



RSA

Action and Research Centre

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## Beyond the school gates

Developing the roles and connections of supplementary schools

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# Foreword

This report emerges at a time when the variety of schools available for parents and children to choose from look set for further political change. This makes a discussion about the extent to which there is a broad variety of educational support for children from *all* groups that more urgent.

This discussion is also emerging in the midst of a political and topical discourse about inequalities in education which no longer includes an analysis of gaps between minority ethnic groups, short of highlighting how well children in certain urban areas now do in comparison to those in more rural and/or less diverse parts of the country. Any discussion of educational inequality instead now focuses on the relative success of pupils from some minority ethnic groups and the comparative difficulties of white pupils from poorer backgrounds, which often includes two subtexts – first that poorer children from minority ethnic groups are not of immediate policy concern, or if they are, they can now be supported solely through interventions to help poorer children more broadly. The second and related subtext is simply that minority ethnic children are doing well.

What this report's focus on supplementary schooling shows is that issues remain for migrant and minority ethnic communities – that educational success is not the minority ethnic pupil 'story' for all groups and that, often regardless of educational qualifications, education, quite simply, is not enough. It is here, as this report illustrates, that supplementary schools have historically intervened – providing the broader levels of support for children and young people from minority ethnic and migrant groups that extend beyond educational support, through nurturing mother-tongue language support, wellbeing and heritage teaching.

As the often undervalued and underfunded partner in the range of out of school providers available to families stretching from sports clubs to private tutors, supplementary schools have historically provided support for communities ostracised by virtue of ethnic and/or religious background or migrant status. At a time when the political discussion about immigration has generated more heat than light and when the debate about free schools has drawn on concerns about Britishness, the space to be occupied by supplementary schools serving migrant and minority ethnic communities can be an important one. Therefore, while the supplementary school 'offer' has not changed, the way that offer is perceived societally has to. If minority ethnic children and young people are experiencing their educational careers inequitably and if the political rhetoric around social mobility fails to account for barriers to finding employment that educationally successful minority ethnic young people continue to face, it is now surely time to re-evaluate the support that supplementary schools can and do provide to communities, by communities.

**Dr Debbie Weekes-Bernard**

Head of Research, The Runnymede Trust

# Summary of recommendations

This report's recommendations centre on how supplementary schools can harness their strengths to broaden their **purpose, connection, impact** and **sustainability**. We offer these recommendations with caution. Supplementary schools are justifiably proud and protective of their independence. Whilst many are keen to connect better with other parts of the education and youth sectors, others are concerned to protect their independence and distinctive mission and values.

## **Recommendations:**

**R1: There should be greater encouragement and support for supplementary schools to work with youth (between the ages of 14–19), directly supporting their further and higher education, career ambitions and transition to adulthood.**

Given the links supplementary schools have with students and their families, many are well placed to play a pivotal role in supporting black and minority ethnic (BME) youth from low income backgrounds as well as youth who are new to the country. Depending on the relevant connections and motivations of the supplementary school, schools could offer careers advice, organise work placements and formalise links with higher education institutions and local businesses for future employment opportunities.

**R2: University outreach, bursary and widening participation programmes aim to connect with supplementary schools in their area, giving them similar opportunities to those offered to mainstream schools.**

By working with supplementary schools, as well as engaging directly with specific communities who are under-represented within their academic institutions, higher education institutions can help embed these schools in the wider educational network and increase their visibility.

University engagement can also facilitate more open relationships between mainstream and supplementary schools and with other educational projects. The goal should be holistic support for ethnic minority pupils and young people.

**R3: Wherever possible and appropriate, mainstream schools open up any professional learning opportunities to staff from supplementary schools. We also recommend that teaching school alliances extend their continuing professional development (CPD) offer to supplementary schools.<sup>1</sup>**

**R4: All local organisations who work directly with young people consider the scope to build relationships with supplementary schools. Local 'brokerage' organisations, (for instance, education business partnerships, Arts Council Bridge organisations, or youth sector networks) should seek to integrate supplementary schools into their existing networks.**

<sup>1</sup>. Teaching school alliances are a community of schools and cross-sector partners that work together to receive mutual support on training, support and research and development.

**R5: Supplementary schools, both individually and through their local and national networks, connect with the youth sector – in particular through the new Centre for Youth Impact – to improve approaches to evaluating impact.**

**R6: Mainstream schools should consider whether pupil premium funding could be used to support partnerships with supplementary schools particularly in using the expertise of supplementary school teachers to support BME students.**

Mainstream schools could hire supplementary school practitioners as advisers in how to connect with low performing BME students or students newly arrived in the country. They could also hire supplementary school teachers to develop and implement strategies in how to have more meaningful engagement with parents from BME communities in their school.

**R7: Local and national government, and national agencies, trusts and foundations, should consider options for offering some ‘stability funding’ to supplementary schools – three to five year agreements that support their longer term viability as sustainable, ‘commission-ready’ organisations.**

This funding model would be appropriate for supplementary schools willing to formalise their role and operating methods, for example, by strengthening safeguarding and off-site procedures. The duty to assess the risks associated with out-of-school settings, including supplementary schools, has been passed on to local authorities but without allocated funding. An intelligent compact with supplementary schools could support their stability and improve procedures and trust.

**R8: Arts Council England (ACE) should consider using its strategic funding to support supplementary schools as cultural organisations, and to encourage its national portfolio of funded organisations to develop partnerships with supplementary schools.**

Supplementary schools offer a range of cultural, linguistic and artistic activities in an environment where community heritage is valued.

ACE has committed to supporting new commissions that contribute to the Creative Case for diversity. A new programme will be “open to artists and organisations who are not in our National portfolio providing an opportunity to invest in talent development and support the creation of new work”.<sup>2</sup> Arts Council England should look to supplementary schools as a powerful network of cultural ‘points of contact’, connecting with parts of the community that the rest of the arts sector struggles to reach. Strategic funding from the ‘Creative Case for diversity’ programme could support supplementary schools to:

- Develop cultural outputs and offers, possibly leading to an annual national festival for supplementary schools.
- Commission artists and organisations to work with the young people they serve.
- Building on the notion of supplementary schools as ‘basecamps’, help young people and communities to access offers from other cultural organisations.

2. See [www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/our-priorities-2011-15/diversity-and-creative-case/diversity-arts-and-culture-across-england/#sthash.B9iun6wj.dpuf](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/our-priorities-2011-15/diversity-and-creative-case/diversity-arts-and-culture-across-england/#sthash.B9iun6wj.dpuf)



## About the RSA

The RSA (Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce) believes that everyone should have the freedom and power to turn their ideas into reality – we call this the Power to Create. Through our ideas, research and 27,000-strong Fellowship, we seek to realise a society where creative power is distributed, where concentrations of power are confronted, and where creative values are nurtured. Aligned to this view, RSA Creative Learning and Development team's new mission is to close the creativity gap in learning. We believe that cultivating everyone's creative capacities throughout life, working particularly with individuals and communities who lack the opportunities, power and resources to realise their aspirations, is crucial for an adaptive, inclusive society. Our programme of research, innovation and mobilisation aims to inspire debate, influence policy and change practice.

## About RSA Investigate-Ed

*Beyond the School Gates* marks the end of the second RSA Investigate-Ed, a series of investigations into key issues within education. These seek to offer new perspectives and directions on policy concerns, aiming to propose new ideas for policy and practice in response to emerging evidence and changing contexts, as well as to support the early development of practical partnerships and projects. These investigations will give policymakers, practitioners and other stakeholders structured spaces to diagnose problems and generate solutions. *Schools with Soul*, the report from our first RSA Investigate-Ed, into Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Education (SMSC), has already influenced government response to issues around British values, and the revised Ofsted Framework. You can read the report here [tinyurl.com/pylj04j](https://tinyurl.com/pylj04j).

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# 1. Introduction

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*We offer this report as a means to widen the conversation about supplementary schools and their existing roles*

## Overview

Supplementary schools are volunteer-led spaces, offering educational, cultural and language provision for mainly black and minority ethnic (BME) children and young people. Research has consistently shown that they offer an invaluable resource for many pupils, but are often overlooked by mainstream schools and education funders.<sup>3</sup> This report seeks to **explore the value of supplementary schools so that their contribution is more widely understood** beyond grassroots communities and pockets of academia. In a changing cultural, social and economic climate, we also consider how supplementary schools might adapt, particularly to helping their pupils make successful transitions from school to further and higher education and employment.

Crucial within our understanding is the different motivations and aims of supplementary schools. While we offer a series of reflections and recommendations within this report, we acknowledge that some recommendations may not feel applicable to how some supplementary schools perceive their role. However, we offer this report as a means to **widen the conversation about supplementary schools and their existing roles**, so that they are able to evolve with support and intention.

In this same spirit, we also consider the possibilities for strengthening partnerships between supplementary schools, mainstream schools, and parts of the local learning ecology, including youth services and cultural organisations, to support the development of their students' social, emotional and cultural capacities.

## What are supplementary schools?

The term supplementary school, or complementary school as it is also known, incorporates a diversity of provision including Saturday schools, homework and after school clubs. Supplementary schools are usually community spaces, led by volunteers, which offer educational and cultural opportunities outside of mainstream school provision for BME children and young people.

Supplementary schools have existed for at least a century, with a significant expansion in numbers since the 1960s, driven by increased immigration. With approximately 3,000 supplementary schools across the UK<sup>4</sup> they represent a powerful network of grassroots organisations, purpose driven and responsive to the needs of their community.

3. Maylor, U., Glass, K. and Issa, T. et al (2010) *Impact of supplementary schools on pupils' attainment: an investigation into what factors contribute to educational improvements*. London: Department for Children, Schools and Families.

4. John Lyon's Charity (2012) *Supplementary Schools – A new Approach*.

Research identifies two main overlapping categories of supplementary schools:<sup>5</sup>

- a. Schools that focus on improving the educational attainment of their students and who provide support in national curriculum subjects. This type is particularly dominant within African-Caribbean communities where the rate of educational attainment has tended to be below average.
- b. Schools which focus on the cultural and/or language traditions of a particular community, common in Bangladeshi, Punjabi and Chinese supplementary schools.

### Why supplementary schools?

Against a background of continuing ethnic inequalities, supplementary schools offer an important set of resources for an estimated 15–38 percent of BME pupils aged 5–16 in England.<sup>6</sup> Supplementary schools are often considered safe spaces<sup>7</sup> within which the culture, heritage and language(s) of BME children are nurtured. The notion of ‘creating space’ to foster the ambitions and nuanced identities of BME pupils in a diasporic context can build resilience and a sense of belonging. Supplementary schools can also be more flexible and responsive to the needs of BME students than mainstream schools and are often better placed to provide tailored support and guidance to pupils from the specific communities they serve.

#### Box 1: Understanding ethnicity and diversity in Britain

Over the past decade, the UK's white British population has remained roughly the same, while the black and minority ethnic (BME) population has almost doubled. Eight million people or 14 percent of the UK population are from a BME background and 1.2 million people are from mixed ethnic backgrounds.<sup>8</sup> One in 10 children are growing up with parents from different ethnic backgrounds.<sup>9</sup>

This growing diversity is reflected within mainstream schooling.<sup>10</sup> Children from BME backgrounds account for around 27 percent of pupils in state-funded primary schools and approximately 22 percent of pupils at secondary school.<sup>11</sup> One in six primary school pupils and one in eight secondary school pupils have English as an additional language (EAL). Both figures have more than doubled since 1997.<sup>12</sup>

5. Issa and Williams (2009) cited in Maylor, U., Glass, K. and Issa, T. et al (2010) op cit, p.27.

6. Maylor, U., Glass, K. and Issa, T. et al (2010) op cit, p.229.

7. Conteh, J. and Brock, A. (2011) ‘Safe spaces’? Sites of bilingualism for young learners in home, school and community. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 14(3), 347–360.

8. CoDE (2014) How are ethnic inequalities in education changing? *Dynamics of diversity: evidence from the 2011 census*. Available here: [www.ethnicity.ac.uk/medialibrary/briefingsupdated/how-are-ethnic-inequalities-in-education-changing.pdf](http://www.ethnicity.ac.uk/medialibrary/briefingsupdated/how-are-ethnic-inequalities-in-education-changing.pdf). In order of size, the five largest minority communities are: Indian, Pakistani, Black African, Black Caribbean and Bangladeshi.

9. Ford, R., Jolley, R. et al (2012) *The Melting Pot Generation*, London: British Future, pp.2–4.

10. All BME groups except the Black Caribbean population display a much younger age structure than the white population (Policy Exchange 2014).

