the report's recommendations to reduce disproportionate exclusions. The strategy will involve targeted intervention pilot work, initially with 11 local authorities with high proportions of Black Caribbean and Mixed White/Black Caribbean pupils and high or disproportionate exclusion rates for BC/MWBC pupils.

As my research discovered, there was no 'targeted intervention pilot work' and the local authorities who volunteered to be part of the pilot did not all have high proportions of Black Caribbean/Mixed White Black Caribbean pupils or high rates of exclusions of these pupils.

The letter continues 'This will involve National Strategies providing evaluation tools and effective practice examples, to inform positive intervention required in the pilot schools'. As my researchers found out, not all of the local authorities even received the tools and practice examples. The letter states that the original plan was to involve100 schools in the pilot project. In fact the ten LEAs we spoke to involved only 45 schools.

Because there were never any targets there is no way of knowing what, if anything, the pilot achieved. It would seem that the pilot was just a way of appearing to take action whilst allowing schools to carry on with business as usual.

But exclusions remain one of black parents' top concerns. It is time to follow the original recommendations of the report and both target the 100 worst schools for black exclusions and set clear targets for bringing black exclusion levels down nationwide.

Reference

Department for Education and Skills (2006) *Getting It. Getting It Right*, Priority Review on Exclusion of Black Pupils. London: DfES. URL (accessed 8 June 2010): http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ethnic minorities/resources/PriorityReviewSept06.pdf.

3. School Exclusions: Wasteful, Destructive and Discriminatory
Gerry German
Communities Empowerment Network

The Communities Empowerment Network (CEN) provides advice, support and representation for the parents of children experiencing problems with school admissions, special educational needs and school exclusions, the latter accounting for about 90 per cent of CEN's work. However there are few advocacy groups in the UK. If all those in London were functioning to capacity, fewer than 30 per cent of the parents of excluded pupils would be able to avail themselves of the services of independent advocates.

There are well over 7000 permanent school exclusions annually in England and roughly 300,000 fixed term exclusions up to a maximum of 45 days per student in any one academic year. An estimated 9,000,000 truancies also occur every year, with at least 50,000 pupils absent every school day

The Education (No 2) Act of 1986 nationally systematized school exclusions and at the time there occurred an inevitable jump in the number of pupils excluded from school, some indefinitely and lost to the system as a consequence. The last report on *Children Out of School* was in 2004 (DfES, 2004) and it must surely be time for an update.

In 1994 the Secretary of State provided further guidance in the Department for Education (DfE, 1994) which provided for the appointment of Exclusions Coordinators in councils throughout the country, many of whom contributed to another huge rise in exclusions. Department officials were alarmed at what was happening, and in 1999 the Secretary of State published new guidance (DfES, 1999) aimed at curbing schools' excesses and introducing some balance between teachers' and parents' rights.

Plans were also at that time announced to reduce exclusions and truancies by one-third. This was abandoned after two years, however, because of union agitation against what head teachers in particular saw as an infringement of their rights to maintain discipline through exclusion.

Other amendments have since been introduced by the Government which have made it more difficult for parents to appeal successfully against the permanent exclusion of their children. However, despite these attempts to support head teachers in maintaining order in schools, there has been little in the way of a reduction in permanent exclusions. There has instead occurred a massive increase in pupils allocated to special units/centres which keep them out of full-time mainstream schooling and deny them access to education as a human right.

Only some 15 per cent of permanently excluded pupils get back to mainstream schooling and the results of this are clear – a quick slide from exclusion into disaffection, delinquency and crime; excluded pupils in and out of detention centres and prisons; social exclusion and unemployment and increasing demands on social welfare, medical and mental health services.

Policies on discipline and behaviour from Government have resulted in a view of discipline as obedience, of order as conformity and classroom management as control and even punishment. Ultimately these policies have recommended anti-social behaviour orders for youngsters, banning orders for parents and stay-at-home directions for parents whose children are excluded from school and in turn banned from the streets.

If there are problems in inner city schools, why not think radically about developing inclusive welcoming learning communities such as locally accessible comprehensive schools with a maximum enrolment of 500 pupils and classes no bigger than 20? This would involve encouraging the development of ordinary comprehensive community-related schools providing free no-charge facilities for local groups and should include:

• Staff, governors and pupils reflecting the multi-ethnic, multilingual, multicultural and multi-faith nature of modern British society;

• Parent Associations and Student Councils with control of their agendas and implementing their decisions;

• Frankly anti-racist curricula related to the experiences and aspirations of young people

growing up in an increasingly diverse society and inter-dependent world;

• Genuinely individualized curricula, work-programmes, collaborative learning and self-testing related to all levels of ability and all kinds of personal interests;

• Less formal testing and more enjoyable learning opportunities;

• A stable staff with no need to depend on profit-seeking supply teacher agencies.

Teacher sickness absence currently runs at seven times the rate of pupil truancy and we need to question what this says about our state schools. If this is symptomatic of the experiences of some qualified teachers, what are the implications for children and young people between five and sixteen who are compelled to attend school? What then also of the raising of the school leaving age to 18?

Comparatively few school governors have been trained in exclusions procedures and anecdotally it is suggested that governing bodies often rubber-stamp the head teacher's exclusion decisions. Excluded pupils have a somewhat better chance before Independent Appeal Panels – members are compulsorily trained and advised by legally qualified clerks who have to observe professional standards.

In 1985 Black African-Caribbean pupils were on average six times more likely to be excluded permanently for fewer, less serious offences, at a younger age and less likely to get back into the mainstream than others. There is said to have been an improvement – Black pupils are now only three times more likely than others to be excluded.

But in some of local authorities there are council wards where Black pupils are 15 times more likely to be permanently excluded. Children in care are currently eight times and statemented pupils three to four times more likely than non-statemented pupils to be excluded. Furthermore a statemented Black child in care is 72 to 96 times more likely to be excluded than anybody else.

Schools need to be integrated with and belong to the communities around them and to the pupils who attend them, so as to ensure that the present blatant inequalities based on class and 'race' are eliminated once and for all. Instead, we are faced with regular further amendments to exclusions guidance which appear to do little for children and young people at risk.

We need to organize a parents' and students' movement to promote an enforceable Learners Charter, whereby schools will have to begin to transform themselves into communities based on shared values like respect, cooperation, consideration, helpfulness, kindness and a commitment to peace in our lives.

References

Department for Education (1994) *Circular 10/94.* London: DfE.

Department for Education and Skills (1999) *Circular 10/99.* London: DfES.

Department for Education and Skills (2004) *Children Out of School.* London: DfES.

SECTION II: SCHOOL EXCLUSIONS AND BLACK PEOPLE

4. Black Male School Exclusion: The Emotional Preparation for Adulthood

Uanu Seshmi MBE

From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation

Young male students within our schools, regardless of ethnic background, are moulded by their histories and cultures. Many breakthroughs have occurred in the US, Caribbean, and parts of the UK due to the re-visiting of the effects of slavery (Eyerman, 2001), colonialism and class in forming identity and self-worth in Black and minority ethnic (BME) males (hooks, 1994; Spillers, 1987; Williams, 1991) by sociologists, therapists, psychologists and educationalists. These professionals are making progress due to their acknowledgement of the importance of an individual's personal history and culture in healing. Schools and teachers should bear this in mind, if they are to effectively reduce Black male pupil exclusions.

In order for solutions to school exclusions to work, they must be based on an understanding of Black British history and culture. The approaches that schools utilize must include or be based upon the knowledge and sensitivities of the collective and personal histories within BME communities (Arana, 2009). British society (Dabydeen et al., 2010) creates many hurdles for young BME men, which may have an impact on their social and emotional development.

Schools with high exclusion levels have not drawn on outside support for young BME males in order to deal with issues of self-worth and masculinity (Canada, 1998) and hence are failing in two main areas:

1)   Supporting BME males in Key Stage 3 and 4 to have a healthy understanding of masculinity and adulthood;

2)   Nurturing BME males' pro-social behaviour in order to compete in a healthy way with other males, whether intellectually or physically.

The failure to recognize these important stages of BME male development means that valuable, teachable moments on the path from boyhood to manhood are being missed. This is why an increasing number of young men are turning to 'the street' in search of male role models which can only socialize them to see other men as a threat and to view manliness in terms of aggression. These factors contribute to exclusions, because 'street cultures' teach young men to be defiant and disrespectful to authority.

The issue of male gender identity is extremely important (Kerr and Cohn, 2001). Many young Black men are forced to prove their masculinity everyday. Disruptive behaviour in schools and gang cultures resulting in 'weapon-enabled crimes' are all signs of young Black male attempts to prove or earn their masculine rights. It is therefore not surprising to see a young man losing interest in his education and instead turning to the 'hard man' or the self-concept of the gangster to affirm his masculinity.

Emotional illiteracy (Hyson and Zigler, 2003; Ritchie, 1999) is another troubling deficiency that is contributing to BME male school exclusions. When parents and schools fail to recognize the importance of social, emotional and adult development, they surrender many young men to 'street culture' for a sense of 'being safe.' However, 'the street' only prepares them to be emotionally unskilled.

The negative portrayal of young Black males as violent, misogynistic, aggressive, and disruptive has reinforced some teachers and educational professionals' negative attitudes towards young Black men (Sue, 2003). Teachers who genuinely seek to understand the culturally specific issues of their BME male pupils do so because they are aware of their own prejudices (Lipman, 1998). Such awareness allows them to be sensitive to the way that a growing number of disruptive young Black males relate to and develop relationships with authority figures.

An increasing number of teachers are seeking to develop relationships with reputable voluntary organizations in order to cater for the social and emotional needs of young BME males. The From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation's 'Calling the Shots' programme is one such example illustrating the success to be gained in partnership with schools. The programme is a teaching and learning resource designed to proactively address, educate and challenge young people about their assumptions and attitudes towards violence and weapons. Most importantly, it can be delivered by trained facilitators from the communities most affected by this violence. Each lesson plan and activity worksheet has been piloted with young people in a range of environments including prisons, schools and the community. The themes address a broad framework of knowledge, skills and values such as peer pressure, anger management, law and authority, collective and individual responsibility and citizenship.

