

# Understanding Minority Ethnic Achievement

Race, gender, class  
and 'success'

---

LOUISE ARCHER and BECKY FRANCIS

# **Understanding Minority Ethnic Achievement**

Race, gender, class and 'success'

**Louise Archer and Becky Francis**

First published 2007  
by Routledge  
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada  
by Routledge  
270 Madison Ave, New York, NY 10016

*Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business*

© 2007 Louise Archer and Becky Francis

Typeset in Garamond by  
HWA Text and Data Management, Tunbridge Wells  
Printed and bound in Great Britain by  
TJ International, Padstow, Cornwall

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

*British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data*

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

Archer, Louise, 1973–

Understanding minority ethnic achievement : race, gender, class and  
'success' / Louise Archer and Becky Francis.  
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

1. Chinese students – Education – Great Britain – Case studies.  
2. Chinese – Great Britain – Social conditions – Case studies. 3. Academic  
achievement – Great Britain – Case studies. I. Francis, Becky. II. Title  
LC3085.G7A73 2007  
371.829'951041–dc22 2006011793

ISBN10: 0-415-37281-X (hbk)

ISBN10: 0-415-37282-8 (pbk)

ISBN10: 0-203-96839-5 (ebk)

ISBN13: 978-0-415-37281-7 (hbk)

ISBN13: 978-0-415-37282-4 (pbk)

ISBN13: 978-0-203-96839-0 (ebk)

# Understanding Minority Ethnic Achievement

The authors of this book take a refreshing approach to the issue of minority ethnic achievement as they examine the views, identities and educational experiences of those pupils who are undoubtedly 'achieving', but who tend to remain ignored and overlooked within popular concerns about under-achievement. By investigating the factors underpinning 'success', this ground-breaking book shows how a better understanding of high achievement can also inform our knowledge of under-achievement.

*Understanding Minority Ethnic Achievement* combines a broad analysis of minority ethnic pupils' achievement together with a novel, detailed case study of an educationally 'successful' group, the British-Chinese. Despite their apparent high achievement and social mobility, relatively little academic or policy attention has been given to the British-Chinese, who are popularly referred to as the 'invisible ethnic minority'. Yet their apparent success offers a fascinating angle to debates on the reproduction of social inequalities.

In this thought-provoking and highly accessible book, the authors:

- Review the theoretical and policy context to issues of 'race', gender, social class and achievement
- Discuss the role of teachers and schools
- Explore Chinese parents' views of their children's education and explain how these families 'produce' and support achievement
- Investigate British-Chinese pupils' views on their approaches to learning and their educational identities
- Examine the relationship between aspirations and educational achievement
- Consider the complexity and subtlety of racism experienced by 'successful' minority ethnic pupils.

*Understanding Minority Ethnic Achievement* will provide researchers, students, education professionals and policy makers with fresh insights and understandings about educationally 'successful' minority ethnic pupils.

Louise Archer is at King's College London, UK.

Becky Francis is at Roehampton University, UK.

**for Matt, Danny, Ben and Louis, with love**

# Acknowledgements

We would like to thank everyone who has helped us in the production of this book.

The empirical data that we draw on were collected as part of a study funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (award no. R000239585), exploring constructions of gender, education and post-16 aspirations among British-Chinese pupils. We would like to extend our warmest thanks to all the British-Chinese young people, parents and teachers who generously gave their time and shared their views and experiences with us in this research – and we hope that we do them justice.

We would also like to thank Sau-Wah Lam for her excellent fieldwork in conducting (and translating) the interviews with Chinese parents – and for her comments and feedback on our analyses. We are also very grateful to the other British-Chinese advisers to the project, Yen-Wah Lam, Danny Hew and Sui-Mee Chan, for their advice across the project – from design and recruitment through to analyses. Thanks, in particular, are due to Sui-Mee for reading and commenting on draft work produced from the project.

We conducted the research study and began the initial writing of this book while we were both based at London Metropolitan University, in the Institute for Policy Studies in Education. We would like to thank all our former IPSE friends and colleagues for the various support they provided to us – especially Lindsay Melling for her organisation and coding of some of the data. We also thank our current colleagues at King's College London and Roehampton for providing us with the space and encouragement to complete the book.

Some of the data and discussion in the book are drawn from articles published in *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, *British Educational Research Journal*, *Sociological Review*, *Oxford Review of Education*, *Sociology and Race*, *Ethnicity and Education*. We thank the publishers (Sage, Blackwell and Taylor & Francis) for giving us their permission to reproduce material. We are also grateful to the DfES for allowing us to reproduce their tables on ethnicity and achievement in Chapter Two. We should like to extend thanks to colleagues at Routledge for commissioning the book and supporting its production.