11. DfE (2011) *Schools, Pupils and their characteristics, January 2011*. Available here: [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/219064/main\\_2otext\\_2osfr122011.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/219064/main_2otext_2osfr122011.pdf)

12. NALDIC (accessed 2015) The latest statistics about EAL learners in our schools [website]. Available from: [www.naldic.org.uk/research-and-information/eal-statistics/eal-pupils](http://www.naldic.org.uk/research-and-information/eal-statistics/eal-pupils)



Collecting and analysing data on different ethnicities can be challenging, given the subjective and changing nature of ethnicity. Our reference to BME pupils takes guidance from the Institute of Race Relations, which defines black and minority ethnic as the term 'normally used in the UK to describe people of non-white descent'. Similarly, the Office for National Statistics considers 'minority ethnic' as a group that refers to all groups that are not 'white British'.<sup>13</sup>

The core analysis of this report has been driven by the wider data available. However, this is sometimes lacking consistency and nuance, given that local authorities are only required to submit school achievement data of BME students under the four categories of 'White', 'Black' 'Asian' and 'Other'. Although schools and local government have the option of using extended ethnic codes, this is not obligatory.<sup>14</sup> While data from central government is more extensive, the predefined labels relating to ethnicity often fail to capture the many variances, cultures, and experiences within any category.

Analysis of the impact of supplementary schools also indicates that they can help improve the attainment of their pupils.<sup>15</sup> Notably, BME attainment has changed significantly over the past two decades. While certain minority ethnic groups (notably students of Chinese and Indian origin) have traditionally performed well at GCSE in comparison to their white British counterparts,<sup>16</sup> there have been educational improvements from many BME pupils, with Nigerian and Bangladeshi students now also attaining above the national average.<sup>17</sup> However, while the gap in average attainment for black and white pupils has narrowed, black pupils remain the lowest performing group at GCSE.<sup>18</sup>

Although recent political attention has concentrated on improving the attainment of white pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds,<sup>19</sup> evidence indicates that action is still required to improve the attainment and life chances of pupils from some BME backgrounds. While some debates, in seeking to understand the lower attainment of some BME groups, may locate blame within those communities themselves, this report seeks to avoid deficit labelling of this nature.

Our report aims to explore how supplementary schools have and can continue to act as springboards for facilitating meaningful BME achievement.<sup>20</sup>

In examining the roles and practices of supplementary schools today, we consider how they can go beyond supporting BME attainment in the classroom. In particular, we explore how they can impact on wider

13. ONS (2003) *Ethnic group statistics: A guide for the collection and classification of ethnicity data*.

14. Rutter, J. (2013) *Back to Basics*. London: IPPR.

15. Ibid; Evans, D. and Vassie, P. (2012) *Evidencing the impact of supplementary education across the beneficial area of John Lyon's Charity*. London: John Lyon's Charity.

16. Gillborn, D. and Rollock, N. (2010) 'Education' A. Bloch and J. Solomos (eds.) *Race and Ethnicity in the 21st Century*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

17. CoDE (2014) *Addressing Ethnic Inequalities in Social Mobility*. Manchester University.

18. DfE (2015) *GCSE and equivalent attainment by pupil characteristics, 2013 to 2014* (Revised) Available here: [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/399005/SFR06\\_2015\\_Text.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/399005/SFR06_2015_Text.pdf)

19. Ofsted (2013) *Unseen children: access and achievement 20 years on*; Stuart, G. (2014) *Underachievement in education by white working class children: Government response to the Committee's first report of session 2014-15 second special report of session 2014-15*.

20. Maylor, U., Glass, K. and Issa, T. et al (2010) op cit.

social and cultural outcomes and encourage successful transitions to young adulthood.

### **A snapshot of supplementary schools today**

More recent increases of immigration over the last two decades have brought economic migrants from the European Union and eastern Europe in particular, as well as refugees and asylum seekers from across the world.<sup>21</sup> As with earlier waves of immigration, this has been a driver in the formation of new schools.

Today, there are about 3,000 supplementary schools across the country, which teach between 18 and 28 percent of all children from non-white British communities at some point during their school years.<sup>22</sup> According to research commissioned by the Department for Children, Schools and Families,<sup>23</sup> the makeup of supplementary schools in recent years was as follows:

- 60 percent of schools served a single ethnic community.
- 48 percent of the schools served Asian communities, including Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi.
- 38 percent served black African communities and 23 percent African-Caribbean communities.
- 22 percent served communities from the European Union and eastern Europe (such as Greek, Polish, Hungarian or Russian).
- Other communities served were Middle Eastern (18 percent) and south-east Asian (14 percent, including Chinese, Vietnamese, and Japanese).

*68 percent of supplementary schools offered teaching in National Curriculum subjects*

In terms of content, 68 percent of supplementary schools offered teaching in National Curriculum subjects, focusing on maths and English; 75 percent provided coaching for GCSEs and 26 percent provided coaching for A-level and AS-level exams.<sup>24</sup> Provision included Saturday schools and after school clubs, and typically operated from community-based venues such as youth clubs, places of worship, mainstream schools or community centres.<sup>25</sup> In practical terms, they varied in size and organisational structure; class sizes were typically smaller than in mainstream settings.<sup>26</sup>

85 percent of schools taught culture and heritage and 79 percent taught community or mother tongue languages, representing 53 language groups.<sup>27</sup> Religious and faith teaching was offered by just under half of schools, with Islam (52 percent) being the most commonly

21. Hansen, R. (2000) *Citizenship and Immigration in Postwar Britain*, Oxford: Oxford University Press; Maylor, U., Glass, K. and Issa, T. et al (2010) op cit, p.29.

22. Maylor, U., Glass, K. and Issa, T. et al (2010) op cit, p.170.

23. Ibid, p.10.

24. Ibid, pp.10–11.

25. NRCSE (2009) What is Supplementary Education? *The Bulletin* Summer 2009. Issue 12. Found here: [www.supplementaryeducation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/nrcsebulletin-12-summer2009.pdf](http://www.supplementaryeducation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/nrcsebulletin-12-summer2009.pdf)

26. A survey of 301 supplementary schools carried out in 2010 found that the majority (82 percent) of schools had a typical class size of 20 or fewer pupils (Maylor, U., Glass, K. and Issa, T. et al (2010) op cit, pp.10–11).

27. Ibid, p.10.

taught religion, followed by Christianity (25 percent) and Hinduism (18 percent).<sup>28</sup>

Islamic faith schools, also known as madrassas, serve about 250,000 Muslim children.<sup>29</sup> Research and understanding of madrassas outside the Muslim community is relatively limited.<sup>30</sup> Mainstream narratives and public perceptions of madrassas are influenced by negative portrayals of Islam and faith schools in the media, often lacking in evidence, which are predominantly framed in terms of concerns about radicalisation and political extremism.<sup>31</sup> Unlike most supplementary schools, madrassas are often subject to criticism and high levels of scrutiny by politicians and the wider public due to ongoing concerns about alleged extremism within the Muslim community.

While this report incorporates the work of religious supplementary schools within its scope and analysis, it is with a view to considering the priorities of the supplementary schools sector and the achievements of its pupils. We are conscious that, within current government discourse, faith supplementary schools in particular are referred to only in connection with extremism and the Prevent agenda. The issue of unequal life outcomes of BME pupils constitutes a neglected current area of public policy, far more salient for the vast majority of BME pupils than issues surrounding radicalisation and extremism.

## **Aims of the Investigation**

At a moment when supplementary schools could play an enhanced and even more significant role in improving outcomes for young people, they also appear vulnerable to shifting priorities. From building partnerships with an increasingly fragmented school system, to coping with suspicions raised through the anti-extremism agenda, to understanding the changing needs of their community groups, supplementary schools are, in a period of reduced local and national funding opportunities, facing a complex set of challenges. In this changing context, our investigation explores how supplementary schools can add most value to the life chances<sup>32</sup> of young people from BME backgrounds. It seeks to build on the existing body of research on supplementary schools to understand the role that they can play in supporting their students to achieve across a broad range of outcomes. In doing so, the report seeks to move BME achievement issues higher up the policy and practice agendas and bring supplementary schools to wider policy attention.

28. Ibid, p.52.

29. Hayer, S. (2009) and Abrams, F. (2011) cited in Cherti, M. and Bradley, L. (2011). *Inside Madrassas: Understanding and Engaging with British-Muslim Faith Supplementary Schools*. London: Institute for Public Policy Research, p.3.

30. Cherti, M. and Bradley, L. (2011) *ibid*.

31. *Ibid*.

32. By 'life chances', we mean the chances of individuals achieving a broad range of outcomes at successive stages of the life course, which are important for allowing them to live a flourishing and fulfilled life. These outcomes include health and wellbeing, educational achievement and enjoyment in learning, income, occupation, social networks and personal autonomy.

## Methods and structure

To support our work, we recruited an expert group of practitioners, policymakers and academics, all with expertise around either BME achievement or supplementary schools. This group met twice over four months, advising us on useful lines of enquiry, interrogating our analysis, and suggesting principles and recommendations.<sup>33</sup>

Following desk research and a review of existing literature, our primary research involved a small-scale, qualitative study consisting of 24 semi-structured, telephone interviews with 18 supplementary school volunteers, two school development support employees, two senior local authority employees, one education activist and a former senior adviser for a local authority. We ran three focus groups with supplementary school leaders and volunteers in Lewisham, Bradford and Birmingham.

In chapter two, we chart the rise of the supplementary school movement and in chapter three, we look at BME outcomes beyond the school gates. In chapter four, we present findings from research undertaken for this investigation. Chapter five draws together conclusions from the research and sets out a number of recommendations.

33. A list of group members is included at the end of this report.

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## 2. The rise of the supplementary school movement

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### A rich history of supporting young people

Supplementary schools have a rich history as some of England's first social enterprises. Evidence of Hebrew, Irish, Polish and Turkish supplementary schools in Britain dates back over 150 years.<sup>34</sup> Jewish supplementary schools<sup>35</sup> of the 19th century were set up in order to preserve language and culture.<sup>36</sup> Schools were set up by Irish parents as a way of preserving the Irish language amongst their children while Turkish supplementary schools were established to preserve Turkish culture, traditional values and promote mother tongue teaching.<sup>37</sup>

The period after the second world war saw significant growth in the number of supplementary schools. These were set up by refugees from eastern Europe and migrants from Asian and Caribbean countries, mainly from the Commonwealth.<sup>38</sup> The aims and motivations of this community-based provision varied. In the 1950s and 60s, Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong, Cypriot and Ukranian communities set up supplementary schools as 'mother tongue' institutions to pass on language and culture to younger generations.<sup>39</sup> Later, the increase of Filipino, Thai and Vietnamese migrants and refugees coming into Britain from the 1970s, would lead to a growing number of supplementary and community-based provision for the children in south-east Asian communities.<sup>40</sup> However, for what was then called the West Indian population, the Black Saturday schools movement grew during the same period in response to concerns among parents and families

34. Simon, A. R. (2013) *The social positioning of supplementary schooling* (Doctoral dissertation), University of Birmingham.

35. This was likely to include religious components as the term 'supplementary school' was commonly interchangeable for 'Hebrew', 'Religious' and 'Synagogue' school by the Jewish community. (Holtz, B. W., Dorph, G. Z. and Goldring, E. B. (1997) cited in Maylor, U., Glass, K. and Issa, T. et al (2010) op cit, pp.27–8.)

36. Gluckman, B. (1997) cited in ibid.

37. Memdouh, F. (1981) cited in ibid.

38. Simon, A. R. (2013) op cit; Maylor, U., Glass, K. and Issa, T. et al (2010) op cit.

39. Francis, B., Archer, L. and Mau, A. (2008) *British-Chinese Pupils' Identities, Achievement and Complementary Schooling* [Executive Report]. University of London/Kings College, p.520.

40. Çavuşoğlu, Ç. (2013) *Complementary schools as 'safe spaces' to practise hybridity? Language, power & resistance*. Working Papers in Language & Literacies (Paper No: 109). London: King's College London.

about the lack of adequate provision offered to black children within mainstream education.

### From cultural to classroom support

For much of the 20th century, the dominant educational discourse systematically underestimated and undermined the intellectual abilities of black pupils.<sup>41</sup> Long-held assumptions about the supposed deficiencies of Black Caribbean families, in particular, served to reinforce this narrative.<sup>42</sup> As a result, disproportionately large numbers of black children were for decades identified as being educationally subnormal and removed from mainstream schools to be educated separately, having taken forms of IQ tests that today would be considered discriminatory and culturally biased.<sup>43</sup>

In response to concerns about increasing immigration, educational policy during the 1960s adopted an assimilationist ideology with educational initiatives that required newcomers to integrate<sup>44</sup> into British society as quickly as possible.<sup>45</sup> From the late 1960s, Black Caribbean parents and the wider community expressed growing concerns about the academic performance of their children. These were eventually recognised in 1977 by the Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration, leading to an ‘independent inquiry into the causes of the underachievement of children of West Indian origin in maintained schools and the remedial action required’ in 1979. The interim and final reports of this inquiry, known respectively as the Rampton<sup>46</sup> and Swann<sup>47</sup> reports, were given greater prominence as a result of the 1981 riots. Over the same period, a growing body of academic research highlighted how the dominance of reductive stereotypes of minority ethnic pupils, while not only fictitious, provided a smokescreen to low teacher expectations and racism.<sup>48</sup> Some sustained efforts were made in London and other more progressive local authorities to address these issues, but overall, BME underachievement in English schools remained a persistent problem.