Some of the benefits for schools working with voluntary organizations in order to reduce BME male exclusions are that:

• Schools gain the benefit of years of accumulated experience and dedication;

• Schools are able to draw on a voluntary organization knowledge base that represents the culturally specific needs of Black and minority ethnic (BME) communities;

• Students serve and learn beyond their school involvement;

• Schools are able to get meaningful support in their efforts for ethnic minority achievement;

• Personalized learning for BME young men in danger of exclusion becomes more functional and purposeful.

Below are some strategies that can be adopted to support BME young males in schools:

1. Take steps to develop trust, which is the crucial first step to support the social and emotional needs of young Black men. It does not matter whether you are Black or White, male of female. Be aware of your biases towards Black males (Lipman, 1998);

2. Recognize and take into account the power of 'street culture' when responding to the social and emotional needs of BME males;

3. Social and emotional support must be in the context of BME males' true history and culture;

4. Create links with an organization that can help in providing genuine role models who have had successful life experiences;

5. Assist BME male students to develop a variety of ways in which they can express their masculinities and that they are not limited to traditional pursuits such as sports or 'the street';

6. Support BME male students to understand how they can develop a healthy relationship with other males without being domineering;

7. Support BME males to become aware of the challenges facing them on 'the street', within society and the world of work;

8. Provide a safe environment for BME males to examine the 'images' of Black men in the music industry, the media and society. (The 'Calling the Shots' programme is a resourceful tool for such critical exploration.);

9. Use Citizenship or PSHE lessons to explore the notion of responsibility, strength, character, giving, caring, sharing and positive self-expectancy.

10. Not all Black men are qualified to work with BME youth.

References

Arana, R.V. (2009) *Black British Aesthetics Today*. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Canada, G. (1998) *Reaching Up for Manhood: Transforming the Lives of Boys in America.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Dabydeen, D., Gilmore, J. and Jones, C. (2010) *The Oxford Companion to Black British History.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Eyerman, R. (2001) *Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity.* Kindle Edition.

hooks, bell (1994) *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom.* New York: Routledge.

Hyson, M.C. and Zigler, E. (2003) *The Emotional Development of Young Children: Building an Emotion-Centered Curriculum*, Early Childhood Education Series. New York: Teachers College Press.

Kerr, B.A. and Cohn, S.J. (2001) *Smart Boys: Talent, Manhood, and the Search for Meaning.* Scottsdale, AZ: Great Potential Press.

Lipman, P. (1998) *Race, Class and Power in School Restructuring.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Ritchie, D. (1999) 'Young Men's Perceptions of Emotional Health: Research to Practice', *Health Education* 99(2): 70-75.

Spillers, H.J. (1987) 'Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book', *Diacritics: A Review of Contemporary Criticism* 17: 65-81.

Sue, D.W. (2003) *Overcoming Our Racism: The Journey to Liberation.* Kindle Edition.

Williams, P.J. (1991) 'On Being the Object of Property (A Gift of Intelligent Rage)', in *The Alchemy of Race and Rights*, pp. 216-236. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

———————————————

5. Why Black Boys are More than a Racial Statistic: Getting It Right on Exclusions
Tony Sewell
Generating Genius

There is clear evidence to link family life, peer pressure and anti-school culture to disproportionate levels of Black Caribbean exclusion from school. However in a document produced by the then Department for Education and Skills called *Getting It. Getting It Right* (DfES, 2006) they failed to focus on what they called 'out of school' causes and instead took the easy route of blaming institutional racism. Black Caribbean exclusions are three times higher than white. What they fail to mention is that Black Caribbean exclusions are also three times higher than Black African exclusions. The clear out-of-school difference is family and culture; Black African fathers are present in their families much more than those from a Black Caribbean background. This leads to significant behavioural outcomes, particularly with boys.

Martin, a mixed-race 15 year-old from south London, had just downed half a bottle of vodka. The boy had already gained a reputation for attention-seeking, bad behaviour, and aggressively challenging authority figures. But in his drunken state, with his inhibitions gone, he wasn't acting wildly, or in a threatening manner. He was crying – violently sobbing, in fact – for his father. 'I want my Dad. It's not fair. I've only spoken to him once on the phone. Why does he hate me? I … want to see him now.'

Martin was taking part in a residential summer camp run by my charity, Generating Genius, which takes Black boys and offers them educational coaching and mentoring. Martin had smuggled in the alcohol without us realizing. Raised by a single white mother, he had never known his Dad.

Another boy at the summer camp just couldn't get along with the others; he told me that he just loved fighting. He displayed an excessive amount of attention seeking. He had to be up front in every photo call and would never allow other boys a turn during play activities.

The head teachers of each boy's school – who were also both Black – later told me that the mothers blamed the school for making their sons behave badly. The heads spoke of a personal dislike shown by the students, which they reported as a wider dislike of Black male authority. When the boys did open up at our camp, it was our female staff whom they felt they could trust.

Psychologists have known for some time that children's attachment to their fathers and mothers derives from different sets of early social experiences. Specifically, mothers provide security when the child is distressed, whereas fathers provide reassuring play partners. As part of our orientation we played a simple game called 'Trust'. I stood behind Martin who had to blindly fall into my arms. He refused to do it.

Typically, this kind of tough play love would never come from his mother. Instead of allowing him to fall, she would probably grab him from behind and whisper in his ear: 'This game, it's too dangerous. I'll buy you a PlayStation instead'. A typical father would say: 'Come on, son. Fall, I'm behind and you'd better not look back'.

We have been running summer camps for five years now, where boys are taken from their familiar environment and work on high-level science

projects at universities. All the boys have bucked the trend for inner-city African Caribbeans, scoring an average of nine high-grade GCSEs each. We've found that our biggest barrier was not repairing the damage of racism in the education system, but getting boys to overcome the psychological damage of not knowing their fathers. As they dropped their sons off, mothers would often warn us: 'By the way, he doesn't like men telling him what to do!'

National Statistics reveal that among those with a partner, 73 per cent of Whites are in formal marriage compared with only half of Caribbeans. Among those who have married, Caribbeans are twice as likely to have divorced or separated as Whites across all age groups under the age of 60. We need to understand these matters and find solutions; otherwise we will continue to see a disproportionate amount of violent crime committed by Black young males, high exclusion rates from school, and the lesser-told story of the huge levels of mental illness amongst African Caribbean males.

When we set up the Generating Genius programme, we had high aspirations that we would train and nurture the next generation of Black Britain's intellectual best. However, our academic ideals soon became secondary. Many of the boys, once freed from the arms of their single mothers, suddenly had to cope with a world run by adult Black males – figures in their lives who were mostly absent, unreliable, despised by their mothers, and usually unsuccessful.

These boys kicked up against us. It was like we were their dads who had walked out of their lives without any explanation and suddenly we demanded their respect. According to research, 'A father who is dead may be carried within the child's mind as a very alive figure depending on the mother's way of talking about the father.... A father who is physically present might nevertheless be lived as symbolically lost, absent or dead in the child's inner world'.(McDougall, 1989: 209)

More than racism, I now firmly believe that the main problem holding back Black boys academically is their over-feminized raising. Firstly, because with the onset of adolescence there is no male role model to lock down the destructive instincts that exist within all males, and to provide guidance on what a man should be. Secondly, in his own mind, no child is without a father. In the absence of such a figure he will seek out an alternative. This will usually be among dominant male figures, who are all-too-often found in gangs. This is the space where there is a kind of hierarchy, there is a ritual, there is education and of course a sense of belonging.

The Black gang is really a cadre of Black male caricatures that replace the father figure who never played the trust game with his son. It is the nearest they will get to the love usually given by a father. I believe we have wasted years, and lives, looking in the wrong direction as to the causes of failure in education and participation in crime. We have had endless studies attempting to prove institutional racism – obsessed with the prejudice of White teachers and police – while all along the psychological needs of our boys were never met. The current government policy of rolling out suited and booted role models to Black youngsters is another attempt to externalize the problem that lies within.

It has left us with little research and knowledge about a group that gets kicked out of school the most. Meanwhile, the Black family continues to disintegrate and it seems no one dare say a word.

References
Department for Education and Skills (2006) *Getting It. Getting It Right*, Priority Review on Exclusion of Black Pupils. London: DfES. URL (accessed 8 June 2010): http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ethnic minorities/resources/PriorityReviewSept06.pdf.

McDougall, J. (1989) 'The Dead Father: On Early Psychic Trauma and its Relation to Disturbance in Sexual Identity and in Creative Activity', *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 70: 205-219.

6. 'Don't Believe the Hype': Towards a Contextualized Understanding of Absent Black Caribbean Fathers and Black Boys in Family Life. A Response to Tony Sewell
Tracey Reynolds
London South Bank University

In his article, Tony Sewell claims that Black boys living in lone-mother households are 'over feminized' due to the absence of a father-figure in these boys' lives. Here I argue that this is merely a continuation of the moral panic surrounding Black fathers and family life. Recent figures indicate that in Britain almost two-thirds of Black Caribbean families with dependent children are lone-mother households (Owen, 2006).[1] The fathers are typically portrayed as being 'absentee fathers' who are unwilling to take responsibility for their children. Researchers and policy makers have been particularly concerned with understanding the extent to which Black fathers' absence from family life negatively impacts on their children's emotional psychological well-being and social development. Indeed, in the education field, a whole body of scholarship has developed out of this concern. Many interventionist approaches designed to raise the educational achievement of Black boys – including, for example, surrogate father figures or male mentors who work with Black boys in schools – take Black fathers' assumed absence from family life as the starting point in tackling this issue (see report by the London Development Agency, 2004). Oftentimes, the underlying subtext for Black Caribbean children is that their family structures, or more specifically absentee Black fathers, are to blame.