Finally, thanks to our families and friends for their patience and support during the writing of this book.

Louise Archer and Becky Francis

# Preface

It is evident that contemporary UK education policy is characterised by an ‘obsession with academic achievement’ (Mahony, 1998:39). This is amply illustrated by the proliferation of testing regimes, academic league tables and the regular, high profile publication of achievement statistics from children’s earliest years through to GCSEs and into post-compulsory education. Indeed, we would assert that achievement is not just an educational issue – for the current government, it is *the* educational issue. As noted by Francis and Skelton (2005), however, the current policy concern with ‘achievement’ tends to be ‘extraordinarily narrowly conceived’, being treated ‘as exclusively reflected by credentials from performance in examinations’ (p. 2). As various critics have argued at length, the measurement and classification of achievement/under-achievement within and between different groups of pupils remains a far more complex and contentious issue than education policy acknowledges (e.g. Epstein *et al.*, 1998; Francis and Skelton, 2005; Gillborn and Gipps, 1996; Gillborn and Mirza, 1992, 2000; Mirza 1992).

Beneath this umbrella concern with ‘achievement’, national moral panics have flourished regarding the apparent ‘under-achievement’ of particular groups of pupils – notably boys, working-class pupils and (some groups of) Black and minority ethnic (BME) young people. Within the broader concern with boys’ achievement, the spotlight has been placed on the under-achievement of Black Caribbean boys (e.g. see Sewell, 1997, 1998; Phillips, 2005) – and to a lesser extent Asian Muslim pupils (e.g. see Archer, 2003). Inequalities in the educational experiences and outcomes of minority ethnic children have been documented and discussed throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first – although a range of radically different approaches and interpretations have been proffered. For instance, positivistic psychologists in the USA and Europe have attempted to explain differentiated achievement as the result of biological factors, reflecting inherent differences in intelligence, ability, or resulting from biologically different family structures and cultural psychologies. Whilst this work is mostly outdated and discredited (e.g. Eysenk, 1971; Jensen, 1973), it continues to re-emerge periodically (e.g. espousing innate racial differences in intelligence), attracting sensationalised media attention (e.g. Hernstein and Murray, 1994). Such approaches have for some considerable time been denounced as reflecting racist, homogenised and untenable assumptions about minority ethnic peoples (e.g. Mama, 1995; Omi and Winant, 1986). Indeed, as Rose

(2001) points out, ever since the end of the Second World War and the creation of the Geneva Conventions, there has been a growing popular concern to discredit and denounce essentialising approaches to understanding human behaviour, in acknowledgement of the horrific results of Fascist eugenicist ideology regarding racial hierarchies. However, as we discuss in this book, the potency of 'commonsense' racist discourses (Billig *et al.*, 1988) around minority ethnic pupils remains a pertinent concern, and continues to permeate education policy (Gillborn, 2005) and the everyday views of teachers, pupils and parents.

In this book we argue that policy approaches to 'under-achievement' tend to adopt a narrow, individualised approach to understanding the factors underlying and driving 'success' and 'under-achievement'. Thus the 'causes' of under-achievement among, for instance, Black Caribbean pupils and Muslim pupils, are often popularly assumed to be a product of personal attitudes, beliefs and cultural/family practices and values. Indeed, whilst conducting research and writing in this area, we have frequently been approached by journalists, policy makers and practitioners wanting to know the 'secret' of British-Chinese pupils' educational success and, more to the point, what messages and 'top tips' we can provide for application to 'other' groups. The popular assumption seems to be that there must be something that British-Chinese individuals and families are doing 'right' and that other groups are doing 'wrong'.

Our intention in writing this book is to bring a more complex understanding to the issue of minority ethnic educational 'success'. In particular, we try to place notions of 'culture' and individual agency within an appreciation of intermeshed structural identities and inequalities of 'race'/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, social class and age. We hope that the text provides a critical contrast to current dominant 'colour blind' approaches (which have entailed the erasure of 'race' from policy (Lewis, 2000)), whilst not falling into the trap of propagating essentialist and homogenised readings of racialised communities. Our intention is to help lever social justice concerns back into mainstream educational debates that have become dominated by the neo-liberal language of 'quality' – in which concerns with 'equality' have become evacuated and consigned to the margins.