The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills was intended, therefore, to compensate for inadequate mainstream provision where lower teacher expectations of and bias towards black children were seen as

*But overall, BME underachievement in English schools remained a persistent problem*

41. It should be noted that early debates focused on the attainment and experiences of the then called ‘West Indian’ and Asian heritage pupils. This was a reflection of the dominant minority ethnic population at the time.

42. Foster et al (1996) cited in Stevens, P. (2007) Researching race/ethnicity and educational inequality in English secondary schools: A critical review of the research literature between 1980 and 2005. *Review of Educational Research*, 77(2), 147–185.

43. Coard, B. (1971) *How the West Indian Child is Made Educationally Subnormal in the British School System: The Scandal of the Black Child in Schools in Britain*.

44. Though the 1970s saw some ideological shifts in educational policy towards ‘integration’, the interpretation of this stance placed the onus on the immigrant to ‘fit in’. (Grosvenor 1997 cited in Simon 2013).

45. Leung and Franson (2001) cited in Simon, A. (2013) op cit.

46. Storbritannien. Committee of Inquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups, and Rampton, A. (1981) *West Indian Children in our Schools: interim report of the Committee of Inquiry into the education of children from ethnic minority groups*. HM Stationery Office.

47. Swann, B. M. S. (1985) *Education for all: The report of the committee of inquiry into the education of children from ethnic minority groups* (Vol. 9453). HMSO.

48. Donald, J. and Rattansi, A. (eds.). (1992) *Race, culture and difference* (Vol. 1). Sage. Klein, G. (1993) *Education towards race equality*. Continuum International Publishing Group.



commonplace.<sup>49</sup> The development of provision within the Black Saturday school movement was one of several strategies adopted by anti-racist academics, parents and campaigners, who called for equality within the mainstream education system as well as a less Eurocentric curriculum.<sup>50</sup>

### The main missions of supplementary schools

As the history of the movement alludes, supplementary schools have fulfilled a range of different roles and purposes, reflecting the schools' differing origins, contexts and motivations. Two overarching aims can be identified as:

- i. Developing the cultural identity, self-esteem and confidence of minority ethnic children.<sup>51</sup>
- ii. Promoting the formal attainment of minority ethnic children in examinations.

These core aims are not mutually exclusive; in practice, many schools offer a range of provision which incorporates educational, cultural and linguistic elements.<sup>52</sup>

As we explore further, what distinguishes different types of provision is the motivation behind the school: whereas the principal motivation behind some supplementary schools has been to **conserve**, protect and celebrate the culture and language of origin, the primary motivation in other cases has been **compensatory** – that is, to bridge the attainment gap experienced by minority ethnic pupils by compensating for inadequacies in mainstream provision. Furthermore, some community members and activists have articulated an explicitly political and **counter-cultural** dimension, which seeks to challenge dominant discourses that perpetuate racism and discrimination. These motivations are discussed in detail below:

- i. *Bridging the cultural and generational gap: conserving and celebrating language and culture*

For first and second generation children growing up in a different cultural context to their parents, the supplementary school often acts as a bridge by which the pupil can learn about their heritage, culture and language. As captured in the Swann Report<sup>53</sup> members of both the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities were “anxious for their children to be able to speak their ‘mother tongue’ languages” as part

49. Ibid; ibid; Solomos, J. (1991) *Black youth, racism and the state: the politics of ideology and policy*. CUP Archive; Sewell, T. (1997) *Black Masculinities and Schooling: How Black boys survive modern schooling*. Buckingham, Open University Press.

50. Mirza, H. S. and Reay, D. (2000) Spaces and places of black educational desire: Rethinking black supplementary schools as a new social movement. *Sociology*, 34(3), 521–544; DEPS (2014) *Black History Month*. Available here: [www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/departments/education/web-files2/news-files/Black-History-Month-DEPS-2014.pdf](http://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/departments/education/web-files2/news-files/Black-History-Month-DEPS-2014.pdf)

51. Abdelrazak, M. (2000) cited in Strand, S. (2007) Surveying the views of pupils attending supplementary schools in England. *Educational Research*, 49(1), 1–19, p.7.

52. Issa, T. and Williams, C. (2009), cited in Maylor, U., Glass, K. and Issa, T. et al (2010) op cit, p.27.

53. Swann, B. M. S. (1985) *Education for all: The report of the committee of inquiry into the education of children from ethnic minority groups* (Vol. 9453). HMSO.

of retaining their identity. It was also seen as a ‘key’ to their religious and cultural heritages, as well as “[being important to be] able to communicate with relatives... who might not speak English.”<sup>54</sup> For these communities, the ‘case’ for ‘mother tongue’ provision was “also seen from the point of view of according true equality of opportunity to BME children on par with their majority peers.”<sup>55</sup> Similarly, one member of the Ukrainian community described how important it was for “a migrant child to be able to study his own culture... he must have sound knowledge of his own mother tongue... This is his birth right...”.<sup>56</sup>

ii. *Bridging the attainment gap: compensating for inadequate provision in mainstream settings*

Many black supplementary schools in particular provide support in core curriculum subjects and preparation for school examinations. Similarly, many Bengali, Gujarati, and Turkish supplementary schools also provide support for their pupils’ educational attainment, often including support for attainment in community language examinations.<sup>57</sup> One headteacher surveyed for a study stated that the main aim of the school was to “bridge the [attainment] gap” and to “enable children to work to their full potential” through the school’s focus on “reading, writing and arithmetic”.<sup>58</sup> Provision often responds to the concerns of many minority ethnic parents and their “disappointment and anxiety over how [their] children were taught in [mainstream] schools”.<sup>59</sup> This could particularly be the case for migrant parents unfamiliar with the education system, especially in instances where their children are not achieving high grades or have been excluded from school.

*A de facto purpose: safe spaces and sites of resistance*

The supplementary school, both symbolically and literally, denotes the need to create and protect a space for the language and culture of the minority communities in a diaspora.<sup>60</sup> Creese sees the very establishment of the supplementary schools sector as “a result of historical processes and attitudes towards language and culture in specific national contexts, which do not see the learning and teaching of the minority languages and cultures as the state’s responsibility”.<sup>61</sup> As such, the supplementary school is often a place of negotiation where fluid and hybrid identities are formed and performed, which are less reductive than in mainstream settings.<sup>62</sup> Others have argued that the very preservation of culture and language within a supplementary school can lead to a rigid vision of identity, which

54. Ibid, p.682.

55. Ibid, p.682.

56. Ibid, p.716.

57. Creese, A. et al (2008) cited in by Maylor, U., Glass, K. and Issa, T. et al (2010) op cit, p.32.

58. Ibid, p.65.

59. Ibid, p.64.

60. Creese, A. (2009) cited in Çavuşoğlu, Ç. (2013) *Complementary schools as ‘safe spaces’ to practise hybridity? Language, power & resistance*. Working Papers in Language & Literacies (Paper No: 109). London: King’s College London.

61. Creese, A. et al (2008) cited in Simon, A. R. (2013) op cit, p.15.

62. Simon, A. R. (2013) ibid.

creates a tension with younger generations who need to reconfigure their identities within the context of a new country.<sup>63</sup> Nevertheless, within these spaces, BME pupils are able to explore and celebrate their multiple identities, instead of having to negotiate and often suppress them within mainstream educational settings. For Conteh and Brock, the supplementary school is a safe space, giving opportunities “for meaning-making and identity construction through language and other social tools”.<sup>64</sup> In this sense, supplementary schools allow for “other ways of knowing”.<sup>65</sup> These spaces also connect BME parents who can be more closely involved in their child’s education, without the alienation often felt within the mainstream education system.<sup>66</sup>

An important academic and practitioner perspective maintains supplementary schools as sites of activism and resistance, even when this is not their explicit intention.<sup>67</sup> In making the marginal, or in many cases the invisible, both present and celebrated, supplementary school education goes beyond, “the process of learning, teaching or schooling... [and instead becomes]... a political act”.<sup>68</sup> They can allow for learners and educators to develop meaningful relationships in particular ways that can sometimes disrupt normalised practices.<sup>69</sup> For example, black supplementary schools which place pan-African history and culture centrally within their supplementary education provision directly challenge dominant mainstream discourses that do not incorporate wider global histories into their narrative.

For this reason, supplementary schools remain political grassroots organisations at their very core, building thriving and self-determined communities that refute notions that BME parents are disengaged from their children’s education or are “hard to reach”.<sup>70</sup> Importantly, these schools are largely led by women.<sup>71</sup> While often considered marginal within mainstream education, these new types of ‘professional intellectuals’ are running supplementary schools, often in a voluntary capacity, and constructing alternative ways to build BME identities.<sup>72</sup>

63. Çavuşoğlu, Ç. (2013) op cit. London: King’s College London; Francis, B., Archer, L. and Mau, A. (2010) Parents’ and teachers’ constructions of the purposes of Chinese complementary schooling: ‘culture’, identity and power. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 13(1), 101–117.

64. Ibid, p.3.

65. Mirza, H. S. (2009) Plotting a history: Black and postcolonial feminisms in ‘new times’. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 12(1), 1–10.

66. Francis, B., Archer, L. and Mau, A. (2009) Language as capital, or language as identity? Chinese complementary school pupils’ perspectives on the purposes and benefits of complementary schools. *British Educational Research Journal*, 35(4), 519–538.

67. Mirza, H. S. and Reay, D. (2000) op cit.

68. Casey, M. (1993) cited in Mirza, H. S. and Reay, D. (2000) *ibid*, 521–544, p.524.

69. Conteh, J. and Brock, A. (2011) op cit.

70. Mirza, H. S. and Reay, D. (2000) op cit.

71. Notable historical examples include the Black Parents movement, North London West Indian Association and Caribbean Education and Community Workers Association (CECWA) (Myers and Grosvenor 2011).

72. Mirza and Reay (2000) op cit, p.538.

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# 3. Improving BME outcomes in and beyond the school gates

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In recent years, supplementary schools and mainstream schools have come to share one mission in particular: bridging the attainment gap for BME pupils. Educational inequality was deemed a public priority under the New Labour government.<sup>73</sup> The first schools white paper, *Excellence in Schools*,<sup>74</sup> laid the foundation for many of the government initiatives that aimed to boost the attainment of children and young people from BME backgrounds and other disadvantaged groups.<sup>75</sup> For example, the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) from 1999 aimed to support local education authorities in raising the attainment of BME groups at risk of underachieving, as well as for bilingual and refugee pupils.<sup>76</sup> Targeted interventions in areas with high concentrations of BME pupils such as Excellence in Cities and the London Challenge were also initiated.<sup>77</sup> The Black Pupils Achievement Programme was launched in October 2005 to target interventions in 100 schools across 25 local authorities.<sup>78</sup>

These interventions appear, overall, to have had a positive impact. Historically, only pupils of Chinese and Indian origin have performed better on average than their white British counterparts.<sup>79</sup> But in the last two decades other minority ethnic groups have seen significant improvements in outcomes, with Bangladeshi and Nigerian students also now outperforming their white British peers at GCSE.<sup>80</sup> Although attainment tends to fall for BME students on free school meals, Chinese and Indian

73. Alexiadou, N. (2002) Social inclusion and social exclusion in England: tensions in education policy. *Journal of Education Policy*, 17(1), 71–86.

74. DFEE (1997) *Excellence in Schools* (White Paper) London: HMSO.

75. Gillborn, D. and Mirza, H. S. (2000) *Mapping Race, Class and Gender*. London: OFSTED.

76. Runnymede (2012) *Briefing on ethnicity and educational attainment, June 2012*.

77. Tomlinson, S. (2008) *Race and education: Policy and politics in Britain*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).

78. Phillips, C. (2009) Ethnic inequalities: another 10 years of the same? In: Hills, J., Sefton, T. and Stewart, K. (eds.) *Towards a more equal society? Poverty, inequality and policy since 1997*. CASE studies on poverty, place and policy. Policy Press, Bristol, UK, pp.179–200.

