

Attainment - Aspirations and progression

Aim: To ensure that Black Caribbean pupils can achieve their future education and career aspirations

Whilst raising aspirations for pupils is undoubtedly important, we also need to acknowledge that many Black Caribbean pupils (and their parents) already possess high aspirations from primary school onwards.

Evidence indicates that these high aspirations are sometimes crushed during their academic careers or are sometimes unable to be realised due to low academic outcomes or limited awareness of how to navigate the education system (including into further and higher education).

Questions for reflection by school leaders

- How do we currently identify, support and promote further the high aspirations that many Black Caribbean students (and their parents) already have from as early as primary school or year 7?
- How do we currently identify and support those specific Black Caribbean students who may benefit from higher aspirations for their future careers? How early is this identified and supported?
- How do we identify and address any current barriers for our Black Caribbean students?
- How might discussions about career aspirations be included within Year 6 to Year 7 transition experiences?

Improved information for parents and pupils

Schools can support parents and pupils by providing targeted information, starting from primary school, about:

- pathways available to reach their aspirational goals/careers
- the academic choices and subjects required by the end of KS3 that may inform their later pathways towards their aspirations:
- the GCSE grades and soft-skills required by universities for specific careers
- the fact that the career planning, thinking and decision-making required, needs to start early and not just in late KS3, KS4 or beyond.
- the wide range of possible careers; providing opportunities for pupils to speak to people (including those who look like them) already employed within a wide range of careers; to enable students to make informed career aspirational decisions

Data analysis to support Post-16 progression

High schools need to carry out a detailed analysis of data for their Black Caribbean pupils and put in place strategies to address disproportionality, and remove barriers, to ensure that they have every opportunity to achieve their future academic and career aspirations. Below are recommendations for school leaders in regard to year groups and key stages:

All year groups

- Review targets for Black Caribbean pupils to ensure that they are aspirational and in line with all students with similar prior attainment
- Review setting and grouping to identify how this may impact on the outcomes, progress and progression of Black Caribbean pupils
- Analyse Black Caribbean pupil outcomes and progress in detail at each internal assessment point
- Follow up on pupils below target identifying any barriers to progress overall and at subject level including feedback from staff, pupils and parents
- Celebrate the success of pupils on or above target, overall and at subject level, identifying keys to success with staff, pupils and parents

Key Stage 3

- Review the options system to ensure that Black Caribbean students are encouraged to make aspirational choices
- Put in a place a higher education programme and early careers guidance in Year 7&8 including engaging parents and promoting the sixth form
- Monitor setting and grouping, providing support before moving students to lower sets

Key Stage 4

- Review the sixth form options system to ensure that Black Caribbean students are encouraged to make aspirational choices
- Provide targeted support to encourage applications to the sixth form or other high-quality destinations
- Monitor setting and grouping, providing academic and pastoral support before moving students to lower sets or removing the option to take a higher-level paper

Key Stage 5

- Review the UCAS application system to ensure that Black Caribbean students are encouraged to make aspirational choices
- Provide targeted support to ensure applications to higher tariff universities are successful

Further Resources

- Ealing Race Equality Action Plan: Achievement and Progression – Follow up actions for high schools [add hyperlink to doc 6]
- Action for Race Equality, Routes to Success mentoring programme [ARE](#)
- Education Skills and Development Group (ESDEG) -mentoring support for pupils [ESDEG](#)

Related content

[Rapidly close the attainment gap for Black Caribbean pupils](#)

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