The book also aims to provide researchers, policy makers and practitioners with insights and understandings about educationally 'successful' minority ethnic pupils – who are often ignored and overlooked within the prevalent concerns with 'under-achievement'. We also believe that understanding achievement is not only important in its own right, but can tell us more about under-achievement. As Gibson (1988) writes from the US context: 'many of these theories have originated in an effort to explain minority failure and have been generated without sufficient attention to cases of minority success' (Gibson, 1988, p. 168).

We would further argue that this focus on BME 'success'/achievement is politically, socially and academically important. For instance, the recognition and 'celebration'<sup>1</sup> of BME success provides an important challenge to the constant tirade of negative images and associations of BME young people as 'problems' and 'failing' pupils. It also provides a vital tool for highlighting some of the previously hidden and ignored injustices experienced by 'achieving' BME pupils – as we discuss at length within the book. Furthermore, the potential practical applications of this endeavour are

underscored by the results of recent surveys of newly qualified teachers (NQTs) which are conducted each year in the UK by the Teacher Training Agency. These surveys continue to reveal that the majority of new teachers report feeling ill-prepared and ill-equipped to engage with multicultural classrooms and pupils from diverse backgrounds. This situation is perhaps understandable given the marginalisation and reduction of equality issues within initial teacher education courses (often as little as one session within an entire course) – a situation that is certainly not defensible in our opinion. This is not attempting to be a ‘how-to’ book, but we would hope that readers who are (student) teachers and professionals might be inspired to develop new knowledge and ways of ‘thinking otherwise’ (Renold, 2005) about minority ethnic pupils and parents and issues of achievement.

Whilst engaging with a broader literature pertaining to education and ‘race’/ethnicity, gender and social class, we focus particularly on the case of the UK’s highest educationally achieving ‘ethnic group’, the British-Chinese. As we note further in Chapter 2, British-Chinese identities remain under-theorised within the sociology of education and yet they offer a potentially interesting angle to debates around the (re)production of privileges/inequalities – especially given their apparent success in transcending barriers of racism and social class and achieving social mobility. Relatively little academic work has focused on the British-Chinese diaspora, although there is a growing critique that counters popular narrow, stereotypical representations of British-Chinese families and their ‘success’ (e.g. Archer and Francis, 2005a, 2005b, 2006; Chau and Yu, 2001; Cheng, 1996; Parker, 2000; Song, 1999; Wong, 1994).

The predominant academic silence around the British-Chinese is also matched by a wider silence within popular life. Despite a few tragic stories in the UK press over the last few years (e.g. the deaths of migrant Chinese workers and attempted ‘illegal immigrants’<sup>2</sup>), the British-Chinese community attracts relatively little popular attention. This has led to their identification as ‘the invisible ethnic minority’<sup>3</sup> – despite their notable academic and economic ‘success’. Indeed, as the British-Chinese actor David Yip has complained, there are relatively few British-Chinese people represented to any meaningful degree within mainstream British cultural and popular life.

## Structure of the book

We wrote this book with a potentially broad readership in mind. We hope that the ideas and understandings proposed within it will be relevant for a range of researchers/academics, students, practitioners, education professionals and policy makers. In practice, we recognise that this remains essentially an ‘academic’ text, discussing (and proposing) theoretical concepts and ways of reading, understanding and representing ‘achieving’ minority pupils. However, this academic text espouses a political and applied aim of contributing to, and helping to further develop, socially just practices with education. The following outline of the book’s structure is intended to help readers to navigate their way through the text.

Chapter 1 effectively sets the scene for the book and discusses the policy context in relation to issues of ‘race’ and achievement. It explores current patterns of educational

attainment by ethnicity and gender (including relevant statistical tables) and discusses this achievement in relation to 'social class'. These figures are critically discussed, with attention drawn to their contradictory use and interpretation within education policy. The chapter maps out key debates within the field, including the impact of the 'boys debate', the standards movement and educational credentialism – highlighting the pernicious effects of these discourses on BME pupils and discussions around ethnicity and achievement.

Chapter 2 provides the theoretical context to the book. It details the theoretical perspective that is brought to bear on our data and analyses and argues for the utility and importance of adopting an integrated approach which can simultaneously account for social axes of 'race'/ethnicity, gender, sexuality and social class. Key work is reviewed in relation to the theoretical approach adopted, notably on 'feminist poststructuralism', discourse analysis and, in relation to the conceptualisation of 'race'/ethnicity, gender, sexualities and social class. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the British-Chinese research context and provides an introduction and overview of the empirical study to be drawn on in the remainder of the book.