79. Gillborn, D. and Rollock, N. (2010) 'Education' in A. Bloch and J. Solomos (eds.) op cit.

80. CoDE (2014) *Addressing Social Inequalities in Social Mobility*, op cit.

students on free school meals<sup>81</sup> are still above or at the national average levels of attainment while Bangladeshi students are only slightly below.<sup>82</sup>

Over the same period, however, the gap in average attainment for black and white pupils has narrowed, but not closed completely for all groups. Average attainment for black African students is now in line with the national average, but attainment of Black Caribbean pupils is still below the national average.<sup>83</sup>

### **Tackling persistent inequalities in the classroom**

Although the practices and the cultures which supported the view that Black Caribbean children are ‘educationally subnormal’ have largely disappeared, Black Caribbean pupils and children from British Pakistani families are more likely than white British pupils to be identified as having Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD). The overrepresentation disappears once the effects of poverty are taken into account. However, Black Caribbean pupils are still more than twice as likely to be identified as having Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD) than other pupils, which reduces to around 1.5 times even when higher rates of poverty are taken into account.

This has an impact on exclusion patterns. Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are almost seven times more likely to receive a permanent exclusion than pupils with no SEN. Being excluded from school has a significant impact on a pupils’ attainment levels. Excluded pupils are four times more likely to finish their education without having gained academic qualifications which in turn affects outcomes within higher education and employment.<sup>84</sup> Though the rate of permanent exclusions is in decline for all groups, Black Caribbean pupils are nearly four times more likely to be excluded from school than other groups.<sup>85</sup> Recent research from the Office of the Children’s Commissioner highlights a related problem of pupils being excluded illegally.<sup>86</sup> Such measures often involve children with special educational needs and those from BME backgrounds.<sup>87</sup>

There is still scope here for both supplementary and mainstream schools to support Black Caribbean pupils in particular to bridge the attainment gap through creating a culture of inclusiveness.

*Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are almost seven times more likely to receive a permanent exclusion than pupils with no SEN*

81. It is important to acknowledge that free school meal eligibility is an imperfect proxy for poverty, and take up of FSM varies by ethnic group.

82. DfE (2015) *GCSE and equivalent attainment by pupil characteristics, 2013 to 2014* (Revised) Available here: [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/399005/SFR06\\_2015\\_Text.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/399005/SFR06_2015_Text.pdf)

83. Ibid.

84. Runnymede (2012) *Briefing on ethnicity and educational attainment, June 2012*:3.

85. DfE (2012) *A profile of pupil exclusions in England*.

86. It should be noted that issues of exclusion are longstanding and predate the data now more nationally available. Regional studies dating back from the 1970s and 80s highlight problems of disproportionate disciplinary measures taken towards certain minority ethnic groups, giving rise to concern. They in turn argued that the formalisation of exclusionary measures would result in disproportionate expulsions. (Berridge et al 2001).

87. OCC (2013) “Always Someone Else’s Problem” *Office of the Children’s Commissioner’s Report on illegal exclusions*:6.

## Addressing inequalities beyond the classroom

While the attainment gap for most BME pupils has narrowed, these BME pupils still face an uphill battle beyond the school gates. The following section details a number of inequalities in post-16 outcomes between BME young people and their white peers.

### Post-16 Education

Studies over the past decade have consistently shown that British BME groups are more likely to stay on in full-time education at 16 than their white peers.<sup>88</sup> However, with the exception of Chinese and Indian students, BME pupils are more likely to attend further education colleges and pursue vocational qualifications than attend a sixth form and undertake A-levels.<sup>89</sup> Pakistani and Bangladeshi students achieve the fewest qualifications at this stage.<sup>90</sup>

Nationally, BME participation in apprenticeships is disproportionately low at 8.7 percent.<sup>91</sup> Those who do undertake apprenticeships are less likely than their white counterparts to complete the qualification or to progress to a related job after completion of a framework apprenticeship.<sup>92</sup>

### Higher Education

Over the last 20 years there has been an overall increase in the university attendance of BME pupils, particularly for Chinese and black African groups.<sup>93</sup> Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils have quadrupled<sup>94</sup> their rates of degree level qualifications during this time.<sup>95</sup> While improvements in attainment and degree level qualifications are promising, closer analysis reveals evidence of continued inequality and disadvantage.

Diversity within the HE sector has produced a segregated and increasingly polarised system, in which more advantaged groups continue to enjoy the educational exclusivity they experienced in private and selective state schooling, relegating most black and white working classes to the universities that the more privileged do not want to attend.<sup>96</sup> BME students tend to be concentrated in newer universities in urban areas.<sup>97</sup> For example, more black students attend the University of East London than the top 20 UK universities combined.<sup>98</sup>

88. Connor et al (2004), cited in Tackey, N., D., Barnes, H. and Khambhaita, P. (2011) *Poverty, ethnicity and education*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

89. Weekes-Bernard, D. (ed.) (2010) *Widening Participation and Race Equality*. London: Runnymede Trust.

90. Tackey, N. D., Barnes, H. and Khambhaita, P. (2011) *Poverty, ethnicity and education*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

91. Equalities Toolkit (Accessed 2015) BAME Apprenticeship Ambassadors [website]. Available here: [www.equalities toolkit.com/content/apprenticeship-ambassadors](http://www.equalities toolkit.com/content/apprenticeship-ambassadors)

92. DCSF/DIUS (2008) cited in Tackey, N. D., Barnes, H. and Khambhaita, P. (2011) *op cit*.

93. CoDE (2014) How are ethnic inequalities in education changing? *Dynamics of diversity: evidence from the 2011 census*. Available here: [www.ethnicity.ac.uk/medialibrary/briefingsupdated/how-are-ethnic-inequalities-in-education-changing.pdf](http://www.ethnicity.ac.uk/medialibrary/briefingsupdated/how-are-ethnic-inequalities-in-education-changing.pdf)

94. Research from the Centre on Dynamics on ethnicity reminds us that we also need to consider how increases of immigration and admission of international students could also play a role here (*ibid*).

95. CoDE (2014) *Addressing Social Inequalities in Social Mobility*, *op cit*.

96. Reay, D. (2015) *Time to Change: Bringing Oxbridge into the 21st Century. Aiming Higher: Race, Inequality and Diversity in the Academy*. London: The Runnymede Trust, p.19.

97. National Equality Panel (2009) cited in Runnymede (2010) *Ethnicity and Participation in Higher Education*.

98. Elevation Networks Trust (2012) *Race to the Top, The Experience of Black Students in Higher Education*. London: The Bow Group, p.8.



Research indicates that BME students are less likely to be offered a place at a Russell Group University than their white counterparts with similar grades.<sup>99</sup> This is found to be the case even after taking into consideration applicants' A-level subjects and how many other applicants were competing for places on the same course, raising serious questions about the levels of potential within the admissions process.<sup>100</sup> In general, elite universities have a strong bias towards 'traditional' applicants; those with A-levels rather than other qualifications and those applying from school rather than college, who are less likely to be from a minority ethnic background.<sup>101</sup>

Factors behind these trends include the residential concentration of BME young people in larger cities and preferences for studying while living at home, differences in entry requirements, course availability and apparent bias in admissions at some universities.<sup>102</sup> Another important set of factors relates to the influence of teachers on students' choices: research from the Bow Group finds that feedback from black students in this regard was generally negative. Black male respondents in particular claimed that they had received little or no support from their teachers at school, as well as feeling as though their teachers tarnished them with negative stereotypes.<sup>103</sup>

Whilst at university, BME students are less likely to achieve a first or upper second class degree than their white counterparts<sup>104</sup> even when pre-entry qualifications and socio-economic and educational backgrounds are the same.<sup>105</sup> More specifically, according to the Equality Challenge Unit, in 2012–13, for example, just 57 percent of UK-domiciled BME students achieved a first or upper second class degree compared to approximately 73 percent of white British graduates.<sup>106</sup> Low degree outcomes of BME students remains a persistent problem.

### Labour market outcomes

Within the labour market, higher rates of unemployment for BME groups persist: black, Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups are twice as likely to be unemployed compared with their white counterparts,<sup>107</sup> and in some deprived areas, unemployment can reach up to 22 percent for black males.<sup>108</sup> The unemployment rate for 16–24 year-olds is close to 50 percent for Pakistani, Bangladeshi and black young people, more than twice the rate

99. Boliver, V. (2015) Why are British Ethnic Minorities Less Likely to be Offered Places at Highly Selective Universities? *Aiming Higher*, The Runnymede Trust, p.15.

100. Ibid.

101. Purcell, et al (2009) cited in Barnard, H. and Turner, C. (2011) *Poverty and ethnicity: A review of evidence*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

102. Barnard, H. and Turner, C. (2011) *ibid*, p.5.

103. Elevation Networks Trust (2012) *Race to the Top, The Experience of Black Students in Higher Education*. London: The Bow Group, p.30.

104. Stevenson, J. (2012) *Black and minority ethnic student degree retention and attainment*. Higher Education Academy.

105. Tatlow, P. (2015); Boliver, V. (2015) Participation of BME Students in UK Higher Education. *Aiming Higher*. The Runnymede Trust, p.10.

106. ECU (accessed 2015) [website]. Available from: [www.ecu.ac.uk/guidance-resources/student-recruitment-retention-attainment/student-attainment/degree-attainment-gaps](http://www.ecu.ac.uk/guidance-resources/student-recruitment-retention-attainment/student-attainment/degree-attainment-gaps)

107. DWP (2014) *Labour market status by ethnic group: data to September 2013*. Available here: [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/labour-market-status-by-ethnic-group](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/labour-market-status-by-ethnic-group)

108. CoDE (2014) *Addressing Social Inequalities in Social Mobility*, op cit.

of their white peers.<sup>109, 110</sup> Even BME graduates who have attended prestigious universities are more likely than white graduates to be unemployed.<sup>111</sup>

Studies of recruitment over the last 20 years show a consistent pattern of less favourable treatment of people from many BME backgrounds.<sup>112</sup> Higher levels of discrimination exist in the private sector than in the public sector and in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) compared to larger employers.<sup>113</sup> SMEs, a growing part of the economy, are less likely to promote equality and diversity.<sup>114</sup> Research by NatCen tested recruitment procedures for discrimination and found high levels of racial discrimination across all ethnic groups, ranging from 21 percent for Pakistani and Bangladeshi names to 32 percent for Indian, Chinese and Black Caribbean names, and with levels of net discrimination in favour of white British names over equivalent applications from minority candidates of 29 percent.<sup>115</sup> There is also evidence to suggest that employers are more likely to be discriminatory in times of higher competition and scarce resources, which means that BME groups are disproportionately affected by recession and austerity.<sup>116</sup>

### **Social capital and social networks**

Social capital can broadly be defined as the number of connections a person has that support complex systems of exchange, influence and interaction. These connections affect life chances and outcomes because informal relationships link individuals, not only to others in their immediate social realm, but reach beyond this via the contacts of friends and acquaintances.<sup>117</sup>

A striking example of powerful social networks is demonstrated by the 7 percent of the privately educated people who disproportionately occupy high status employment positions, across all sectors.<sup>118</sup> The particular schools and universities attended all act as markers of privileges, allowing people with similar backgrounds to navigate and progress through influential spheres more fluidly.<sup>119</sup> Conversely, those on the ‘economic

109. Inman, P. (Accessed 2014) Minority ethnic workers in UK twice as likely to be unemployed as whites, *The Guardian* [Article]. Available here: [www.theguardian.com/society/2014/jan/08/minority-ethnic-workers-more-often-unemployed](http://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/jan/08/minority-ethnic-workers-more-often-unemployed) ; Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2015.

110. Catney, G. and Sabater, A. (2015) *Ethnic minority disadvantage in the labour market*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

111. The Runnymede Trust (2014) *When Education Isn't Enough. Labour market outcomes of ethnic minority graduates at elite universities*, p.3.

112. Wood, M. et al (2009); Heath, A. and Cheung, S. Y. (2006); Hoque, K. and Noon, M. (1999); Noon, M. (1993), cited in Barnard, H. and Turner, C. (2011) *op cit*, p.7.

113. Task Force on Race Equality in the Private Sector (2004), cited in *ibid*.

114. Heath, A. and Cheung, S. Y. (2006) cited in Hudson, M. and Radu, D. (2011) *The role of employer attitudes and behaviour*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

115. Hales, J., Purdon, S., Sejersen, T. and Hayllar, O. (2009) *A test for racial discrimination in recruitment practice in British cities*. Department for Work and Pensions.

116. Li, Y. (2015) *Ethnic Minority Unemployment in Hard Times. Aiming Higher*. The Runnymede Trust.

117. Gilchrist, A. and Kyprianou, P. (2011) *Social networks, poverty and ethnicity*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, p.3.

118. Social Mobility & Child Poverty Commission (2014) *State of the Nation 2014: Social Mobility and Child Poverty in Great Britain*.

119. For a summary of social capital see: Rollock, N. (2014) *Race, Class and the Harmony of Dispositions*.

periphery'<sup>120</sup> with similarly good education outcomes, but without the same level of connections are less likely to progress, therefore undermining social mobility.