Yet, it is all too easy to blame non-resident fathers for the problems their children encounter in schools and the wider community because in reality little is known about these fathers' relationships with their children. There exists a scarcity of factual data and empirical research examining their parenting experiences. As such our knowledge about the behaviours and attitudes of 'absent' Black fathers is typically based on myths, folklore and a series of sensationalised media images. Despite a small but growing number of studies attempting to challenge such negative images (Reynolds, 2001 and 2009), the views of fathers themselves and the meanings and practices they associate with fatherhood and family life are rarely, if ever, publicly debated.

However, contrary to popular (mis)conceptions, my own research (Reynolds, 2002, 2009) identifies that many non-resident Black fathers are involved

in parenting and family life, albeit to varying degrees. Of course, and as Sewell alludes too, there will always be those fathers that have little or no contact with their children whether by choice or circumstance. But are we truly to believe that in such situations there exists a complete absence of male family members in the lives of these children? What about the step-fathers, uncles, grandfathers, brothers, male cousins? In Caribbean cultures such men-folk traditionally provide a valuable resource and social support to lone-mothers in socializing young boys into culturally prescribed notions of manhood and masculine identities (Chevannes, 2002). Sewell's assumption about such 'over-feminized' households completely overlooks and disregards the significant role these men play in caring for and raising Black Caribbean boys.

Dr Sewell himself, as a Black man of Caribbean heritage, would recognize the Caribbean well-established cultural practice of female-headed households. In this context, the mother-figure is historically celebrated as occupying the dual role of nurturer/carer and worker/financial provider, in essence raising her children with little economic support from the father (Reynolds, 2005). Generations of Black Caribbean men in the Caribbean and across the Diaspora have been raised in such households. Is Dr Sewell suggesting that culturally and historically, generations of Black men are 'over-feminized? Is there evidence that swathes of Black men across the Caribbean Diaspora have, and continue to, underachieve as a result of being raised in a normative Caribbean family structure? The relative educational success of Black Caribbean boys in the USA and Canada raised in lone-mother households (for example, see Waters, 1999) would provide a direct challenge and interesting counter argument to Sewell's attempt to casually link the issue of absent fathers and 'over feminized households' to educational underachievement among Black Caribbean boys in Britain.

Therefore, I will conclude by arguing that it is vitally important that a contextualized and measured approach regarding family life and Black Caribbean children's educational success (or failure)

foregrounds any discussion. Just as Sewell is critical of policy makers and practitioners adopting the 'easy route in blaming institutional racism' for Black boys underachieving in schools, it is important that he guards against adopting this same 'easy route' in proportioning blame to cultural traditions of lone-mother households in Caribbean communities.

Note

1. Official records and data that record Black fathers as 'absent' from the households and living apart from their children does not accurately record the reality of family households and fathers' living arrangements. My previous study (Reynolds, 2002) identifies that many low-income Black mothers have partners who live with them. Yet, they declare themselves to be lone parents as a strategic response in meeting the requirements of the social welfare system. Other lone mothers in this study, both low-income and higher-income mothers, also lived with their partners in either 'visiting' or 'common law' relationships but they deliberately chose to define themselves as 'lone mothers' in order to preserve their independent and autonomous status.

References

Chevannes, B. (2002) *Learning to be a Man: Culture, Socialization and Gender Identity in Five Caribbean Communities.* Kingston, Jamaica: University of West Indies Press.

London Development Agency (2004) *The Educational Underachievement of Black Boys in London Schools.* London: LDA Education Commission.

Owen, D. (2006) 'Demographic Profiles and Social Cohesion of Minority Ethnic Communities in England and Wales', Special Issue: Ethnicity and Social Capital, *Journal of Community, Work and Family*, 9(3): 251-272.

Reynolds, T. (2001) 'Black Fathers and Family Lives in Britain', in H. Goulbourne and M. Chamberlain (eds) *Caribbean Families and the Trans-Atlantic World*, pp. 133-153. London: Macmillan.

Reynolds, T. (2002) 'Analyzing the Black Family', in A. Carling, S. Duncan, and R. Edwards (eds) *Analysing Families: Morality and Rationality in Policy and Practice*, pp. 69-76. London: Routledge.

Reynolds, T. (2005) *Caribbean Mothering: Identity and Childrearing in Britain.* London: Tufnell Press.

Reynolds, T. (2009) 'Exploring the Absent/Present Dilemma: Black Fathers, Family Relationships and Social Capital in Britain', *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 624: 12-28.

Waters, M. (1999) *Black Identities: West Indian Immigrant Dreams and Realities.* New York: Harvard University Press.

———————————————

7. Exclusions: A Way Forward?
Deborah Tucker

In order to reach a sustainable goal of reducing school exclusions, judgements which centre on either concepts of 'poor parenting' or 'bad schools' will need to be left behind. These concepts historically have grown from a need to see one or other group as 'blameless'. In reality this leads to interventions which inevitably fail as teachers shy away from declarations of institutionalized racism and parents either fail to seek help for risk of appearing inadequate or come to believe that schools should have a greater impact on their child than they do. Why not go for a holistic approach? One which recognizes the impact of community, culture, race, parenting and schooling? What are the issues for black and ethnic minority boys in and out of schools? We should attempt to create a synthesis of perceptions of behaviour and school exclusions between the school and child and the school and parent?

In order to work towards reducing exclusions in our schools, relationships between parents, children and the school need to be strengthened and in some cases built from scratch. Schools tend to make clear where they stand in regards to school discipline in their Behaviour Policy, Disciplinary Procedures, Staff Handbook and in Student Diaries but in order to effect change we need to know exactly where parents fit within the process by posing the following questions:

• Are parents aware of their child's concerns?

• Are they aware of the school's concerns?

• Have they been able to access the myriad of support agencies in and outside of school?

• Are they aware that their child might need support in the first place?

• How can they, as parents, move to effect change?

• What support can they expect?

Parents should be supported to reflect critically on their child's exclusion, the exclusion process and the behaviour which led to the exclusion. To take them or their children out of the equation leads to disassociation.

Schools should also be supported to have a critical analysis of their exclusions by categorizing:

• Reasons (for exclusion);

• Key stage of pupil;

• Ethnicity of pupil;

• Gender of pupil;

• SEN (evidence of);

• Involvement of staff in incidences leading to exclusion;

• When incidences occur which lead to exclusion, i.e. particular lessons/break/lunchtime;

• Risk factors for individual students emanating from school policy, i.e. SEN/ community/family, etc.;

• Comparison of exclusions between black boys and other groups;

• Change in leadership and policy;

• Peaks and troughs in resources and funding.

This analysis could be used to make comparisons between schools with a similar make up and build relationships which will involve increased parental awareness of the expectations around behaviour from the school and an understanding of agencies working towards improving behaviour and the part that they, as parents, play to effect change.

Post exclusion reintegration should be used to:

• assemble an understanding of parental perceptions of and involvement in the exclusion process;

• glean an understanding of parental perceptions of their child's behaviour in the school and comparisons made between styles of discipline at home and school;

• share information and ideas about how parents can become more involved to improve their child's behaviour and/or understand the school's perception of the child's behaviour;

• engage and inform parents on school processes, i.e. Key Stages, Special Needs and a general explanation of acronyms;

• open up lines of communication between parents, schools and support agencies;

• dispel any existing feelings of mistrust between parents and school;

• collaborate with parents and the community to resolve problems and find solutions to the factors which led to exclusion.

The possible outcomes of this will include:

• the creation of a professional network of parents to share concerns, set goals, exchange ideas, discuss plans, solve problems, and to build trusting relationships that are key to effective partnerships;

• parents adding to their existing knowledge of the educational system and feeling more confident in approaching and working with schools and agencies to support their children;

• parents becoming more familiar with school behaviour codes, expectations and procedures;

• parents taking a more active role at home and in school regarding their child's progress;

• schools using new opportunities to engage with parents previously viewed as disinterested or antagonistic;

• creating a positive effect on learning outcomes through higher levels of achievement and reduced exclusions.

Exclusions are often discussed as 'stand alone' incidents, as though they arise from little else than a head teacher's whim. It is important to recognize that exclusions are the result of behaviour, whether this behaviour is misunderstood, misdiagnosed, real or imagined. The link is made between exclusion and criminality whilst ignoring the obvious similarities between the behaviour which leads to exclusion and criminality.

Better then to discuss improved behaviour and alternatives to exclusion and to continue to embed social and emotional aspects of learning and restorative approaches which work holistically to improve life chances for children. To focus solely on the actual exclusion is a distraction away from the more complex issues occurring in the lives of many children with challenging behaviour and the attitudes which exist in high excluding schools.

There has been a deliberate focus here on parents and children as I feel that these relationships are the most important in a child's life. This is not to discount the impact of special needs, race, poverty and discrimination, as behaviour and exclusions must be examined holistically. However relationships between home and school are a good place to start.

_____

8. Young Black People Finding Paths to Success: Transforming School Exclusion/Marginalization
Cecile Wright

Nottingham Trent University

Introduction: The More Things Change the More They Stay the Same

Historically, within the UK the presence of black and minority ethnic (BME) young people within the education system has been framed by a struggle for educational opportunities. This struggle has been characterized by systematic institutional discriminatory practices which have resulted in continued below average performance evidenced in disproportionately poor exam results and high exclusion rates (Wright et al., 2000). Archer et al. (2007) argues that within the policy domain although 'approaches to "race" have changed over the years, the pathologization of minority ethnic pupils within education policy remains an issue today – although debates have taken a more subtle and complex form' (p. 1). What's more, exclusion from school of black pupils remains both a pathologizing and an extremely urgent issue for proponents of social justice. Over the past decade, the number of pupils excluded from school has fallen (DFES, 2006). However, throughout this period a larger proportion of Black Caribbean and White and Black Caribbean pupils has been excluded than white pupils. Moreover, the evidence suggests that disproportionate exclusion of Black Caribbean and mixed heritage pupils occurs irrespective of the socio-economic context of the school, its performance, or its educational effectiveness. While recognizing that all this disproportionate exclusion needs to be continually challenged, this paper goes beyond this exclusion and seeks to ascertain what happens to those who are excluded, and the support available to them.