In Chapter 3 we explore teachers' views of BME pupil identities and achievement. The chapter reviews existing literature pertaining to teachers' roles and the impact on/ interaction of these with BME pupils. Teachers' attributions of BME success to the 'home'/ home culture are critically examined. Attention is also given to teachers' constructions of home-school relations. It is argued that despite praising British-Chinese pupils' educational success, teachers also unwittingly positioned it as problematic. Particular consideration is given to teachers' constructions of British-Chinese pupils and the ways in which these constructions are distinctly gendered. The chapter concludes by proposing a new conceptual model as a framework for understanding how dominant educational discourses of the ideal pupil positions both high *and* low achieving BME pupils as 'other'.

In Chapter 4 we examine BME parents' views of the British education system. The chapter reviews the education policy context with regard to parental involvement in schooling and reviews research conducted with both white and BME parents. Chinese parents' constructions of the value of education (and their transmission of this valuing to their children) and their mobilisation of economic capital to help support their children's achievement, are all explored. Attention is drawn to how Chinese parents mobilise this valuing of education within their constructions of racialised identities and ethnic boundaries. It is suggested that, despite not challenging schools overtly, many Chinese parents appear critical of the British education system (comparing it with Hong Kong/China) and express dissatisfaction with their children's schooling. In line with Ran (2001), it is suggested that irrespective of their children's high achievement, Chinese parents and schools appear to be travelling on 'parallel tracks', rather than engaging in equitable and reciprocal partnerships.

Chapter 5 focuses on BME young people's educational identities. Following an overview of relevant literature, the chapter examines British-Chinese pupils' learning preferences and learner identities. Their subject preferences, constructions of themselves as pupils and their stated approaches to learning are discussed and contextualised *vis-à-vis* research conducted with ethnically diverse pupil cohorts. The

chapter also discusses in-depth pupils' views on the laddism debate and specifically whether, or not, laddishness applies to British-Chinese boys. Consideration is given to boys' and girls' constructions of British-Chinese masculinity and their explanations (and boys' performances of) British-Chinese laddishness. These questions are considered in terms of interweavings of 'race', class, gender and space within the construction of minority ethnic masculinities. The chapter explores these issues with the aid of a proposed conceptual dichotomy, discussing how British-Chinese approaches to learning and, in particular, British-Chinese boys' gender positions are othered/Orientalised.

Chapter 6 engages in linking identities, aspirations and achievement. In this chapter we bring together data from teachers, pupils and parents to explore the relationship between aspirations and achievement. The chapter introduces education policy in relation to aspirations – with particular reference to BME pupils and parents. The views of teachers, parents and pupils on the relationship between aspirations and British-Chinese approaches to learning and 'success', are then discussed in turn. These accounts reveal that whilst all parties agreed that British-Chinese pupils generally tend to hold 'high' aspirations (to go to university and achieve professional careers), parents and teachers tended to perceive pupils as holding a narrower range of occupational aspirations than pupils themselves. Differences were also evident in terms of how parents, teachers and pupils perceived and explained points of agreement (or disagreement) between British-Chinese pupils and their families regarding their future aspirations. The chapter discusses how a desire for familial social mobility (fostered by the diasporic cultural habitus) is a key driver of 'high aspirations' and attention is given to the role of social class and gender within British-Chinese boys' and girls' constructions of their aspirations. Discussion focuses on British-Chinese families' use of social capital and of 'known'/'safe' routes – proposing that these reveal agentic responses within a constraining context of structural inequalities.

Chapter 7 explores how we might understand and address educational inequalities of racism, sexism and classism. It notes that there is a relative silence within policy texts on issues of racism – which stands in stark contrast to research studies documenting BME pupils' experiences of racism in their schools and classrooms. As many teachers assumed, British-Chinese pupils are not often considered to experience racism – presumably on account of their high levels of achievement. However, as this chapter demonstrates, for many pupil respondents racism was an everyday issue. These experiences of racism took many forms – both subtle and overt. In particular, we suggest that their experiences can be understood as revealing a specific local (or micro) form of Orientalism (Said 1978) and we attempt to unpick the key features of these local manifestations of Orientalist discourses within the lives of contemporary British-Chinese pupils. Attention is drawn to 'negative-positives' in relation to the stereotypes applied to the British-Chinese, and to the gendered cultural exoticisation of British-Chinese performances of masculinity and femininity. The chapter also discusses pupils' resistances and responses to these racisms and concludes by reflecting on challenges for schools.