Understanding patterns of social networks by ethnicity is complex. Close knit networks within BME communities have both benefits and potential costs; while individuals may be more likely to hear about jobs or be recommended for employment within these networks, this can lead to the 'clumping' of people from certain ethnic groups in low paid employment; for example, the over-concentration of Pakistani men in taxi driving and of Bangladeshi men in the restaurant trade.<sup>121</sup> However, these patterns are never simple; the life outcomes of a young person are affected by many factors including their educational experience, qualifications and class.<sup>122</sup>

### **Participation in arts and culture**

Despite a significant focus on diversity, in all its forms, from cultural agencies, funding bodies and organisations, progress has been slow. Comparing data from the government's *Taking Part Survey* in 2005–06 and 2012–13, BME audience and participation levels have barely increased at all. Because of increased levels of engagement amongst white people, the participation gap has increased again, and can not only be explained by social class. Only 2 percent of amateur group participants are from a BME background, and the cultural and creative workforce is essentially still as white as it was in 2008–09 – up slightly from 92 percent to 93 percent. Arts Council England (ACE) has also seen a reduction in Grants for the Arts applications from BME organisations. Importantly, this disparity is not caused by lower BME interest in the arts and culture.<sup>123</sup>

ACE is currently researching patterns of diversity relating to young people's cultural participation, but it is likely that the overall decline in many aspects of young people's participation during the last few years, as evidenced by the Taking Part Children's survey and GCSE and A-level participation rates, has had a similar impact on BME children and young people.

Whilst it is impossible to imply any causality between lower BME cultural participation rates and their poorer higher education and employment outcomes, the evidence exemplifies how BME young people may, in missing out on wider opportunities to develop their cultural capital, face additional disadvantage in attempting to transfer better GCSE and A-level results into improved HE and labour market outcomes.

### **Health outcomes**

Chronic exposure to economic, political and social exclusion arising from racial discrimination has a corrosive effect on people's health (known as

120. Gilchrist, A. and Kyprianou, P. (2011) *Social networks, poverty and ethnicity*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, p.3.

121. Wood, M. et al (2009); Patacchini, E. and Zenou, Y. (2008), cited in Barnard, H. and Turner, C. (2011) *op cit*, p.11.

122. Lew, J. (2010) cited in *ibid*, p.11.

123. For example, see: Jermyn, H. and Desai, P. (2000) *Arts – what's in a word?: ethnic minorities and the arts* (No. 20). London: Arts Council England.

*Black, Arab, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, and Indian people also report significantly lower wellbeing than white people in the UK*

the ‘weathering hypothesis’)<sup>124</sup> which can lead to ill health and advanced age-related health deterioration.<sup>125</sup>

Research published by the New Economics Foundation reveals that black, Arab, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, and Indian people also report significantly lower wellbeing than white people in the UK, even when social and economic status is taken into account.<sup>126</sup> Those working on temporary, more precarious employment contracts were also found to experience lower wellbeing than those who do not;<sup>127</sup> employment of this type has been found to be more common amongst BME groups. For teenagers, reported rates of mental health problems are higher in some ethnic minority groups (black) and lower in others (Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi), although this is to some extent related to social background.<sup>128</sup>

These conclusions also parallel findings in *Understanding Society*,<sup>129</sup> particularly in relation to second generation ethnic minorities, who, being born in the UK, reasonably expect to have equal opportunities with their white British peers, but who experience feelings of frustration and low wellbeing when this is not the case.<sup>130</sup>

### **The evolving missions of supplementary schools**

Although the past decade has seen welcome improvements in BME attainment in schools and classrooms, outcomes for BME students beyond the school gates are still largely lagging behind their white counterparts, and opportunities remain more limited. As some of the attainment issues have been addressed for most BME groups, achieving more equal post-school outcomes for ethnic minorities may require a more subtle, calibrated set of interventions. Supplementary schools cannot and should not address the entirety of these problems, some of which are deep rooted and structural. Nor can they address any of these problems alone. Tackling persistent inequalities in the classroom as well as in post-16 outcomes requires supplementary and mainstream schools to share a new mission as they did when addressing gaps in attainment; moreover, given the breadth of inequalities, more partners will need to be involved in this mission, including other parts of the local learning ecology, such as higher education institutions; local authorities; youth services; and cultural organisations.

The capacity of supplementary schools in supporting young people’s achievement across a broad range of outcomes is discussed further in the next chapter as part of the findings of our investigation.

124. Society and Health (2009) Black-White Disparities in preterm birth [website]. Accessed 2015 from: <https://societyandhealth.wordpress.com/tag/weathering-hypothesis>

125. Stevenson, J. and Rao, M. (2014) *Explaining levels of wellbeing in Black and Minority Ethnic populations in England*, p.28.

126. Abdallah, S. and Shah, S. (2012) *Wellbeing patterns uncovered: An analysis of UK data* London: NEF.

127. Ibid.

128. Ibid.

129. *Understanding Society* is a longitudinal study about 21st century UK life and how it is changing. It captures important information about people’s social and economic circumstances, attitudes, behaviours and health. For more information: [www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/about](http://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/about)

130. Stevenson, J. and Rao, M. (2014) op cit.

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## 4. Findings of our investigation

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This investigation has explored the role of supplementary schools in light of their changing context and of the limited life chances of many BME young people.

Our study began with background research followed by an initial discussion with an expert group of 20 academics, researchers and supplementary school practitioners.<sup>131</sup> Following this, we conducted 24 interviews with supplementary school leaders. We also held focus groups in London, Birmingham and Bradford with participants selected through the National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education (NRCSE) database of supplementary schools, existing supplementary school contacts in each area and local authority members. We then discussed our emerging conclusions and recommendations during a second expert group summit.

The limited scale of this project does not provide conclusive evidence, and indeed has generated many new questions. However, by offering insight into the nature of supplementary schools and the opportunities and challenges they face, this report provides a basis for further research and debate on an important topic for BME communities, the education system and wider society.

### **Challenges facing supplementary schools**

The research on supplementary schools points to a consistent set of challenges:

### **Evaluating the impact on formal attainment**

Evaluating the impact of supplementary schools on pupils' attainment is a difficult undertaking. The informal and dispersed nature of the sector is compounded by the lack of administrative capacity, systems and, therefore, suitable data.<sup>132</sup> Some attempts have been made to evaluate impact by focusing on the outcomes for students attending supplementary schools as compared to average attainment for other students from the same ethnic backgrounds. For example, research for John Lyons Charity reports that the majority of children attending supplementary schools within the Brent area were on a par or exceeded the national average level of attainment within

<sup>131</sup>. Members of the expert panel can be found at the back of the report.

<sup>132</sup>. Evans, D. and Gillan-Thomas, K. (2015) *Supplementary Schools, Descriptive analysis of supplementary school pupils' characteristics and attainment in seven local authorities in England, 2007/08–2011/12*. London: PHF.

mainstream education.<sup>133</sup> The same research found that 95 percent of students of Somali heritage who attended supplementary school achieved higher rates of attainment at Key Stage 2 English compared to their non-attending Somali counterparts.<sup>134</sup> In another instance, over the course of three years, 91 percent of students from a black supplementary school based in Barnet achieved on average 5 GCSE passes A\*-C, including maths and English, which represents a significantly better performance than the borough overall and for African groups in the borough specifically.<sup>135</sup> Studies have also indicated that learning another language within these spaces can contribute to educational achievement in mainstream schools, even when this is not the explicit intention of the school.<sup>136</sup>

However encouraging, research undertaken has not yet been able to control the wider range of factors that may influence pupils' attainment nor to unpick the duration, frequency and timing of their attendance at the supplementary schools.<sup>137</sup> While research of a more qualitative nature details the important contribution supplementary schools make to their pupils' education and academic attainment, obtaining more rigorous statistical data continues to be an ongoing challenge.

Attempts have been made to encourage supplementary schools to monitor and evaluate their impact more rigorously. As part of the NRCSE's remit, the organisation has developed a quality framework for supplementary schools, by which they can record their achievements and improve their quality across the sector. However, supplementary schools must become a paid member of the NRCSE in order to be eligible for this support. Given the challenges in staff capacity and resources, such monitoring and evaluation may not be a priority for these schools.

### **Understanding wider impact and quality**

Given the range of activities that they lead, it is also likely that supplementary schools have an impact on young people's broader cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes, including social and emotional wellbeing, and social and cultural capital. However, studies to date have not sought to understand this broader impact.

### **Recruiting volunteers**

Supplementary schools are largely volunteer led and so many supplementary schools find it hard to recruit staff who are sufficiently qualified or experienced.<sup>138</sup> Given their restricted resources, there are minimal opportunities for staff development or promotion. Volunteers and staff are likely to fulfil a variety of roles beyond their job description. Many volunteers have a child attending the school, but then no longer volunteer when his or her child leaves. As supplementary school classes take place in the evening or at the weekend, family or work commitments may also be an obstacle to recruitment.<sup>139</sup>

133. Evans, D. and Vassie, P. (2012) op cit.

134. Ibid, p.6.

135. Ibid.

136. Creese, A., Bhatt, A., Bhojani, N. and Martin, P. (2006) Multicultural, heritage and learner identities in complementary schools. *Language and Education*, 20(1), 23-43.

137. Evans, D. and Gillan-Thomas, K. (2015) op cit.

138. Maylor, U., Glass, K. and Issa, T. et al (2010) op cit.

139. Ibid.



## Funding challenges

Supplementary schools are sustained financially in a variety of ways. Whilst some supplementary schools survive on donations from local businesses, many will charge a school fee. Additionally, where there is capacity, supplementary schools will run fundraising events as well as apply for grants from local authorities, trusts and foundations.<sup>140</sup> Under the Labour government (1997–2010), some supplementary schools received support from local authorities. This support came through school improvement funding streams and initiatives such as the BME achievement grants, as well as in the form of guidance from local authority officers and free-of-charge use of mainstream school facilities.<sup>141</sup> It was also during this time that more systematic attempts were made to support and develop the sector through creation of the NRCSE in 2007.

In 2011, the BME achievement fund had its ring-fenced status removed and was subsumed into a Dedicated Schools Grant, meaning that schools could reduce the level of specialist provision to minority ethnic children at their discretion.<sup>142</sup> As a result, schools are no longer under any obligation to ensure that funding is allocated to supporting the needs of BME pupils and Excellence, Achievement & Learning (EAL) learners.<sup>143</sup> This has had a direct impact on the amount of funding local authorities have available to support supplementary schools. Funding from local authorities has been reduced significantly<sup>144</sup> or in many instances withdrawn.<sup>145</sup> The NRCSE still provides national support for supplementary schools, but in a context where government funding has been withdrawn this means that their resources are being stretched thin.

Supplementary schools also appear to have missed out on recent youth-focused funding opportunities supported by the Cabinet Office, for instance, the youth engagement fund and social action funds, as well as the grants to support social enterprises in becoming ‘investment ready’. This may be a consequence of weak connections with the youth sector. Similarly, although some cultural organisations (in particular, some of the larger museums) have sought to work with supplementary schools, schools themselves do not appear to have sought or found any arts-related funding opportunities, including from ACE. Despite their strong cultural offer in communities that are often poorly served by existing cultural organisations, supplementary schools are rarely connected to their local cultural infrastructure, or on the radar of ACE or local art-specific networks or opportunities.

140. Evans, D. and Gillan-Thomas, K. (2015) op cit.

141. Ibid.

142. Runnymede Trust (2012) op cit, p.2. Found here: [www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/Parliamentary%20briefings/EducationWHdebateJune2012.pdf](http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/Parliamentary%20briefings/EducationWHdebateJune2012.pdf)

143. NALDIC (accessed 2015) The latest statistics about EAL learners in our schools [website]. Available from: [www.naldic.org.uk/research-and-information/eal-statistics/eal-pupils](http://www.naldic.org.uk/research-and-information/eal-statistics/eal-pupils)

144. Though local authorities in Harrow and Bradford, for example, continue to have strong links with supplementary schools in their area.

145. Evans, D. and Gillan-Thomas, K. (2015) op cit.

## Changing demands and competition with other providers

Parts of the supplementary school movement have been declining in popularity since the 1990s.<sup>146</sup> For example, in contrast to their burgeoning numbers in the 1960s and 70s, student numbers attending Black Saturday schools appear to be dwindling.<sup>147</sup> Supplementary schools in all communities are competing with the growth of private tutors, who can often be more flexible in their provision. There has also been a growth in other types of after-school provision, often linked to particular sporting or cultural activities, which compete with supplementary schools for pupils' time. Finally, the growth in digital technologies provides opportunities for online learning at home, which parents and pupils may choose over supplementary school provision.