It is still the case that for some black pupils, schooling is framed within the context of exclusion but it is pertinent to ask: How do school exclusions come to structure opportunities beyond the school? How do black students respond, resist and work to transform their school experience? Why, in the context of endemic race inequality is there a persistent expression of educational desire and optimism among excluded young people? The research underpinning this paper derives from an empirical study of how young

people creatively respond to permanent schooling and the discussion draws on data from a Joseph Rowntree project I have been involved in. Most of the young people in the study were back in mainstream education, in employment or about to return at the time we contacted them. Further, most of the young people were optimistic about their lives and the future, despite having experienced a difficult and disrupted education (Wright et al., forthcoming). Black young people tell of how the influence of family, friends and community enabled them to succeed against the odds (Wright et al., 2005). This paper provides a framework for conceptualizing and understanding the ways in which black young people and their families continually resist and rename the regulatory effects of discourses of educational inequality and subjugation in education.

For many years black youth have been problematized and pathologised. This has been accompanied by blaming their educational 'failure' an 'cultural deficit' (e.g. Coard, 1971; Cork, 2005; Majors, 2001; Rhamie, 2007; Wright, 1987). However, the research referred to in this paper reveals that there is positive social and cultural capital in the black community (e.g. Cork, 2005; hooks, 1991; Mirza and Reay, 2000), and that this capital is supportive of positive educational outcomes and successful transitions (Fordham, 1996; Wright et al., forthcoming).

The research involved young black people excluded from school providing narratives of their experience. These narratives acted as tools for empowerment and 'sites of resistance' (Rodriguez, 2006). The young people draw on resources of social and cultural capital in an effort to overcome school exclusion. In addition, family, community and voluntary education projects in the black community have been important in transforming the positions of the excluded.

For the group of young people in the study, labelling and stigmatization meant that they came to occupy a marginal status. However, in these marginal spaces resistance and empowerment develops (hooks, 1991; Collins, 1998). The young people felt that school exclusion was indicative of

the discriminatory processes they would face in wider society and felt that the stigmatization they experienced damaged their esteem and fractured their opportunities. However, these feelings were temporary as the young people sought to replace the negative labels assigned to them. With the support of family, friends and community agencies, the young people sought to change their situations to become positive. A culture of resistance was available to them. This came from the support of parents and others whose own school experiences mirrored the children. Resistance would operate through challenging the school and working with the child to develop classroom strategies for coping with their teachers and their peers. These resources were vital in assisting young people to overcome the effects of exclusion.

Making Successful Transitions

The lack of educational provision during the period of exclusion is a major obstacle to a successful transition for pupils out of school. Community-based organizations, parents' associations and families acted as surrogates for statutory service provision. The young people in the study engaged with these services which facilitated a work ethos, attitudes of self worth and black identity. The development of a positive black identity by using the available social and cultural capital is seen as vital in achieving successful transitions for marginalized young people. The young people were able to highlight how racial stereotypes could be disproved by their own successful transitions. Becoming aware of the intentional and unintentional discriminatory practices of society and its institutions is important in providing support to young people who become marginalized as a result of them.

Future Directions

A key theme in this study was the value of social and cultural capital in supporting young black excludees. Should this activity be built on and developed? Or should it be the case that the persistent problem of racial inequality in education be tackled more urgently?

What should be done to negate persistently racially based assumptions about 'troublesome others'? UK Government initiatives such as the Widening Participation Agenda, Aiming High, Black Pupils Achievement Programme, do not address the root problems of a discriminatory education system.

We recommended a number of initiatives to address this situation:

• The active pursuit of an exclusion reduction programme;

• The provision of full alternative education for pupils excluded for more than 15 days;

• A re-integration policy of excludees back into mainstream education that facilitates movement of young people between schools;

• Greater priority to be given to assisting individual complaints from the black community and the initiation of investigations into high excluding schools;

• Short term excludees should receive support to recognize their ongoing educational entitlement;

• There should be an integrated support system to help excluded students to successfully re-integrate and avoid the risk of longer term exclusion;

• Community-based organizations need to be fully supported to enable them to support black excludees. These organizations should provide families with guidance and support.

Conclusion

The recommendations offered here are an important step forward in catering for the needs of those excluded from education and in assisting them in the transition to adulthood. The paper raises the wider issue of the extent to which young people's transitions reflect continuing structural inequality as opposed to personal agency.

References

Archer, L. and Francis, B. (2007) *Understanding Minority Ethnic Achievement: Race, Gender, Class and 'Success'.* London and New York: Routledge.

Coard, B. (1971) *How the West Indian Child is Made Educationally Subnormal in the British School System.* London: New Beacon Books.

Collins, P.H. (1998) *Fighting Words: Black Women and the Search for Justice.* Minnesota, University of Minnesota Press.

Cork, L. (2005) *Supporting Black Pupils and Parents: Understanding and Improving Home–School Relations.* London: Routledge.

Department for Education and Skills (2006) *Getting It. Getting It Right: Exclusion of Black Pupils*, Priority Review. London: DFES.

Fordham, S. (1996) *Blacked Out: Dilemmas of Race Identity and Success at Capital High.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

hooks, b. (1994) *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom.* New York: Routledge.

hooks, b. (1991) *Yearning: Race, Gender and Cultural Politics.* London: Turnaround Press.

Majors, R. (ed.) (2001) *Educating our Black Children.* London: Routledge.

Mirza, H.S. and Reay, D. (2000) 'Redefining Citizenship: Black Women Educators and "The Third Space"', in Arnot, M. and Dillabough, J. (eds) *Challenging Democracy: International Perspectives on Gender.* London: Routledge Falmer.

Rhamie, J. (2007) *Eagles Who Soar: How Black Learners Find the Path to Success.* Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books.

Rodriguez, D. (2006) 'Un/masking Identity: Healing our Wounded Souls', *Qualitative Inquiry* 12(6): 1067-1090.

Wright, C. (1987) 'Black Students - White Teachers', in B. Troyna (ed.) *Racial Inequality in Education,* pp. 109-126. London: Allen and Unwin.

Wright, C., Standen, P., John, G., German, G. and Patel, T. (2005) *Overcoming School Exclusion and Achieving Successful Youth Transitions within African Caribbean communities.* York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Wright, C., Standen, P. and Patel, T. (forthcoming) *Black Youth Matters: Transitions from School to Success.* London and New York: Routledge.

Wright, C., Weekes, D. and Macglauglin, A. (2000) *Race, Gender and Class in Exclusion from School.* London: Routledge Falmer.

_____

SECTION III: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL EXCLUSION
9. School Exclusion and Racial Equality
Val Gillies
London South Bank University

My thoughts on race and school exclusion have been informed by the time I have spent researching the topic of classroom behaviour in inner city schools. Motivated by an aim to better understand young people viewed as having challenging behaviour, my colleague (Yvonne Robinson) and I approached three mainstream secondary schools and spent two years in their behaviour support units. We worked specifically with pupils at risk of school exclusion, gathering their thoughts, opinions and experiences, alongside those of their parents and teachers. We were also able to observe first hand how the process of school exclusion operates and crucially the social context framing decisions and actions. While statistical analysis effectively reveals the disproportionate number of black boys excluded from school, more intensive qualitative research provides crucial insights into how and why this happens.

Behind every school exclusion is a story that can be told from different viewpoints. A major strength of our research is the ability to bring together these different stories to reflect on how race and racism might play out in terms of personal and institutional practices. Untangling the complex and subtle way in which the issue of race suffused our findings has been an important challenge. While there were episodes and incidents where race was explicitly spoken and acknowledged, it was more often an implicit, unspoken dimension shaping practices, assumptions, misunderstandings and defensive agenda setting. As diverse, multi-ethnic institutions each school was clearly and visibly committed to embracing inclusive values. Cultural identities were celebrated while unambiguous racism was subject to a zero tolerance policy. Yet under the surface of these genuine efforts to promote respect and equal opportunities lay a considerably more confused and troubled relationship to race.

A school ethos of inclusion often conflicts these days with more dominant and pressing concerns over discipline. Strong notions of what an ordered and orderly school should look like inform policies, procedures and everyday interactions. Acceptance of difference and tolerance in schools take place within these boundaries, through highly subjective and often culturally specific interpretations of behaviour. Universal models of the ideal 'disciplined' school best suit the white, middle class pupil for whom the rules have more often than not been designed. Other pupils can find the system more exacting and less forgiving and there is rarely much consideration of how black and white students might be differently positioned. For example, rules in place in each school forbidding hats and hoods in the playground were strongly resented, but more often resisted by black pupils. Hair and its styling could be a sensitive subject for black pupils, and hats or hoods were highly valued by some. The confiscation of hats, particularly by white teachers, was often characterized by an unspoken racialized narrative. Neither pupils nor teachers addressed the subject directly, but frustration and resentment could bubble under the surface feeding into or provoking future problems.

As we discovered, small incidents like the confiscation of a hat could very quickly escalate, and earn pupils a reputation for being difficult. In the pressured and fraught environs of secondary school, teachers had scarce time or space to properly explore and reflect upon conflicts they might have with pupils. Quick assessments and assumptions were acted upon, and misunderstandings and false accusations were common. These frequently revolved around misattribution of tone, gestures, stance and aspects of demeanour that were often culturally rooted. For some pupils, an inability to make sense of and follow a teacher's instructions was misread as defiance, leaving them feeling humiliated and angry. Pupils and school staff could become locked into a negative spiral. Teachers rarely had time to get to know all the pupils under their charge, and by way of coping, there was a tendency to swiftly label some as troublesome and impossible to reach. One teacher in our study openly admitted writing off 5 to 10 per cent of each class he taught on the grounds that there are 'other systems in place for them'. Pupils themselves were acutely aware of any reputation they carried,

with feelings of injustice and powerlessness easily translating into disruptive behaviour, which then further compound teachers' interpretations.