Finally, the key contributions of our findings are drawn together in Chapter 8. The implications of our analysis are teased out in relation to researchers, policy makers

and practitioners and the argument is made that a more institutionally critical and reflexive approach might usefully be brought to bear on the complex and multifaceted issues of 'race', racisms, and achievement in education.

# Contents

<i>List of illustrations</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xi
<i>Preface</i>	xiii
1 'Race' and achievement: the policy context	1
2 Theoretical perspectives on race, gender, class and achievement	25
3 Teachers' views on pupil identities and achievement	41
4 Minority ethnic parents' views of the British education system	69
5 Young people's educational identities	91
6 Linking identities, aspirations and achievement	117
7 Understanding and addressing educational inequalities: racisms, sexism and classism	145
8 Implications	167
<i>Notes</i>	175
<i>References</i>	179
<i>Index</i>	197

# Illustrations

## Figures

6.1 Teachers' constructions of British-Chinese pupils' occupational aspirations	121
6.2 British-Chinese pupils' occupational aspirations	130

## Tables

1.1 Achievements at Key Stage 1 Level 2 and above in 2004, by ethnicity and gender	3
1.2 Achievements at Key Stage 2 Level 4 and above in 2004, by ethnicity and gender	7
1.3 Achievements at GCSE and equivalent in 2004, by ethnicity and gender	11
1.4 Achievements at GCSE and Equivalent in 2004, by ethnicity, Free School Meal provision and gender	14
3.1 Model trichotomy mapping the discursive production of 'ideal', 'pathologised' and 'demonised' pupils in Western educational discourse	66
5.1 British-Chinese pupils' favourite subjects, placed in order of preference	93
5.2 Comparison of favourite subjects of British-Chinese pupils and of mixed-ethnicity sample	94
5.3 Discursive constructions of 'the lad' and 'the British-Chinese pupil'	111

# 1 'Race' and achievement

## The policy context

### 'Race', ethnicity and achievement in policy discourse

The presence of minority ethnic pupils in Western schools has long been characterised in negative racist terms, with concerns being expressed about their problematic behaviours and achievement and their potential negative impact on schools and other (i.e. White) pupils as a result of their 'alien' demands and identities. As highlighted by high profile cases such as *Brown v. Board of Education*, the USA historically adopted a policy of formally segregating minority ethnic and White pupils – a policy which was successfully challenged as Black families mounted a series of legal cases to demand equality of opportunity for their children (see e.g. Chapman, 2005 for review and discussion).<sup>1</sup> In Britain, the schooling of minority ethnic and White pupils was not formally segregated to the same extent; however, research and testimonies have documented how discrimination against minority ethnic groups was systematised within mainstream British education for decades (e.g. Swan Report, 1985; Mullard, 1985; Troyna and Hatcher, 1992). Mullard (1985), for instance, discusses how Black children were assumed to be detrimental to, and a burden on, White schools, so were 'bussed' to different areas in order to spread and minimise the impact across schools. White authorities also hoped that such dispersal would encourage (or force) the children concerned to 'assimilate', and adopt the dominant White culture (Mullard, 1985; see also Rattansi, 1992 for a discussion of the history of multicultural education policy in Britain).

As we shall argue, whilst policy approaches to 'race' have changed over the years, the pathologisation of minority ethnic pupils within education policy remains an issue today – although debates have taken on a more subtle and complex form. For instance, it is notable that issues of race/ethnicity are only really acknowledged or addressed by education policy within the context of 'under-achievement'. In this chapter we examine the ways in which issues of ethnicity and achievement are framed and understood within contemporary education policy discourse. Reviewing statistical evidence and recent policy initiatives, we argue that issues of 'race'/ ethnicity have been subject to a pernicious turn in policy discourse which removes the means for engaging with inequalities, naturalises differences in achievement between ethnic groups and places the responsibility or blame for achievement differentials with minority ethnic individuals. This discourse effectively denies racism as a potential cause of differences

in achievement and hides inequalities within congratulatory public statements. We also trace how issues of 'race'/ethnicity, social class and achievement (and achievement issues pertaining to girls) have been eclipsed by the 'boys' under-achievement' debate – although, as we discuss, this debate is profoundly racialised and classed.