The recent decision by exam boards to withdraw examinations in A-level Bengali, Hebrew, Polish and Punjabi among other minority languages poses a new set of challenges for the future of language teaching. Many supplementary schools teach community or mother tongue languages to support their pupils in obtaining a qualification at A-level or GCSE. Therefore these changes could also impact this level of provision often offered within supplementary schools.

## Relationships with mainstream schools

As forms of community-based provision, supplementary schools tend to be rich in community relationships, many connecting with each other through local networks. However, partnerships between mainstream and supplementary schools remain an area of contention.<sup>148</sup>

While mainstream schools have far more financial resources and capacity than their supplementary school counterparts, competing demands and heavy teacher workloads often mean that mainstream schools are unresponsive to supplementary school requests for meaningful connection. The dominant domain for engagement often centres on the hiring of space in schools. The transactional, one-sided nature of this relationship (in which mainstream schools are seen as opening their doors to supplementary schools for financial gain, but keeping them closed for conversations around a more meaningful partnership) can create tensions and feelings of resentment. As the landscape of schools diversifies, it also fragments, meaning that schools often work in isolation with little connection to other schools or their local authority, rendering it more difficult for supplementary schools to build sustained and interrelated connections with local mainstream schools. While some academy chains are filling this void, supplementary schools have often found them impenetrable in comparison to local authorities.

Regardless of structure or governing arrangements, current policy is often constraining schools' capacity to look outwards and develop wider partnerships that can support learning outcomes. Funding challenges in schools are also reducing willingness to commission external

<sup>146</sup>. A similar decline in numbers registering on the website has been noticed by the National Association of Black Supplementary Schools (NABSS), an online directory of black supplementary schools across the country, which was set up in 2007 (see [www.nabss.org.uk](http://www.nabss.org.uk)).

<sup>147</sup>. Andrews, K. (2013) *Resisting Racism: Race, Inequality, and the Black Supplementary School Movement*. Institute of Education Press.

<sup>148</sup>. Maylor, U., Glass, K. and Issa, T. et al (2010) op cit.

*Supplementary schools are a fundamental part of the UK's educational heritage, and remain an important element of the ecology of educational opportunities*

organisations. Supplementary schools are, of course, not the only organisations which experience a growing lack of connection with mainstream schools. But, unlike other external organisations which need schools as a route to young people, supplementary schools are less dependent on mainstream schools and may, therefore, be more willing to abandon or postpone efforts to connect with these schools.

Supplementary schools are a fundamental part of the UK's educational heritage, and remain an important element of the ecology of educational opportunities, formal and informal, that exist for young people beyond the school gates. The following key findings build on this knowledge about histories, motivations and differing purposes to offer new insights about the current context for supplementary schools, and recommendations about their future.

## **Key Findings**

### **1. The mission of the supplementary school sector is evolving and can be difficult to define and communicate.**

The disparate nature of supplementary schools can contribute to a lack of understanding about the sector. While the educational and cultural offer is generally clear, there is an array of less obvious advantages to supplementary schools that tend to be overlooked by those outside the sector.

Supplementary schools offer flexible approaches to engaging young people and parents within their ethnic communities.

As well as offering educational provision and cultural links for their pupils, supplementary schools can also empower young people and build their confidence. The schools can also play an important role in helping parents become more familiar and engaged with their child's mainstream education. Some supplementary school leaders and volunteers act as advocates, for example, accompanying parents to speak with teachers should their children face difficulties at school.

While the majority of the supplementary schools we spoke to in the course of this investigation offered some form of provision related to literacy and numeracy, many also wanted to encourage a wider love of learning among their students as well as enhance critical skills. Other schools adopted innovative approaches to teaching, for example, using maths as a medium to learn Arabic or incorporating dance, art and creative writing into academic learning to attract new students. The supplementary sector is made up of adaptable schools that can adjust in response to changing needs and demands.

Although a unifying feature of supplementary schools has been a focus on cultural heritage, some supplementary school leaders and volunteers describe pressure to refocus on core academic subjects and reduce their focus on arts and culture.

The school began as a school just for culture – Indian dance and languages. Now it is also for coaching in mainstream subject and exams. We had to concentrate more on mainstream subjects and had less time for cultural subjects.

**Director, Tamil supplementary school**

Given the diverse and changing character of their sector, how can supplementary school leaders be supported in making the clearest case for the value of their work?

## **2. There are shifting levels of demand for supplementary schools.**

Given the diverse, changing and sometimes unseen nature of supplementary schools, it is difficult to analyse aggregate demand and supply. While we encountered examples of Chinese, Polish and Somali supplementary schools that were thriving, there are widely held fears that the black supplementary school movement, especially in the African-Caribbean community, is generally declining. One national activist of the black supplementary school movement commented:

We're not seeing the same attitude with black families – specifically second, third generations born here, there's a more complacent attitude. They're seeing Saturday schools as interchangeable with sports and singing lessons. They still come and complain [about mainstream schools], but they don't move to action... back in the 70s, there were real issues for first generation parents – blatant racism happening in their faces, so they set up their own churches and schools. But today racism is more covert – parents are not going to see it.

Just before exams last year, I got an influx of calls from parents who realised their children are not doing as well. Parents are leaving it too late.

This raises questions about current perceptions of black supplementary schools. Are they still considered relevant for Black and African-Caribbean students today? Conversations during our summit, which echoed analysis from Kehinde Andrews,<sup>149</sup> reflected ideological shifts within the black supplementary school movement. The emphasis of their work is now on compensating for the shortcomings of families and the community more so than of mainstream schools. By extension, although mainstream schools continue to fail many black students (in particular, Black Caribbean students attaining below average), many supplementary schools appear to have moved beyond their original mandate and are now less inclined to challenge the orthodoxies and practices of mainstream education.<sup>150</sup>

There was a sense from some of our respondents that attendance at supplementary schools – given the schools' origins in educational disadvantage – has come to be seen as stigmatising for the African-Caribbean community.

Many [parents] are beginning to shy away from homework clubs – they think it's a label against their children, as if they are not doing well.

**Director, black supplementary school**

Parents are required to bring school reports to supplementary school, but sometimes ask us not to contact the mainstream school or let them

149. Andrews, K. (2013) op cit.

150. Ibid.

know that their children are attending the [supplementary] school in case it harms them.

**Chair, black supplementary school**

There are several factors that explain why certain supplementary schools are increasing in popularity while others are in decline. For example, the desire for ‘newer migrant groups’ to create and develop communities away from their home of origin may be one factor.

How can a sector in which demand is in constant flux be best supported? How might we best understand and react to a decline in particular subsections of the supplementary schools movement?

### **3. Supplementary schools are under-recognised spaces for BME children to improve wellbeing, and social and emotional outcomes.**

Dual identity is difficult; our pupils can be seen as social misfits. We provide a safe space and sense of belonging.

**Volunteer, Russian supplementary school**

If you’re looking at social and emotional resilience, we do that because we are producing more confident young people.

**Chair, black supplementary school, focus group participant**

Confirming existing research,<sup>151</sup> the supplementary school leaders we spoke to view their institutions as spaces in which the culture and heritage of BME students are normalised. One sector expert spoke of the pressure on BME pupils to “bleach their identity” in mainstream settings, leaving their heritage at the door in order to integrate and succeed. Not being fully recognised and accepted can negatively impact BME pupils’ wellbeing. Many supplementary schools see it as part of their role to overcome any feelings of inadequacy and instead build the confidence of their children.

We know children that didn’t lift their heads up when they came [to the supplementary school], but by second term, their hand would be up and they would be answering questions in class. Parents would report back that they would be improving in schools too.

**Director, black supplementary school**

Students at our school become achievers. When a student joins, their life changes in two to three weeks, it builds their confidence. They also meet students from different socio-economic backgrounds.

**Teacher & Project manager, black supplementary school**

Participants in our focus groups spoke about providing opportunities to “build confidence and talk about aspirations” as well as to “socialise and build friendships with other students like them” (Chair, black supplementary school). The generally small pupil group sizes in

151. Conteh, J. and Brock, A. (2011) op cit.

supplementary schools lend themselves to this social bonding,<sup>152</sup> and links with supplementary school teachers are often more personal than in mainstream schools:

We offer one-to-ones, mentoring and coaching. We factor time in to talk about school and life issues. We get them talking about their motivations and passions and how things are for them at school.

**Chair, black supplementary school**

Our focus group participants did not feel this aspect of their work was widely recognised. When it came to providing this mentoring or coaching more formally, through a local authority for example, they felt like they were overlooked as prospective service providers. However, echoing an earlier theme, participants also conceded that this could, in part, be due to not fully articulating the range of the supplementary school offer.

Because we tend to focus on [advertising] languages, we don't talk about the other things [we do] because no one has been interested in hearing that we do some of this [other] stuff... maybe we need to look at how we market ourselves.

**Chair, black supplementary school, focus group participant**

How can supplementary schools better and more widely articulate their offer in providing safe spaces and empowering their young people?

#### **4. While some supplementary schools work with youth and supplementary school alumni, there is currently a limited capacity to develop a coherent extended offer.**

Our investigation explored the potential benefits of extending supplementary provision to older BME young people, particularly those facing challenges in higher and further education. While many of the schools we interviewed offered provision for young people up to 16 or 18 and were concerned about the issues faced by this age group, overall the offer for youth was limited. Resource constraints led schools to focus on younger pupils.

However, there were examples of supplementary school volunteers supporting young people on a one-to-one basis, which was seen as valuable and impactful. For example, two supplementary schools offered work experience on a flexible ad-hoc basis:

We get volunteering placements in the library for work experience as Year 10 no longer have to do work experience [at school].

**Co-ordinator, Dalit supplementary school**

Having older teenagers as volunteers can be good for them and for the younger pupils:

152. Evans, D. and Gillan-Thomas, K. (2015) op cit.



At 15, some offer to volunteer. I'm more than happy for the new generation to volunteer in the school and help the little ones. They understand each other and they work very smoothly together.

**Volunteer, Arabic supplementary school**

Interview participants also mentioned ways in which they maintained engagement with their older students and alumni. Examples included supporting a young woman to set up her own business and helping former students with job and university applications.

There's a young man whom I'm doing some work with; he used to come to our supplementary school. He's looking for work and I work with him one-to-one. There are several others we are working with and that's something we do in terms of tracking the young people we work with.

**Chair, black supplementary school, focus group participant**

*For several focus group participants, the motivation for running a supplementary school goes beyond educational attainment and achievement*

An Arabic supplementary school noted that volunteers and teachers help their older students with UCAS applications. For several focus group participants, the motivation for running a supplementary school goes beyond educational attainment and achievement. The supplementary school is a "second home" (Community engagement officer, focus group participant) for both parents and students providing wider connections and support.

The university student will still go back to their supplementary school... to get help, to get advice and support if their parent is having a problem or [facing] a challenge. That teenager will come back to the supplementary school to get advice.

**Community engagement officer, focus group participant**

One parent came to us – their child had left school with high grades because they were with us since 2009. He went to university [where he] faced some difficulties and so wanted to drop out. She [the parent] came to me for advice to help him. So he came to us around one to two months ago. Now he's feeling much, much better and he wants to go back to university.

**Volunteer, black supplementary school, focus group participant**

Despite these examples, there are several difficulties in providing formal provision to older young people. The lack of capacity is a persistent obstacle and the different subjects and career trajectories that older students may pursue call for a wider and deeper offer than KS3 support in core curriculum subjects. With the appropriate support, how could supplementary schools expand their offer for older young people?

#### **Case Study: Organisation of Young Africans (OYA)**

OYA is an African community organisation. They run a variety of activities, one of which is a supplementary school for African-Caribbean students. OYA also run a trainee programme, catering for students between GCSE and A-level.

Operating on a 'two year contract', trainees develop public speaking and timekeeping skills and adopt creative approaches to problem solving. They also are given space to identify and pursue personal goals.

For one trainee:

"Trainees get a taster of what it's like to run an organisation. We are held accountable and scrutinised for incomplete or poorly done jobs just like in the real world. We help each other and work as a real team, which we, of course, are, as well as a family."<sup>153</sup>

They also run a careers programme in which parent volunteers from a variety of professional backgrounds run career workshops.

#### **Case Study: IntoUniversity**

IntoUniversity is a national charity that provides local learning centres through which young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are encouraged to go on to higher education or another chosen aspiration. It has a supplementary schools programme which provides training and advice to the sector about how their students could progress to Higher Education. IntoUniversity also aims to raise awareness of supplementary schools among universities.

IntoUniversity offers an online 'toolkit' for supplementary school teachers, designed to meet the needs of young people aged 13–18, specifically to support their students with higher education information. It provides teachers with up-to-date and clear information on the processes involved in applying to universities, so that they are able to confidently support their students to make informed choices about their educational pathways.<sup>154</sup>

## **5. Supplementary schools act as community hubs**

Supplementary schools are the heartbeat of the community.