Recognition of the relationship between school exclusion and race provoked uneasy feelings amongst school staff, making it a difficult topic to broach. There was a sense among many white teachers that their decision to work in an ethnically diverse, inner city school should be evidence enough of their anti-racist sensibilities. Where racism allegations were made by pupils or their parents, the issue was addressed at a deeply personal level, through a focus on determining deliberate racial discrimination. The very notion drew hurt and indignation from teaching staff. Accusations were invariably dismissed, with little reflexive consideration of broader practices and the culture of the institutions themselves. This left resentment on both sides, sometimes leading to a complete breakdown in relationships. As we found, white teachers developed different strategies for dealing with their discomfort around the issue of

race. One notable example was a singling out and pathologizing of the white working classes as a way of displaying solidarity with ethnic minorities. A deputy head in one school emphasized the 'white kid problem' describing the white working classes as dysfunctional, small minded, racist and 'between you and me not very nice'. Despite her protestations that white children caused most trouble, she was regularly the focus of complaints from black pupils and their parents. Defensiveness and denial characterized discussions of racism with teachers, reflecting a more generally felt embarrassment and disquiet.

In this short article I have tried to convey some of the complexity associated with the issue of race and school exclusion. Mechanisms of discrimination are deeply engrained and are often barely visible in every day contexts. Efforts to address this problem require institutions to adopt a much more sophisticated and self reflexive understanding of how racism is written into the minutiae of everyday school life.

_____

10. Girls and Exclusion: Why are We Overlooking the Experiences of Half the School Population?
Audrey Osler

Birkbeck College, University of London and the University of Leeds

Introduction

Media headlines suggest it is largely boys, and rarely girls, who experience problems at school. Research in 2007 on the reasons behind low educational achievement was reported under the headline: 'White Boys are "Low Achievers"'.[1]

In fact, their research, *Tackling Low Educational Achievement*, Cassen and Kingdom (2007) highlight problems faced by both boys and girls, and recognizes that African Caribbean young people are those with the lowest average educational outcomes. Nevertheless, the media reinforce the widespread belief that girls have benefited most from efforts to raise standards. It also implies that concerns about black students' performance are misplaced and that we should now focus our attention on white males.

The media emphasis on boys is matched by a similar emphasis in official policy and advice to teachers. The DCSF site on Gender and Achievement now refers to boys and girls, with 16 articles, but it is boys who are acknowledged as underachieving, whereas girls 'should be given due credit for their success' (DCSF, 2009).

Generally speaking, schools are perceived to be girl-friendly institutions and girls are judged less susceptible to behavioural difficulties.

School exclusion and low educational performance are closely linked. Media accounts support the view that exclusion is largely a male problem and that the story of girls' schooling is more or less an unqualified success. Media coverage tends to emphasize the apparent violent nature of excluded young males (Parsons, 1999). Yet official statistics suggest that less than three out of ten students are excluded for verbal abuse or violence (DfES, 2006).

Girls have been largely overlooked in school exclusion prevention strategies and research. National statistics record disciplinary exclusions, with boys accounting for nearly four out of five students permanently excluded and three out of four cases of fixed term exclusion each year (DfES, 2006). Yet 10,000 girls have been subject to permanent disciplinary exclusion in the five-year period from 2000/01 to 2004/05 in England. This amounts to the equivalent of a population of a small town. A significant number of these students effectively drop out of school.

This article is based on research funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, in which we identified factors which enable girls to feel they belong and to achieve and those which lead to alienation and disaffection. We included those types of exclusion, including self-exclusion, which are not recorded in the official statistics. We interviewed 81 girls aged 13 to 15 years in six English localities(see Osler et al., 2002). We also interviewed 55 service providers, including teachers, social workers and health professionals.

Excluding Girls - Different Perceptions of Behaviour

Girls' and boys' problems are categorized differently from each other, with consequent differences in the ways problems are measured and resources allocated. For example, suicide rates for girls and young women are low compared with those of boys. Yet if the problem is re-conceptualized to acknowledge the widespread problem of self-harm, the picture looks very different. Adolescent boys are more likely to commit suicide but girls and young women are more likely to attempt it. Three times more young women than young men engage in self-harming behaviour and the group most likely to do so are girls aged 13-15 years (Meltzer et al., 2001).

At school level, the professionals we interviewed recognized ways in which similar behaviour is perceived in different ways, according to whether the student in question is a boy or a girl. They rarely commented on the ethnic background of girls or boys, and when talking about gender usually assumed we were interested primarily in white girls:

I think there is an assumption that if a female is showing aggressive behaviours, it doesn't really fit in with the stereotype, so there must be something wrong here … let's try and sort it out. But if a boy

does the same thing then that's it, they're out.

(Educational Psychologist)

Girls are greater victims of inconsistencies: there is a degree of intolerance but also a degree of shock and horror; they do not have the ability to be 'loveable rogues'.

(Head of PRU)

The girls spoke a great deal about bullying and described the exclusionary processes which girls show towards each other. Bullying was, for them, a key cause of exclusion, yet professionals failed to identify it as such. Girls placed considerable emphasis on 'reputation', on friendship and on being liked. This requires them to present themselves as attractive to boys, but to avoid being labelled as promiscuous. They are expected to present a strong heterosexual identity, and to avoid any suggestion of lesbianism. They use friendship and the withholding of friendship as a means of exercising power and control (see Osler and Vincent, 2003; Hey, 1997).

Unlike the professionals we interviewed, who rarely mentioned either bullying or racism in their accounts, girls' accounts of bullying, harassment and exclusion revealed that sometimes there is a racist dimension to bullying and exclusion:

This girl kept making fun of me and saying that she was going to beat me up. It was in one lesson, right from the start to the end of the lesson … and there were racial comments as well, calling me 'black bitch' and stuff.

(Daniela, mainstream school)

Daniela's account provides us with some clues as to why black girls may be more vulnerable to exclusion than their white female peers. She believed the bullying that preceded her angry outburst was not taken into account and felt she had no choice but to deal with the bully herself.

Rethinking Exclusion

Current official definitions of exclusion relate to disciplinary procedures. Since boys are more vulnerable to disciplinary exclusion, the support systems and alternative education schemes currently in place tend to be targeted at boys. So, for example, some schemes organized by voluntary sector agencies focus on boys' sports and activities traditionally associated with boys. Even when provision is designed for both sexes,

some professionals are reluctant to send girls to PRUs or other provision where boys make up the vast majority of learners. Similarly, some girls are reluctant to attend when they realize it will be dominated by boys.

Many girls who need alternative provision are not given priority because the pressure is to remove those students who cause teachers the greatest problems:

There's someone I'm working with at the moment… she's very emotionally distressed, as shown by crying, worrying, refusing to do her homework and those sorts of things. Whilst the school are concerned about her, it's not as pressing as a six foot kid who's throwing desks about.

(Educational psychologist)

The withdrawn child sitting quietly at the back is more likely to be female and is in a sense excluded.

(Educational psychologist)

I am arguing for a redefinition of school exclusion which builds upon girls' experiences of schooling and acknowledges behaviour patterns more commonly found among girls and for an understanding of gender politics in schools which addresses race. Redefining school exclusion to include girls' experiences is critical. Currently, resources aimed at disaffected learners are targeted at boys. Boys' behaviour cannot be addressed in isolation, nor can that of girls but both need to be considered as part of a more complex whole. If exclusion is defined so as to include girls' experiences then it is likely that resources designed to address disaffection will be more equitably distributed.

How can School be Improved?

Current official definitions of exclusion, built upon male experiences, have direct consequences for policy development and for the subsequent allocation of resources. Many of the forms of disaffection and exclusion experienced by girls do not tend to have an immediate impact on teachers. Consequently, they do not attract the attention of the media or policy makers and they are generally not prioritized at school level. Those working in child and adolescent mental health services reported an increase in the number of children being referred to them, at a younger age. It would appear that we have learnt not to take

seriously the forms of psychological bullying and exclusion which girls employ. Teachers and other adults underestimate the devastating effects which friendship break-ups can have on girls. We need to sensitise ourselves not only to different forms of exclusion but also to the different ways we respond to similar behaviours in girls and in boys. Early intervention strategies are critical to prevent the exclusion of girls and young women from school.

These are some of the key recommendations from our research:

• Schools should provide support (for example, a counsellor or school nurse) that can be accessed on a self-referral basis;

• Clear plans are needed for re-integrating all learners who have been out of school as a result of disciplinary exclusion, truancy, pregnancy, etc.;

• Policies and practices which address bullying should acknowledge the psychological forms of bullying to which girls may be especially vulnerable;

• Schools need to address racial harassment as a specific form of bullying;

• Schools need to provide support and training to teachers so that they have the skills to identify learners experiencing difficulties and sufficient knowledge about sources of support;

• Interventions and support for individuals identified as vulnerable need to be discreet and sensitive as girls are often concerned about peer reputation;

• Effective learner consultation and participation procedures are critical (e.g. student councils, engagement in policy development) and need to be sensitive to the differing needs of girls and boys;

• Specific initiatives to support girls need to be sensitive to the differences in needs between girls related, for example, to ethnicity, sexuality, maturity and out-of-school responsibilities;

• Access to support systems, alternative educational provision and other opportunities need to be monitored by gender and ethnicity.

Note

1. URL (accessed 22 June 2007): http://uk.news. yahoo.com/itn/20070622/tuyk-white-boys-are-low-achievers-dbal1618.html

References

Cassen, R. and Kingdom, G. (2007) *Tackling Low Educational Achievement.* York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

DCSF (2009) 'Gender and Achievement'. URL (accessed 28 September 2009): http://nationalstrategies.dcsf.gov.uk/genderachievement/

DfES (2006) 'Permanent and Fixed Period Exclusion from School and Exclusion Appeals in England 2004/5'. URL (accessed 8 June 2010): http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000662/SFR24-2006.pdf

Hey, V. (1997) *The Company She Keeps: An Ethnography of Girls' Friendship.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Meltzer, H., Harrington, R., Goodman, R. and Jenkins, R. (2001) *Children and Adolescents who Try to Harm or Kill Themselves.* London: Office for National Statistics.