### **Current patterns of educational attainment according to ethnicity**

The following tables are drawn from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) website, and depict pupils' achievement at Key Stages 1–4, according to ethnicity and gender. They provide a vivid illustration of current attainment patterns, and our commentary attempts to draw out some of the complexities that the figures reflect, as well as key points of note. What needs to be kept in mind when looking at the percentage figures is that some groups are far bigger than others (e.g. 473,665 'White' pupils eligible at Key Stage 1, compared to 42,044 'Asian', and 1,819 Chinese). We can also see in each case how the 'Total' (bold) figure is relatively useless (or misleading), given that the group categories are so broad as to include groups with vastly differing performance levels (e.g. White British and Gypsy/Roma under the title 'White'; or Indian and Bangladeshi pupils under the title 'Asian').

The first set of tables depict pupils' achievements at Key Stage 1 (level 2 and above). We can see from these figures that in all ethnic groups girls outscore boys at reading, though for some groups this gender difference is marginal (e.g. Chinese), where in others it is profound (e.g. Gypsy/Roma). This is also the case for writing at Key Stage 1, where the gender gap is even more pronounced. In maths, too, a higher percentage of girls achieve level 2 and above across most ethnic groups (the exception being Travellers of Irish Heritage); although here the gaps are far smaller, and in some cases insignificant. In terms of ethnicity, a pattern emerges across Key Stage 1 – Chinese pupils perform best as a group; followed by Indian pupils; followed by White British and dual heritage pupils. Next comes a cluster falling below the average for percentage achieving level 2, including Black Caribbean pupils, Black African pupils, Pakistani pupils and Bangladeshi pupils (mainly, but not exclusively in that order); and finally following a substantial attainment gap, Traveller of Irish Heritage and Gypsy/Roma pupils.

These patterns are largely replicated at Key Stage 2, with the same patterns emerging for comparative attainment among the various ethnic groups at Maths, English and Science. There are a few exceptions, for example Indian pupils achieve the highest proportion of level 4s and above for English at Key Stage 2.

The gender gap at Key Stage 2 English is even more evident than in writing at Key Stage 1, and girls' superior attainment is particularly dramatic in certain ethnic groups. For example, 79 per cent Black Caribbean girls achieve level 4 and above compared to only 58 per cent of Black Caribbean boys (fewer Black girls attain this level in comparison with groups such as White British, dual heritage, Indian and Chinese girls, but they out-perform White British boys as a group – of whom only 73 per cent achieve level 4 and above – and even Chinese boys, who are the highest achieving male group for English). Performance at Key Stage 2 Science is very similar

Table 1.1 Achievements at Key Stage 1 Level 2 and above in 2004, by ethnicity and gender

Key Stage 1	Reading					
	Eligible pupils			% Achieving		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
<b>White</b>	<b>242,693</b>	<b>230,972</b>	<b>473,665</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>85</b>
White British	234,307	223,179	457,486	82	90	86
Irish	1,112	1,015	2,127	82	90	85
Traveller of Irish Heritage	190	178	368	25	38	31
Gypsy/Roma	351	354	705	36	53	45
Any other White background	6,733	6,246	12,979	77	84	80
<b>Mixed</b>	<b>9,977</b>	<b>9,760</b>	<b>19,737</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>85</b>
White and Black Caribbean	3,408	3,413	6,821	77	89	83
White and Black African	1,019	1,001	2,020	81	88	84
White and Asian	2,045	1,955	4,000	85	93	89
Any other mixed background	3,505	3,391	6,896	82	89	86
<b>Asian</b>	<b>21,468</b>	<b>20,576</b>	<b>42,044</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>81</b>
Indian	6,490	6,151	12,641	86	92	89
Pakistani	8,953	8,586	17,539	73	81	77
Bangladeshi	3,845	3,800	7,645	72	81	76
Any other Asian background	2,180	2,039	4,219	80	86	83
<b>Black</b>	<b>11,836</b>	<b>11,416</b>	<b>23,252</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>79</b>
Black Caribbean	4,328	4,156	8,484	76	86	81
Black African	6,203	6,009	12,212	74	82	78
Any other Black background	1,305	1,251	2,556	76	86	81
<b>Chinese</b>	<b>903</b>	<b>916</b>	<b>1,819</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>Any other ethnic group</b>	<b>2,683</b>	<b>2,581</b>	<b>5,264</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Unclassified<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>7,971</b>	<b>7,392</b>	<b>15,363</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>All pupils</b>	<b>297,531</b>	<b>283,613</b>	<b>581,144</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>85</b>

1 Includes information refused or not obtained.