**Community engagement officer, focus group participant**

While cultural provision and improving educational outcomes are the primary goals of most supplementary schools, the deeper connection schools have to their community is integral to their value. This seems particularly true for schools that are a part of established voluntary and community organisations.

The supplementary schools we spoke to saw themselves as pivotal in helping newcomers to become more familiar with the country and advising parents on vital issues such as employment and health. Again, this was particularly the case when the leader of the supplementary school was already engaged within the community in a different professional or voluntary capacity, for example, as chair of a health board, city council employee or member of a BME forum.

<sup>153</sup>. Taken from: [www.oya.org.uk/#/the-trainees-biopics/3464164](http://www.oya.org.uk/#/the-trainees-biopics/3464164) [website]. Accessed 2015.

<sup>154</sup>. For more information see: [www.intouniversityssp.org/](http://www.intouniversityssp.org/) [website]. Accessed 2015.

We are key to the community as we also give advice to parents who are on benefits, trying to find a job, also medical and health advice – we are a bridge to the Tamil community.

**Founding member, Tamil supplementary school**

Examples of these wider community roles included a black supplementary school, which runs a mentoring project for younger fathers, some of whom are referred from mainstream schools. Similarly, in addition to providing Arabic classes for young people, an Arabic supplementary school offers English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) to adults, primarily to the Arabic community, but also more widely to accommodate the newly arrived eastern European migrants.

**Case Study: Abraham Moss Community School**

The Abraham Moss Community School in Manchester provides an example of how schools and local communities can work together successfully to connect with and support Somali parents and students. The school set up a Somali supplementary school, working in conjunction with Abraham Moss. Somali parents were actively involved from the beginning, with one being appointed as head-teacher and former pupils of Abraham Moss also helping to lead the supplementary school.

As well as focusing on GCSE attainment, English and maths, the school promotes bilingualism both to maintain a link with children's native culture and as a tool for raising academic attainment. The link between the school and the Somali community has been strengthened through the supplementary school and children of Somali heritage achieve well above the national average for progress in English and maths.

As winners of the 2015 TES Community and Collaboration award, one judge commented that, "many schools make a big contribution to their local community, but Abraham Moss Community School certainly lives up to its name with the remarkable Somali supplementary school, which it started, supports and funds."<sup>155</sup>

We run information sessions that are aimed at parents and grandparents. [We also run a] fathers-in-the-community mentoring project for younger fathers. Some schools refer parents to these sessions.

**Chair, black supplementary school**

This ability to navigate different contexts within supplementary school, professional and community settings and to provide guidance to a wide variety of community members often make supplementary school volunteers and leaders invaluable pillars of their community.

How might we better appreciate the community role of supplementary schools? How might supplementary schools be best supported to welcome and support new arrivals into their community?

<sup>155</sup>. Abridged version taken from [www.tesawards.co.uk/tessa2015/awardswinners/winners](http://www.tesawards.co.uk/tessa2015/awardswinners/winners) and <http://www.abrahammoss.manchester.sch.uk/index.phtml?d=538039> [website]. Accessed 2015.

## 6. Supplementary schools engage BME parents in ways that mainstream schools have often struggled to achieve.

Supplementary schools have a role to play in educating the parents about really being more hands on, so that teachers can see them as being interested in their children's education.

**Volunteer, black supplementary school, focus group participant**

Low levels of parental engagement with many mainstream schools, particularly at the secondary level, is a topic of ongoing concern.<sup>156</sup> In contrast, a key strength of supplementary schools lies in relationships with parents. Because parents make a voluntary commitment to take their children to supplementary schools the relationship dynamic is different to mainstream education from the outset. The likelihood that parents will know supplementary school volunteers and teachers in another capacity creates familiarity and ease. Indeed, many supplementary school volunteers first came as parents, which is something that breaks down the status barriers often existing between teaching professionals and parents in mainstream settings.

Many of the supplementary schools we spoke with wanted to create a space where parents could build social ties; for example, one school held monthly talks for their pupils' parents.

We make space for parents to network. Parents enjoy meeting other Russian parents... from similar backgrounds.

**Volunteer, Russian supplementary school**

The rich engagement of parents with supplementary schools defies the deficit model often attached to BME parents by the mainstream system. Furthermore, supplementary schools are often active in addressing the distance between BME parents and the mainstream system. The schools we spoke to considered it essential to build parents' knowledge of the school system and enable parents to become more visible in their child's mainstream schooling. This was viewed as especially important for those who speak English as an additional language or who might lack familiarity with the English education system.

Some parents, when they come to us, they will get information about how the curriculum is important and how the primary and secondary schools work. Parents... want to know the future of their children.

**Administrator, Arabic supplementary school**

We also work with 10 parents and have a parent support group to help them with their English and to communicate with mainstream schools.

**Coordinator, Dalit supplementary school**

Supplementary school volunteers also support parents and young people through and beyond further and higher education.

<sup>156</sup> Menzies, L. (2013) *Educational Aspirations: How English schools can work with parents to keep them on track*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Part of wanting to support the parents is so that they are able to support the children when they leave us... because they will need that support in further, higher education, even in terms of employment since lots of people are coming out [of higher education] with qualifications and no job.

**Chair, black supplementary school, focus group participant**

How can mainstream schools learn from supplementary schools in achieving sustained and beneficial levels of parental engagement?

## **7. Supplementary schools often have unproductive, fragile partnerships with mainstream schools.**

Mainstream schools could be more supportive as they only approach us when they need us for something, not to establish a partnership. When we contact them, we don't feel welcome or listened to. We hire rooms from a school... They are always complaining about the mess we leave behind, but we do our best to clean up.

**School secretary, Chinese supplementary school**

Relationships between supplementary and mainstream schools can often be problematic. While there are examples of good working links between supplementary schools and mainstream schools, most of the supplementary school volunteers we spoke to did not have formal links with mainstream schools beyond hiring rooms or operating from their premises. In other cases, respondents reported having some interaction with mainstream schools, but stressed that it was a point of contact rather than a partnership.

A recurring theme among respondents who had less positive partnerships with their mainstream schools was the increasing commercialisation of schools which had converted or been sponsored to become academies. Often the change meant that schools charged for premises they previously offered for free at prices higher than both supplementary school volunteers and parents could afford.

Mainstream schools often use supplementary schools as a resource, for example, in sourcing examiners in community languages. But while some schools were benefiting from having the supplementary school as a resource, deeper partnerships were less common. One respondent cited difficulties in establishing formal links with mainstream partners as a barrier to a funding application which called for supplementary-mainstream school partnerships.

Most schools in the area know us – some are helpful, some are not. For some, if a child is not performing well [in the mainstream school], they are asked if they want to go to the supplementary school. Some headteachers advertise the school.

**Director, black supplementary school**

Links were often with individual and enthusiastic staff members. When that member of staff changed, so did the relationship.

Yes, we had a relationship with a mainstream school. The headteacher used to come to visit us on Saturdays. We used to come to agreement on how to bring down the rent. We'd come in and teach Arabic in the school on Wednesdays for reduced rent. Then the headteacher changed... we would normally meet the headteacher once a term to talk about any problems. The new head has refused to meet us.

**Administrator, Arabic School<sup>157</sup>**

#### **Case Study: Paiwand**

Paiwand meaning 'unity' in Dari, was founded in 2002 to support Afghan children to maintain their home language and cultural identity, to unite the Afghan refugee community and improve the quality of their lives in the UK. Paiwand has built successful partnerships with two local authorities, through the help of several mainstream schools.

Paiwand's Director, Ahmad Farid Mall, initiated contact with Whitefield secondary school for access to the premises in 2004. As the school had over 100 Afghan students on roll, Whitefield were keen to work with Paiwand and after further discussions the organisations forged a formal partnership agreement. Paiwand had access to the school and its facilities and provided a community teacher based in Whitefield's English as an Additional Language (EAL) department. Working at the school for two days a week, the teacher provided bilingual support to newly arrived children, made contact with parents to inform them of the progress of their children and translated information into Dari and Pashto to be sent to families.

As this partnership progressed with 140 children benefiting from the Saturday school, classes were opened in Whitefield's feeder primary schools to encourage more Afghan students to attend, offering longer term support and helping cover the transition between primary and secondary school. This deeper partnership enabled Paiwand to have more access to Whitefield facilities, learning resources and computer networks. Community teachers from Paiwand were linked with teachers from the mainstream school to share experiences and practice and they were invited to participate in the school's professional development programme.

Funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, there is now a partnership in which Paiwand coordinates three clusters of schools in Harrow and Barnet. Each cluster consists of either a secondary or primary school hosting classes on Saturdays for students from at least five mainstream schools.<sup>157</sup>

*Many interviewees expressed a desire for greater understanding to be developed between mainstream and supplementary schools*

In exploring relationships more closely, a number of supplementary school volunteers expressed the view that mainstream schools were wary because the very existence of supplementary schools implies that the mainstream sector is not doing its job. Focus group participants felt that mainstream schools often misread the role played by the supplementary sector:

We are not competing with them, we're helping.

**Director, black supplementary school, focus group participant**

Many interviewees expressed a desire for greater understanding to be developed between mainstream and supplementary schools:

<sup>157</sup>. Abridged from a Paul Hamlyn Foundation case study, found here: [www.phf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Paiwand-case-study.pdf](http://www.phf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Paiwand-case-study.pdf)



There needs to be more understanding between mainstream and supplementary schools, approaches should be shared. There should be a forum for sharing best practice.

**Chair, black supplementary school**

Given the problems that can exist it is important to learn from successful examples of supplementary school and mainstream school partnerships.

What are the main barriers (on both sides) to more fruitful mainstream and supplementary school partnerships, particularly when both schools teach the same children?<sup>158</sup>

**Case Study: Making Education a Priority (MEaP)**

The MEaP (Making Education a Priority) project team is a consortium of community organisations which operate to share resources across their communities. Until 2013, the consortium had existed as a loose association of organisations formed from existing grassroots community networks in Manchester. However, the consortium now meets weekly in partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) to discuss and address issues around BME underachievement.

The consortium works in a variety of ways, committed to the strategic linking of initiatives around education, health, wellbeing and employment. The consortium has launched a pilot project involving the setting up of a small hub of Manchester-based supplementary schools based on the Teaching School model of peer mentoring and resource sharing. This project is also engaging The University of Manchester and a range of other stakeholders, including Manchester City Council, the National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education, Manchester Museum and Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI).

The form of this multi-agency partnership building has been crucial in enabling the schools in the consortium to expand their range of educational activities. The team's relationship with MMU has been central to its success. The university has been able to act as the principal broker for a range of stakeholders across the education and cultural sectors. In addition to its brokering role, the university has used its Widening Participation (WP) agenda to the advantage of the consortium. MMU has provided the consortium with Student Ambassadors, as part of WP to help the consortium's schools to deliver their core curriculum subjects. The Student Ambassadors assist in the curriculum areas of English, Mathematics and Sciences. The consortium's schools also wanted to set up a school band, so MMU has provided Student Ambassadors to work with the schools on Music.

By working with Manchester Metropolitan University and The University of Manchester, the consortium has been able to access an extremely large array of cultural and educational activities for free. Many of the outreach activities offered by Manchester's cultural and educational providers had been unknown to the project's leaders. The consortium has been able to enhance its supplementary education so that it complements mainstream provision, in so doing helping to shape best practice for both sectors by ultimately reaching more children.<sup>158</sup>

<sup>158</sup>. An abridged version taken from: Clennon, O.D. (2014) 'Making Education a Priority: Where do we go from here? Towards a Community-Led Approach to Education' in Clennon, O. (ed.) *Alternative Education and Community Engagement: Making Education a Priority*. (pp.122–134) Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.125, 128.

## **8. Supplementary schools would benefit from stronger partnerships with a broader range of organisations.**

We have support from local Chinese businesses – they sponsor events eg prize giving but not many businesses will sponsor us as we are not a registered charity [due to administration costs].

**School secretary, Chinese supplementary school**

Partly as a result of the frustrations experienced with mainstream schools, some supplementary schools have developed partnerships with others in their local community. Examples we encountered included a partnership with a high street bank to educate students on financial literacy. Some schools were beginning to explore more structured corporate partnerships involving sponsorship, whilst others made connections with local volunteer centres and sports and music organisations.

There are mutual gains in collaboration and partnership which would support supplementary schools in the following way: adoption of schools... by local businesses, and sponsorship of local pupils requiring support with assisted places in fee paying schools. Work experience and potential career opportunities could also be afforded by these institutions.

**Chair, black supplementary school**

However, it appeared more common for supplementary schools to have weak connections with other organisations offering opportunities for young people in their locality. Examples of sustained partnerships were rare. It was widely accepted that new forms of partnerships between supplementary schools and the wider world were necessary.