Osler, A. (1997) *Exclusions from School and Racial Equality: Research Report.* London: Commission for Racial Equality.

Osler, A., and Hill, J. (1999) 'Exclusion from School and Racial Equality: An Examination of Government Proposals in the Light of Recent Research Evidence', *Cambridge Journal of Education* 29(1): 33-62.

Osler, A. and Osler, C. (2002) 'Inclusion, Exclusion and Children's Rights: A Case Study of a Student with Asperger Syndrome', *Journal of Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties* 7(1): 35-54.

Osler, A., Street, C., Lall, M. and Vincent, K. (2002) *Not a Problem? Girls and School Exclusion.* London: National Children's Bureau.

Osler, A. and Vincent, K. (2003) *Girls and Exclusion: Rethinking the Agenda.* London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Osler, A., Watling, R. and Busher, H. (2000) *Reasons for Exclusion from School*, Research Report 244. London: Department for Education and Employment.

Parsons, C. (1999) *Education, Exclusion and Citizenship.* London: Routledge.

SECTION IV: VIEW FROM THE TEACHING UNIONS

11. On Race Equality and School Exclusion: A Comment from the Association of Teachers and Lecturers

Alison Ryan
Association of Teachers and Lecturers

Ask many education professionals about the biggest challenges they face in their work and most will include the behaviour of pupils, from low level disruption to more serious incidents which may involve violence against other pupils or staff. Whilst the former is far more prevalent than violent incidents, it is the latter which receives so much attention in the media and, of course, which has the most devastating effects on schools and individuals. In light of this, from the perspective of policy makers, school/college staff and indeed, many parents, the aim of 'zero exclusions' feels a long way away and for some, an undesirable limitation of available strategies and options.

For school professionals, exclusion is a last resort in a range of tools to combat challenging behaviour in schools. At school level, exclusion has an individual face and story. However, there are important patterns in our current exclusions statistics which suggest that the issues in exclusion decisions go beyond the level of the individual and reflect bigger challenges to the ways that schools operate.

The then DfES Priority Review *Exclusion of Black Pupils (DfES, 2006a)* noted, from earlier commissioned research, that Black Caribbean pupils are three times more likely to be excluded than their White peers. When FSM and SEN were taken into account, Black Caribbean pupils were still 2.6 times more likely to be excluded from schools than White pupils. Indeed, the DfFES found that the typical profile of excluded Black pupils is less likely to match the typical profile of excluded White pupils (such as having SEN, FSM, longer and more numerous previous exclusions, poor attendance records, or criminal records or being looked after children) (DfES, 2006b).

I know that many will already be familiar with these observations but it is worth re-stating them as they are a key part of our recognizing that there is an

exclusions gap in relation to Black Caribbean pupils. We know that socio-economic inequalities in society are a factor in exclusions but research evidence also shows that there is a factor that exists outside of these inequalities and that relates to ethnicity. Somehow the education system treats Black pupils differently from others and if we are to tackle pupil exclusions properly, we need to recognizse this and as professionals, reflect on our own practice and the assumptions on which it is based.

There are many factors which play a part in the higher number of exclusions of Black pupils and on their attainment in school. Academics and researchers (Cork; John; Sewell; Youdell) have cited a number of factors, according them different degrees of significance, such as home background, socioeconomic position, parent/school relationships, the impact of youth and street cultures, low expectations from education staff and institutional racism.

Researchers such as Gillborn, Gipps and Major have reached some challenging conclusions based on the evidence they have collected; that schools exclude Black pupils in circumstances where they would have been less likely to exclude a White pupil. Qualitative evidence also suggests that this difference is shown at an earlier point than the exclusion; that Black pupils are subject to more frequent, harsher discipline for less serious misbehaviour than White pupils and they receive less praise. It concludes that teachers are likely to be unaware that they treat their Black pupils differently in this way. We need to look at the decisions that schools and their staff make which have the cumulative effect of producing the outcome of disproportionate exclusions for Black pupils (DfES, 2006).

These are not easy conclusions for staff or their unions and it is vital that we are included in the professional review process which needs to take

place; a meaningful change of culture, while it can be informed and supported externally, cannot be imposed from without. Imposition is likely to result in a defensive superficial compliance. This would not address many of the day-to-day issues and assumptions which have led to the discrimination which has been highlighted above. We know that teacher expectations have a large impact on pupil achievement, and it is at this level where the most positive change can be wrought, in creating a school/college environment which expects achievement, participation and positive contribution from all children and young people, promoting equal opportunities for all and tackling discrimination both within school and through pupils themselves in the wider community.

So, how do we start the process of questioning the expectations (and related behaviours) that education staff currently have of their pupils and of challenging them, where appropriate? We have a highly skilled and knowledgeable workforce and part of their professionalism is to review their practice with the support of their leadership teams and bodies such as the Training and Development Agency (TDA), National College of School Leadership (NCSL) and the Department for Education. That support should include provision of professional development, informed by research evidence; time and space for reflection and, when appropriate, the sharing of effective practice. Teachers and support staff need the tools to challenge stereotypical views, including their own, related to ethnic background, faith or belief, sexual orientation,

gender identity and disability, amongst others. This emphasis on professional reflection and dialogue is required from initial training stages through to early and continuing professional development and as a key part of any leadership training.

Schools and colleges do not exist in a vacuum. They are not only subject to the impact of far broader socio-economic issues but also to a wave of government policy edicts. The curriculum in schools can often be unwieldy and inflexible, innovation discouraged by a high-stakes testing system and what is perceived as a blame-focused accountability framework. It is in this context that we need to challenge institutional-level discrimination and it is important that we recognizse the part that these contextual factors play in the issues highlighted in this piece. Exclusions of Black pupils is an issue which needs urgent exploration, with a shared commitment by groups such as education staff, pupils, parents, community and policy -makers, to tackle the factors that are within their power to make a positive change.

References

DfES (2006a) *Getting It. Getting It Right, Priority Review: Exclusion of Black Pupils.* London: DfES.

DfES (2006b), *Exclusion of Black Pupils*, Priority Review, citing Ofsted, Parsons, D. et al. London: DfES.

12. Exclusions: A Comment from the Association of School and College Leaders
Mike Griffiths
Association of School and College Leaders

The Association for School and College Leaders (ASCL) wishes to continue to work with the Runnymede Trust in seeking to determine reasons for exclusions, particularly amongst the black community.

ASCL believes that schools must retain the right to permanently exclude children from a school if their continuing presence either poses a threat to the health, safety and well-being of other youngsters or school staff, or prevents other children from learning. The rights of all other members of the school community need to be borne in mind as well as the rights of the individual student.

No head teacher or college leader excludes permanently without exploring all other options, but permanent exclusion must be retained as a final sanction if schools and colleges are to be places where there is good order and where effective learning can take place.

Many schools are now engaged with local partner schools in a behaviour partnership. Heads will often seek to 'manage a move' between their schools in order to avoid a permanent exclusion. The problem with this arrangement is that it can lead to a situation where the disruption is simply serially moved around a group of schools, rather than the root cause of the problem being tackled.

Some schools have established a 'unit' (which goes under various titles) within their school, into which a student may be transferred out of his/her mainstream classes. Where this occurs, good practice is that such moves are planned and managed appropriately, and are for a fixed period of time. During this time, it would be expected that a range of strategies will be sought to improve behaviour before re-integration back into the mainstream.

Where a permanent exclusion occurs, it is the responsibility of the Local Authority to help the parent/carer find an alternative school place – often using the Hard to Place Protocol established in that area.

A child who has been permanently excluded from two schools becomes the responsibility of the Local Authority. The LA needs to have sufficient places available in provision other than mainstream schools to meet the reasonable need of the community.

ASCL will support the Runnymede Trust in seeking to establish whether children from some ethnic minority backgrounds are more likely to be excluded than others. If this is the case, it is important to find the reasons why this should be so and learn lessons on all sides to reduce such exclusions.

13. Exclusions and Race Equality
Saurav Sarkar
National Union of Teachers

The NUT has focused on the issue of exclusions in a variety of contexts for many years.   It has found that the issue of exclusions of particular segments of the black pupil population is real and needs addressing in terms of individual needs and the wider ramifications of an outcome that is institutionally discriminatory on the basis of ethnicity

However, in discussing this issue, it is extremely important to contextualize it appropriately. This is to avoid stigmatization, generalizations that are not valid, and approaches that would reinforce rather than undermine discriminatory aspects of the problem. Exclusions are not just an issue that affect black pupils, and not all black pupil groups are affected. It is also unclear how other pupil characteristics besides ethnicity may play a role.

According to the Government's 2006 Priority Review *Getting It. Getting It Right*, Black Caribbean pupils, pupils of dual Black Caribbean and White ancestry, and pupils of 'Any Other Black Background' had significantly higher fixed period exclusion rates in maintained schools than most other groups of pupils.

Traveller pupils of both Irish and Romany/Gypsy heritage had significantly higher rates of exclusion than any other ethnic group for which data was collated, including all black pupil groups. Black African pupils were below the average for all pupils, including White British pupils. However, the text accompanying the data frequently generalized about 'Black' pupils without noting these important facts that call for further investigation.

Further, there was no breakdown by gender or by social class for any of the groups, leading to a possible overemphasis on ethnicity in attempting to grasp the issue of exclusions.

This is a dangerous approach to take in a context in which drawing attention to disparate outcomes of black pupils must be balanced against engaging in practices that reinforce those outcomes through stereotyping. The approach also risks focusing on the wrong aspects of pupil identity or community in terms of determining the appropriate policy solutions, and ignoring pupil

groups that may be facing higher exclusion rates that are masked by the way in which the data is constructed.