Supplementary schools should partner because it is getting increasingly difficult for each school to find a building or space. If they teamed together as four or five schools then they could barter more effectively with mainstream schools or with the local authority for a free or discounted space they could all share.

**Director, Tamil supplementary school**

How might the supplementary schools sector continue to think creatively about the partnerships that might best suit their needs and aspirations?

How might local businesses, cultural and community organisations begin to connect with supplementary schools in a meaningful and sustainable way?

## **9. Supplementary schools are perceived with a mixture of suspicion and indifference from both national and local government.**

Give us the opportunity to be listened to – maybe have some sort of representation at local councils.

**Chair, Dalit supplementary school**

The supplementary school leaders and volunteers we spoke to were disappointed by the lack of positive government interest and engagement. Focus group participants in particular expressed disappointment about the withdrawal of local authority support from 2010–11, when the coalition government’s cuts to local authority funding began. However, often the schools sought support beyond better funding. Indeed one interviewee attributed the decline of some supplementary schools to an over reliance on government funding.

While the majority of supplementary schools we spoke to would like more government funding, many of our interviewees also wanted support to develop alternative and independent sources of funding but need the support to do this. Interviewees also called for more government support in helping facilitate mainstream supplementary school partnerships. Supplementary schools yearned for stability and continuity instead of sporadic hand-to-mouth government funding.

Government should play a championing role and encourage facilitation between mainstream and supplementary schools – they could further facilitate access to CPD for teachers of supplementary schools.

**Chair, black supplementary school**

The general sense that government fails to recognise the contribution of supplementary schools increased resentment when the spotlight was extremism and the Prevent agenda.

How might local and national government think creatively about other levels of support they could offer to supplementary schools?

How might government more widely understand the successes of supplementary schools beyond their fears of supplementary schools and extremism?

## **10. There are mixed perspectives about the future of supplementary schools.**

I don’t think the life of the supplementary school is over. It’s not over yet.

**Chair, black supplementary school, focus group participant**

We’ll start another one... we’ll open more branches.

**Headteacher, Persian supplementary school**

I’d like to work ourselves out of business; where we are doing well, schools are super and there would be no need for a supplementary after school homework club.

**Director, black supplementary school**

Given the sector’s diversity, it is unsurprising that there is a wide range of perspectives about supplementary schools’ future. Several interviewees looked forward to a time when minority ethnic pupils would no longer experience educational disadvantage within the mainstream school sector. One volunteer spoke of “wanting to run their supplementary school out of existence”. Another focus group participant

from a black supplementary school aspired to move away from teaching core curriculum subjects, to providing a space to develop his students' confidence, self-esteem and wellbeing.

The research also reveals the many ways in which supplementary schools continue to evolve; one supplementary school wanted to become more like a social enterprise:

Gradually I see us becoming more like a social enterprise... developing items to sell, [opening] a small shop on the premises of building. I also had an idea to put on booster courses to raise money and subsidise education for students from more impoverished backgrounds.

**Chair, black supplementary school**

For another interviewee, the precarious funding situation facing the school had provided a prompt to reimagine the role for the school and think seriously about exploring new networks and relationships in the future:

Our funding has come to an end. Our future does lie in getting the wider community involved and there is a role to play there... Businesses and other organisations networking together is more powerful.

**Founder and Teacher, bilingual supplementary school**

Although the potential remains for supplementary schools to add even greater value to their young people and their communities, there are real grounds for concern about how, in a different climate, supplementary schools can sustain themselves as a vital part of the educational and cultural fabric of their communities – how they can thrive as well as survive.

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## 5. Conclusions and recommendations

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*Supplementary schools are socially driven organisations, serving very different purposes in response to the demands and needs of their communities*

We also recognise that the impact of supplementary schools on pupils is not limited to their academic attainment, and indeed there may be many wider benefits to their confidence, wellbeing, development of character and skills that we have not considered through this research and which are likely to be as important to the pupils themselves.<sup>159</sup>

Supplementary schools are socially driven organisations, serving very different purposes in response to the demands and needs of their communities. It is a sector comprising evolving components and full of ambition; whilst the black supplementary school movement is declining, the demand for supplementary education for newer migrant pupils from Afghan, Iraqi, Iranian and eastern European countries in some regions of the country is increasing. Equally, whilst some supplementary schools want to be more visible and work in collaboration with mainstream schools, others wish to guard their independence from orthodoxy and the constraining regulations of statutory education.

Supplementary schools are, by and large, not campaigning organisations. Their strengths lie elsewhere: reflecting the identity of children and providing positive role models; offering dependable and regular activities for children and young people; hosting a culturally familiar space where children can ‘let down their guard’; demystifying the education system for newly arrived parents or parents whose own experience of mainstream education (whether in Britain or elsewhere) has left them ill-equipped to guide their children through a changed system 25 to 30 years later; and creating a space for adults to share their experiences as parents from ‘minority’ communities.

The supplementary schools we have spoken to in the course of this investigation, for the most part, are confident of the sustained impact they can continue to have on young people. Though some may be struggling financially, they are sustaining themselves through the peaks and troughs of government and local authority funding. They are embedded within their communities and cater for the needs of their young people and parents. They have largely done this out of the spotlight.

Given what the Paul Hamlyn Foundation has described as the “increasing pressure on supplementary schools”,<sup>160</sup> it could be tempting for supplementary schools to focus inwards on surviving tougher times:

159. Evans, D. and Gillan-Thomas, K. (2015) op cit, p.7.

160. Evans, D. and Gillan-Thomas, K. (2015) op cit, p.11.

consolidating their existing offer, partly through improved local marketing to parents; meeting the new voluntary and (potentially still statutory) code of practice to allay government fears of extremism; and ensuring that the supply of volunteer teachers grows again.

Our analysis points to a broader scope for supplementary schools within the local ecology of educational, social and cultural provision for young people. Whilst some supplementary schools may already be moving in this direction, we believe that overall the sector could be more ambitious in delivering value for young people and their communities, retaining their power as a movement while continuing to challenge mainstream assumptions and practices.

This report's recommendations centre on how supplementary schools can harness their strengths to broaden their **purpose, connection, impact** and **sustainability**. We offer these recommendations with caution. Supplementary schools are justifiably proud and protective of their independence. Whilst many are keen to connect better with other parts of the education and youth sectors, others are concerned to protect their independence and distinctive mission and values.

## 1. Purpose

### **Developing a broader articulation of the purpose of supplementary schools.**

The roles and remits of supplementary schools are broad, diverse and malleable. While raising academic attainment and passing on cultural knowledge will always be important for supplementary schools and the communities they serve, we believe that many supplementary schools, with appropriate external support, are ready and willing to extend their focus to the **development of young people's social, emotional, creative and cultural capacities**.

## 2. Connection

### **a. Developing a broader, deeper set of connections with people and organisations who also aim to improve outcomes for young people.**

Widening the connections supplementary schools have beyond their immediate community is important and having a board or managing committee member with connections to mainstream schools and/or local community organisations can help. However, funding and capacity constraints often make it difficult for schools to pursue opportunities, so they need encouragement and support from other organisations.

### **b. Stronger connections with youth-focused organisations, cultural organisations, universities and employers.**

Supplementary schools might see and portray themselves as 'basecamps' for a broader set of out-of-school opportunities for young people. Whilst many supplementary schools already play this role, others are much less visible. Cultural associations, mentoring organisations, employers and universities should look beyond mainstream schools and better-known youth groups and seek to find supplementary schools in the area and support their work.



### **c. A closer relationship with mainstream schools to support teaching, learning and parental engagement.**

In line with previous research, this investigation has shown that meaningful partnerships with mainstream schools can be sporadic and difficult. Partnerships with mainstream schools need to move beyond transactional room-hiring towards a deeper sharing of expertise. It would be valuable to create opportunities for mainstream and supplementary schools to share best practice. For example, mainstream schools may have particular expertise on pedagogy, whilst supplementary schools may have more effective strategies for engaging parents.

## **3. Impact**

### **Understanding impact.**

If supplementary schools are to take on wider ambitions and roles they need to develop ways of understanding and describing their impact on young people and communities.

The recent Paul Hamlyn Foundation study recommended that supplementary schools and their supporters continue to improve the collection and sharing of data on impact.<sup>161</sup> Rather than seeking probably unobtainable ‘proof’ of direct impact on attainment, the study suggests that supplementary schools (and their researchers and supporters) instead focus on a small number of key outcomes – social, emotional or cultural. Schools can apply emerging and improving models of impact assessment, especially such as those developed by the youth sector.

## **4. Sustainability**

### **Becoming more financially sustainable.**

Supplementary schools have, over the last half century, shown remarkable resilience, in the face of intermittent support from funders. Looking forward, there are three additional funding streams which could help with supplementary schools’ financial sustainability.

### **Recommendations:**

#### **R1: There should be greater encouragement and support for supplementary schools to work with youth (between the ages of 14–19), directly supporting their further and higher education, career ambitions and transition to adulthood.**

Given the links supplementary schools have with students and their families, many are well placed to play a pivotal role in supporting BME youth from low income backgrounds as well as youth who are new to the country. Depending on the relevant connections and motivations of the supplementary school, schools could offer careers advice, organise work placements and formalise links with higher education institutions and local businesses for future employment opportunities.

<sup>161</sup> Evans, D. and Gillan-Thomas, K. (2015) op cit, p.8.

**R2: University outreach, bursary and widening participation programmes aim to connect with supplementary schools in their area, giving them similar opportunities to those offered to mainstream schools.**

By working with supplementary schools, as well as engaging directly with specific communities who are under-represented within their academic institutions, higher education institutions can help embed these schools in the wider educational network and increase their visibility.

University engagement can also facilitate more open relationships between mainstream and supplementary schools and with other educational projects. The goal should be holistic support for ethnic minority pupils and young people.

**R3: Wherever possible and appropriate, mainstream schools open up any professional learning opportunities to staff from supplementary schools. We also recommend that teaching school alliances also extend their continuing professional development (CPD) offer to supplementary schools.<sup>162</sup>**

**R4: All local organisations who work directly with young people consider the scope to build relationships with supplementary schools. Local ‘brokerage’ organisations, (for instance, education business partnerships, Arts Council Bridge organisations, or youth sector networks) should seek to integrate supplementary schools into their existing networks.**

**R5: Supplementary schools, both individually and through their local and national networks, connect with the youth sector – in particular through the new Centre for Youth Impact – to improve approaches to evaluating impact.**

**R6: Mainstream schools should consider whether pupil premium funding could be used to support partnerships with supplementary schools particularly in using the expertise of supplementary school teachers to support BME students.**

Mainstream schools could hire supplementary school practitioners as advisers in how to connect with low performing BME students or students newly arrived in the country. They could also hire supplementary school teachers to develop and implement strategies in how to have more meaningful engagement with parents from BME communities in their school.

**R7: Local and national government, and national agencies, trusts and foundations, should consider options for offering some ‘stability funding’ to supplementary schools – three to five year agreements that support their longer term viability as sustainable, ‘commission-ready’ organisations.**

This funding model would be appropriate for supplementary schools willing to formalise their role and operating methods, for example,

<sup>162</sup>. Teaching school alliances are a community of schools and cross sector partners that work together to receive mutual support on training, support and research and development.

*Supplementary schools offer a range of cultural, linguistic and artistic activities in an environment where community heritage is valued*

by strengthening safeguarding and off-site procedures. The duty to assess the risks associated with out-of-school settings, including supplementary schools, has been passed on to local authorities but without allocated funding. An intelligent compact with supplementary schools could support their stability and improve procedures and trust.

**R8: Arts Council England should consider using its strategic funding to support supplementary schools as cultural organisations, and to encourage its national portfolio of funded organisations to develop partnerships with supplementary schools.**

Supplementary schools offer a range of cultural, linguistic and artistic activities in an environment where community heritage is valued.

ACE has committed to supporting new commissions that contribute to the Creative Case for diversity. A new programme will be “open to artists and organisations who are not in our National portfolio providing an opportunity to invest in talent development and support the creation of new work”.<sup>163</sup> The Arts Council should look to supplementary schools as a powerful network of cultural ‘points of contact’ connecting with parts of the community that the rest of the arts sector struggles to reach. Strategic funding from the Creative Case for diversity programme could support supplementary schools to:

- Develop cultural outputs and offers, possibly leading to an annual national festival for supplementary schools.
- Commission artists and organisations to work with the young people they serve.
- Building on the notion of supplementary schools as ‘base-camps’, help young people and communities to access offers from other cultural organisations.

<sup>163</sup>. See [www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/our-priorities-2011-15/diversity-and-creative-case/diversity-arts-and-culture-across-england/#sthash.B9iun6wj.dpuf](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/our-priorities-2011-15/diversity-and-creative-case/diversity-arts-and-culture-across-england/#sthash.B9iun6wj.dpuf)

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