Exclusions need to be considered in the framework of a broader set of education policy issues. There are other factors besides the demographic identity of pupils which are connected to exclusions.   It was reported in 2008 that academies have double the rate of permanent exclusions. This is evidence that there are other factors that need to be looked at in intersection with ethnicity in properly understanding the exclusions issue. It is also evidence that exclusion rates should be considered in the debate over academies.

Similarly, the lack of role models for black and minority ethnic pupils begs consideration of underrepresentation of black teachers in Greater London when compared to black pupil populations and what impact this might have.

Finally, in addressing exclusions, a whole school approach should be adopted which takes into account the needs of all individuals involved, including school staff and pupils, but parents, community members, and others.

The NUT has produced the publication Born to be Great, a charter for promoting the achievement of Black Caribbean Boys, partly in response to the Government's Priority Review. It uses a gendered lens and considers responsibilities and entitlements of all people involved, including pupils. This document provides recommendations for family members, the wider community, and the pupils themselves as active agents for change in eliminating exclusions and addressing other education issues among Black Caribbean boys. It deals with education for Black Caribbean boys more broadly than exclusively focusing on exclusions. The document is available at http://www.teachers.org.uk/resources/pdf/Black-Youngsters.pdf

Similarly, the NUT and NCSL commissioned extensive research on White Working Class pupils and convened discussions on achievement issues relating to that population. This research also took a gendered lens, considered the broader context

of the debate, and attempted to identify some solutions while avoiding a reinforcement of some of the problematic ways in which the problem is discussed. The research findings and summaries of the discussions conducted by the NUT and

NCSL are available at http://www.teachers.org.uk. A policy document on how to address the issues identified through this process is under production and will be issued later in this school year..

———————————————

SECTION V: APPENDICES
Appendix 1 Roundtable Participants

Biographical Information on Contributors

Diane Abbott made history in 1987 by becoming the first black woman ever elected to the British Parliament. She has since built a distinguished career as a parliamentarian, broadcaster and commentator. She obtained a Masters degree in history from Newnham College Cambridge, joining Government as a Home Office Civil Servant. She went on to work for the lobby group the National Council for Civil Liberties, and then went on to become a journalist. She worked extensively as a freelancer and she went on to work as a reporter for the breakfast television company TV-AM and Thames Television. Diane was elected on to the National Executive of the Labour Party and for most of the 1990s she also served on the Treasury Select Committee of the House of Commons. Diane has been Member of Parliament for Hackney North and Stoke Newington since 1987. She became one of just four ethnic minority Members of Parliament, the others being Paul Boateng, Bernie Grant and Keith Vaz. Diane also campaigns on issues relating to black children and education, organizing the annual London Schools and the Black Child conference and the London Schools and the Black Child Annual Awards to promote positive images of young black people. Diane is also an experienced public speaker and broadcaster and appears regularly on the BBC1 late night political discussion show with Andrew Neil and Michael Portillo.

Gerry German was educated at the Universities of Wales, Basle, Vienna and London. He taught overseas in Jamaica and Nigeria. In the UK he taught with the Inner London Education Authority from 1966 to 1971 and with Clwyd County Council (as Head of the Alun School on an unique bilingual campus) between 1972 and 1974. He worked for the Commission for Racial Equality as Principal Education Officer between 1981 and 1993. He was Chair of STOPP (Society of Teachers Opposed to Physical Punishment) which campaigned to bring about the abolition of corporal punishment in UK state schools in 1986. He worked as a volunteer with WGARCR (Working Group Against Racism in Children's Resources) from 1993 to 1999 when he set up CEN (Communities Empowerment Network) where he still works as full-time voluntary Director providing advice, support and representation for people experiencing problems in education and employment, mainly school exclusions.

Val Gillies is a co-director of the Families and Social Capital Research Group at London South Bank University. She has researched and published in the area of family, social class and at risk youth, producing various journal articles and book chapters on parenting, social policy and home/school relations as well as qualitative research methods. Her book *Marginalised Mothers: Exploring Working Class Parenting* was published by Routledge in 2007. She is currently conducting ESRC funded research in inner city schools with secondary school pupils at risk of exclusion, their parents and teachers.

Michael Griffiths is Head of Northampton School for Boys, a heavily oversubscribed school at both Y7 and sixth form level. As well as serving as chair of Association of School and College Leaders Public and Parliamentary committee, he has also been a member of his county admissions forum. His school has up to 150 appeals annually and some unsuccessful appellants have then taken cases to the Ombudsman and to the Schools Adjudicator. He is therefore actively involved in the reality of setting lawful admissions procedures and dealing with the fall-out of disappointed parents. He was previously a head in Oxfordshire following time in ITT and as a science adviser and Ofsted inspector.

Audrey Osler is Visiting Professor at Birkbeck College, University of London and the University of Leeds, where she was founding director of the Centre for Citizenship and Human Rights Education. Her PhD looking at Black British success was published as The Lives and Careers of Black Teachers and her book *Girls and Exclusion* (with Kerry Vincent) won the Times Educational Supplement award for best academic book. Audrey is adviser to a number of international organizations, including UNESCO and the Council of Europe, and she works closely with a number of policy groups, including the Runnymede Trust. Her forthcoming book *Students' Perspectives on Schooling* will be published by

Open University Press in Spring 2010. Website: http://leeds.academia.edu/AudreyOsler

Dr Tracey Reynolds is a Senior Research Fellow, in the Families and Social Capital ESRC Research Group, London South Bank University, UK. Tracey's research interests - in Caribbean families and kinship networks, parenting and childrearing and women in the labour market - have led to several publications in these areas. She has conducted extensive empirical research in the UK across a range of social issues including Black and minority families living in disadvantaged communities. She is extending her research interests to include developments in the Caribbean and North America. Her current research examines Caribbean youths and transnational identities and she has several publications that she is presently working on in this area. Previous publications include 'Exploring the absent/present dilemma: Black fathers, family relationships and social capital in Britain', *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (2009); 'Black to the Community: Black Community Parenting in Britain', in *Journal of Community*, Work and Family (2003). She is also the author of *Caribbean Mothers: Identity and Experience in the UK* (published by Tufnell Press, 2005). Her most recent publication is a co-authored book, *Transational Families: Ethnicities, Identities and Social Capital*, with Harry Goulbourne, John Solomos and Elisabetta Zontini (published by Routledge in 2010).

Alison Ryan works for the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) as a Policy Adviser in the Education Policy and Research Department. ATL, the education union, works with its 160,000 members – teachers, lecturers, headteachers and support staff – empowering them to get active on a range of education and employment issues locally and nationally. ATL is affiliated to the TUC, and work with government and employers by lobbying and through social partnership. Alison's current areas of policy include the primary sector, curriculum, assessment, behaviour, SEN, faith schools and teacher CPD and ITE. She writes frequently on policy, producing, on members' behalf, ATL policy position statements and consultation responses. She has written articles on subjects as various as assessment and faith schools and she contributed to ATL's *Subject to Change: New Thinking on the Curriculum* publication which argues for a review of the current curriculum and assessment systems in England.

Saurav Sarkar joined the staff of the National Union of Teachers in 2009. He currently serves as Professional Assistant (Race Equality, Disability and SEN). Prior to joining the NUT, Saurav previously worked on race and migration equality issues at several NGOs in the United States.

Uanu Seshmi MBE is Director of the From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation (www.usatfbmf.com) and author of the Calling the Shots programme (www.usatfbmf.com/callingtheshots.php). Email: uanu_seshmi@yahoo.co.uk

Dr Tony Sewell is the director of the charity Generating Genius which supports Black boys into the Sciences and Technology, and a visiting scholar at the University of the West Indies, Jamaica. He is a Trustee at the Science Museum and author of the book *Generating Genius: Black Boys in Search of Love, Ritual and Schooling*. He tours worldwide sharing the Best Practice within the Generating Genius model. He was formerly a columnist with the *Voice* newspaper and a Lecturer at Leeds University.

Deborah Tucker is Lead on Exclusions across Hackney's primary and secondary schools and manages the Behaviour Educational Specialist Team. She was instrumental in setting up a virtual pupil referral unit which was cited for good practice in the DSCF's paper, Back on Track (2008). She has worked in the field of education for 23 years.

Cecile Wright is Professor of Sociology at Nottingham Trent University. Her research includes racialized, classed and gendered identities, youth, and schooling. She conducted a Joseph Rowntree funded project Overcoming School Exclusion and Achieving Successful Youth Transitions within African Caribbean Communities (2005) (with Standen, Johns, German and Patel). Her recent book is *Black Youth: Transition from School to Success* (with Standen and Patel), which was published in 2010 by Routledge in New York.

Appendix 2: Are We Getting It Right Yet? Summary of Proceedings of Runnymede E-conference[1]

On 8 and 9 February Runnymede held its first e-conference which explored the relationship between race equality and school exclusions. Despite a decrease in the number of exclusions of 6.4% from the year 2006/7 to 2007/8, the number of Black and minority ethnic pupils excluded from schools remains disproportionate to pupils from other ethnic backgrounds. Black Caribbean pupils are still three times more likely to be permanently excluded than the school population as a whole.

There were a range of issues raised by both speakers and participants, prompting heated debates. Topics included:

- Whether 'institutional racism' exists in our schools;
- The monitoring of out of onsite provision, e.g. Behaviour Support Units;
- The role and effectiveness of community based initiatives;
- The place of race in research;
- Young Black women, who are often forgotten from these debates;
- How teachers deal with racism in schools and the effect of this on pupils;
- Out of school factors, e.g. cultural values and family life;
- The role and responsibility of parents;
- How to avoid permanent exclusions;
- Rates of exclusion within Academies.

Key Themes from Speakers

1. Black Pupils Achievement (Dan Evans – Department for Children, Schools and Families)

In general Black children's school performance has improved and the number of teachers from BME groups has also increased. However, Black children, and particularly boys, are more likely to be excluded than other children. There have been small improvements, but overall large problems remain. It is emphasized that Academies are 'the most powerful tools' in raising standards in deprived areas.

2. Behavioural Support Units (Dr Val Gillies – London South Bank University)

Behaviour Support exclusion units are used by schools to manage disruptive pupils outside of the classroom without using official exclusion. However, there are inadequate records on which children are placed within BSUs, their ethnicity and how long they remain there. These units urgently need systematic evaluation, to be adequately resourced and given full support by all staff.

3. Race should not be the sole focus of research (Saurav Sarkar – National Union of Teachers)

Saurav Sarker emphasized the importance of looking at a range of factors when researching and discussing school exclusions. Race is not the only issue and exclusions need to be considered in the framework of a broader set of education policy issues including the role of Academies, the number of BME teachers, and a whole school approach that looks at individual pupils, teachers, staff, parents and the wider community. Gender and social class are also important factors.

4. Young Black women (Professor Audrey Osler – University of Leeds)

Audrey Osler stressed that not enough recognition is given to Black girls who are excluded. Black women are often 'invisible' in this debate, with sole attention paid to their male counterparts. More research is needed to investigate how girls deal with barriers at school.

5. Enough talking, not enough action (Dr Nicola Rollock, Professor David Gillborn – Institute of Education)

A key problem is to understand what 'institutional racism' really means among teachers, policy makers and the media. Detailed studies within schools have shown that 'institutional racism' is alive and well in schools today given that Black pupils are likely to receive harsher punishments than their white peers. It is time for policy makers to take the issue of race more seriously and, as part of this, teachers need to understand the historical debates related to race and education.

6. Not right, but getting better (Professor Carl Parsons – University of Greenwich)

The way school exclusions are dealt with is not right, but is getting better slowly. Carl Parsons argues not that school exclusions should be abolished or banned, but that they become unnecessary. There has also been a lack of commitment and leadership in enforcing the law so that all children are protected by it.

7.   School shatters young boys dreams (Harriet Sergeant – Centre for Policy Studies)

The problem is bad schools, not bad pupils. It is not difficult to help boys succeed, however the school system is failing them. Fifty-five per cent of black Caribbean boys at 14 have a reading age of seven or lower. Schools admitted they had neither the time nor the resources to help such a large number of boys to catch up – Harriet Sergeant argues that it should be their number one priority.

7.   'Out of school factors' (Dr Tony Sewell – Generating Genius)

Tony Sewell suggested that out of school factors can be used to explain the differential rates of exclusion between, for example, Black Caribbean and Black African pupils. He notes that family and culture play a huge role in the educational experiences of Black pupils and that the presence of African fathers but relative absence of Black Caribbean fathers in the home is more than simply coincidental. Over-feminized raising is more important than a boy's ethnic background in causing the rise in school exclusions.

9. Single mothers are not the cause of black boy's underachievement (Dr Tracey Reynolds – London South Bank University)

Tracey Reynolds noted that Tony Sewell's argument simply contributed towards the moral panic surrounding black fathers and family life. Recent studies show that two-thirds of Black Caribbean families are headed by a lone-mother. Black fathers are often portrayed as 'absentee parents', unwilling to take responsibility for their children. Though it is easy to blame absent fathers for their children's problems, little is really known about these father–child relationships. This article suggested that Tony Sewell completely disregards the significant role of Black fathers in bringing up their sons.

10. How to avoid exclusion – pod cast (Richard Brown – Headteacher, Hackney Free School)

In a seven minute pod cast the head teacher of Hackney Free and Parochial school, Richard Brown, explains how he managed to avoid permanently excluding any pupils for nearly two years, despite the disadvantage backgrounds of many of his pupil population.

11. Paths to Success (Professor Cecile Wright – Nottingham Trent University)

Cecile Wright notes the various ways in which Black pupils who have experienced an exclusion work to prevent the experience blighting their future educational trajectories. She highlights the increasingly important role played by parents and out of school community-based support networks in assisting excludees in moving beyond negative educational experiences and recommends greater priority to be given to assisting individual complaints from the black community and the initiative of investigations into high excluding schools.

12. Permanent exclusions do not work (Gerry German – Community Empowerment Network)

There are now around 7000 permanent exclusions across the UK annually. There is a slippery slope between school exclusion, delinquency, detention, criminality, incarceration and future unemployability. Fundamental changes need to happen to make schools into friendly, welcoming and inclusive communities. Schools need to reflect the UK's multicultural, multi-lingual, multi-faith and multi-ethnic society.

13. Who is getting it right? (Dr Lorna Cork)

Cork promotes the success of supplementary schools and community-based organizations, and stresses the importance of 'getting it right both within and outside of schools'. She advocates more training and cultural awareness for teachers and associated professionals; statistical monitoring of exclusion rates; best practice guides, etc.

Note

The archive for this e-conference can be found at http://www.runnymedetrust.org/events-conferences/econferences/econfererence.html

Selected Runnymede Publications

The Future Ageing of the Ethnic Minority Population of England and Wales
A Runnymede/Centre for Policy on Ageing Report by Nat Lievesley (2010)

The Costs of 'Returning Home': Retirement Migration and Financial Inclusion
A Runnymede Report by Omar Khan and Phil Mawhinney with research assistance from Camille Aznar (2010)

Ethnic Profiling: The Use of 'Race' in UK Law Enforcement
A Runnymede Perspective edited by Kjartan Páll Sveinsson (2010)

Lone Mothers of Mixed Racial and Ethnic Children: Then and Now
A Runnymede Perspective by Chamion Caballero and Professor Rosalind Edwards (2010)

Seeking Sound Advice: Financial Inclusion and Ethnicity
A Runnymede Report by Phil Mawhinney (2010)

Labour and Cohesive Communities
A Runnymede Platform by the Rt Hon John Denham MP with responses from Professors Derek McGhee, Mary J. Hickman and Chris Gaine (2010)

Race Equality and the Liberal Democrats
A Runnymede Platform by Lynne Featherstone MP with responses from Professor Harry Goulbourne and Dr Claire Alexander (2010)

Conservatism and Community Cohesion
A Runnymede Platform by Dominic Grieve QC MP with responses from Professors Lord Bhikhu Parekh, Ludi Simpson and Shamit Saggar (2010)

Why Do Assets Matter? Assets, Equality, Ethnicity – Building Towards Financial Inclusion
A Runnymede Report by Omar Khan (2010)

Making a Contribution: New Migrants and Belonging in Multi-ethnic Britain
A Runnymede Community Study by Kjartan Páll Sveinsson (2010)

What Works with Integrating New Migrants?: Lessons from International Best Practice
A Runnymede Perspective by Zubaida Haque (2010)

'Them and Us': Race Equality Interventions in Predominantly White Schools
A Runnymede Perspective by Yaa Asare (2009)

School Governors and Race Equality in 21st Century Schools
A Runnymede Trust Briefing Paper by Nicola Rollock (2009)

Who Pays to Access Cash?: Ethnicity and Cash Machines
A Runnymede Report by Omar Khan and Ludi Simpson (2009)

Surrey Street Market: The Heart of a Community
A Runnymede Community Study by Kjartan Páll Sveinsson, Franziska Meissner and Jessica Mai Sims

The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry 10 Years On An Analysis of the Literature
A Runnymede Report by Nicola Rollock (2009)

British Moroccans – Citizenship in Action
A Runnymede Community Study by Myriam Cherti (2009)

Who Cares about the White Working Class?
Runnymede Perspectives by Kjartan Páll Sveinsson (2009)

Right to Divide? Faith Schools and Community Cohesion
A Runnymede Report by Rob Berkeley with research by Savita Vij (2008)

Financial Inclusion and Ethnicity – An Agenda for Research and Policy Action
A Runnymede Report by Omar Khan (2008)

Understanding Diversity – South Africans in Multi-ethnic Britain
A Runnymede Community Study by Kjartan Páll Sveinsson and Anne Gumuschian (2008)

Re(thinking) 'Gangs'
A Runnymede Perspective by Claire Alexander (2008)

Soldiers, Migrants and Citizens – The Nepalese in Britain
A Runnymede Community Study by Jessica Mai Sims (2008)

A Tale of Two Englands: 'Race' and Violent Crime in the Press
A Runnymede Perspective by Kjartan Páll Sveinsson (2008)

Empowering Individuals and Creating Community: Thai Perspectives on Life in Britain
A Runnymede Community Study by Jessica Mai Sims (2008)

Living Transnationally – Romanian Migrants in London
A Runnymede Community Study by Andreea R. Torre (2008)

Mixed Heritage – Identity, Policy and Practice
A Runnymede Perspective by Jessica Mai Sims (2007)

Faith Schools and Community Cohesion – Observations on Community Consultations
A Runnymede Interim Report by Audrey Osler (2007)

Failure by Any Other Name? – Educational Policy and the Continuing Struggle for Black Academic Success
Runnymede Perspectives by Nicola Rollock (2007)

Creating Connections – Regeneration and Consultation on a Multi-Ethnic Council Estate
A Runnymede Community Study by Kjartan Páll Sveinsson (2007)

The State of the Nation – Respect as a Justification for Policy
A Runnymede Thematic Review by Omar Khan (2007)

School Choice and Ethnic Segregation – Educational Decision-making among Black and Minority Ethnic Parents
A Runnymede Report by Debbie Weekes-Bernard (2007)

Not Enough Understanding? – Student Experiences of Diversity in UK Universities
A Runnymede Community Study by Jessica Sims (2007)

Bienvenue? – Narratives of Francophone Cameroonians
A Runnymede Community Study by Kjartan Páll Sveinsson (2007)

Runnymede Perspectives

Runnymede Perspectives aim, as a series, to engage with government – and other – initiatives through exploring these and development of concepts in policy making, and analysing their potential contribution to a successful multi-ethnic Britain.

About the Editor

Debbie Weekes-Bernard works as the Senior Research and Policy Analyst for Education at the Runnymede Trust. Her work has included research on the impact of educational 'choice' agendas on BME parents and children, organizing large conferences on education and community cohesion and speaking and writing about issues to do with choice, cohesion, achievement and educational inequality. Upcoming publications will include an assessment of current policy surrounding widening participation in higher education.

www.runnymedetrust.org