

Ethnicity and higher grade passes in 2004 public examinations in maintained schools in London

Key points

- The Update is based on information released by the Department for Education and Skills on 15th March 2005, which can be compared with similar information on 2003 examination results released in 2004. The Update focuses on the percentage of pupils aged 15 at the start of the school year that achieved five or more higher grade GCSE passes, or their equivalent.
- London's overall performance on this measure in 2004 was above the national average for the first time. The majority of ethnic groups in London had higher levels of attainment than their counterparts nationally, and the 'London advantage' was strongest for Pakistani boys and girls.
- Overall 2004 performance in London improved at more than double the national rate. All ethnic groups in London showed improved performance on this measure in 2004, and all but one had better rates of improvement than their counterparts nationally.
- Black Caribbean pupils, while having one of the most improved levels of average performance in 2004, nonetheless improved from a very low 2003 base. Even in 2004 Black Caribbean boys were nearly half as likely as pupils nationally to achieve 5 or more higher grade passes in public examinations.

1. In 2003, a lower proportion of boys and girls in London maintained (state) schools gained 5 or more higher grade GCSE passes or their equivalent in London than was the case in England as a whole. Despite this, White boys, (but not White girls) and boys and girls with a mixed White and Asian, or Indian, Pakistani, Chinese or unclassified ethnic heritage in London had levels of attainment above the national average for boys and girls respectively.
2. In 2004, performance in London's maintained schools as a whole was above the national average for the first time. The rate of improvement from 2003 to 2004 was higher in London than nationally in all ethnic groups, other than the group 'any other mixed' heritage. Taking boys and girls together, Black Caribbean pupils in London schools showed the fastest rate of improvement. Taking boys and girls separately, boys with a mixed White and African heritage showed the fastest rate of improvement, followed by girls with a mixed White and Asian heritage and boys with a mixed White and Caribbean heritage.
3. Pupils in all ethnic groups but two had higher levels of performance in London schools in 2004 than was the case with the same groups nationally. The two exceptions were pupils with an 'Any other White' or an 'Any other mixed' heritage, both of which had lower levels of average performance than the same groups nationally.
4. The 'London advantage' was greatest in the case of Pakistani boys and girls. Eleven per cent more Pakistani boy and girls in London achieved the national benchmark of 5 higher-grade passes in London in 2004 than was the case nationally.
5. Taken together, Chinese boys and girls had the highest levels of performance, both in London and nationally. However, both nationally and in London, Indian girls had a higher

average level of performance than Chinese boys. In London, girls classified as 'Any other Asian' or as having a mixed White and Asian heritage also had higher average levels of attainment than Chinese boys in the capital's maintained schools.

6. While the attainment of Black Caribbean pupils in London was amongst the most improved in 2004, this was from a very low base in 2003. In 2004 Black Caribbean boys were less likely than boys in any other group in London to achieve five or more higher-grade passes in public examinations. Similarly, Black Caribbean girls were less likely than girls in any other group to reach that national benchmark. Black African pupils also had below average levels of attainment in London, though the percentage gaining 5 or more higher grade passes was closer to the London average than it was to the average for Black Caribbean pupils.
7. The ethnic classification used in 2003 and 2004 was more detailed than that used nationally in earlier years. Nonetheless, the figures published simplify the data available to the DfES. Nationally, data suggest that Gypsy/Roma children and children who are Travellers with an Irish heritage also have low levels of attainment. Information about the 2004 performance of those children, and of children in a number of other ethnic groups is currently not available at a London level.
8. In the same way that a measure of average income in London would mask the gap between those with very high income, and those with very low incomes, the national benchmark used in this paper conceals the range of attainment within ethnic groups in London. Because of this, the tables in the Update need to be read with caution. They should not be interpreted as suggesting that all pupils in some groups have high levels of attainment while all pupils in other groups have low levels of attainment, or that all pupils in yet other groups have average levels of attainment.
9. The numbers of pupils aged 15 in London who were listed as having more than one ethnic heritage in 2003 and in 2004 were comparatively small. For example, in 2003 only 255 pupils were listed as having a dual White and African heritage, and only 453 were listed as having a dual White and Asian heritage. Small changes in the number of pupils in those group attaining five or more higher grade passes translate into large percentage changes. The percentage change in higher grade passes for small groups such as these will be volatile, and those figures should be read with caution.

Table 1. Percentage pupils aged 15 at the start of the school year achieving 5 or more GCSE A*-C grades or equivalent in London maintained schools

Ethnicity	2003			2004			Change 2003 to 2004		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
White	46.0	55.5	50.7	48.9	57.7	53.3	2.9	2.2	2.6
White British	46.2	55.5	50.8	49.0	57.3	53.1	2.8	1.8	2.3
Irish	54.5	58.0	56.4	53.2	64.4	59.3	-1.3	6.4	2.9
Any other White	43.5	55.2	49.0	47.6	59.2	52.9	4.1	4.0	3.9
Multiple heritage	42.3	55.6	49.3	46.9	56.1	51.7	4.6	0.5	2.4
White and Black Caribbean	31.8	45.1	39.0	37.9	47.8	43.0	6.1	2.7	4.0
White and Black African	37.9	57.6	48.6	51.3	52.7	52.0	13.4	-4.9	3.4
White and Asian	67.3	70.7	69.1	66.4	78.2	72.6	-0.9	7.5	3.5
Any other multiple heritage	42.5	58.6	50.7	46.6	55.6	51.3	4.1	-3.0	0.6
Asian	53.6	64.9	59.2	56.1	68.0	62.1	2.5	3.1	2.9
Indian	62.7	72.4	67.5	64.6	75.1	69.8	1.9	2.7	2.3
Pakistani	47.4	58.7	52.8	50.2	63.3	56.5	2.8	4.6	3.7
Bangladeshi	40.1	52.2	46.1	43.1	56.9	50.4	3.0	4.7	4.3
Any other Asian	56.1	70.7	63.4	58.2	71.5	64.7	2.1	0.8	1.3
Black	30.3	44.8	37.8	34.1	48.8	41.6	3.8	4.0	3.8
Black Caribbean	24.2	39.6	32.2	28.4	44.3	36.6	4.2	4.7	4.4
Black African	36.5	50.0	43.6	39.5	53.0	46.5	3.0	3.0	2.9
Any other Black	27.4	42.2	34.5	33.2	47.9	40.1	5.8	5.7	5.6
Chinese	75.2	80.6	77.7	74.3	82.7	78.3	-0.9	2.1	0.6
Any other ethnic group	43.8	52.8	48.0	47.9	57.6	52.6	4.1	4.8	4.6
Unclassified	52.5	58.9	55.8	54.3	58.6	56.5	1.8	-0.3	0.7
Total	45.0	55.5	50.2	47.8	58.0	52.9	2.8	2.5	2.7

Source : Web tables available at the DfES Research and Statistics Gateway (www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/) associated with DfES Statistical First Release 04/2004, *National Curriculum Assessments and GCSE/GNVQ Attainment by Pupil characteristics in England 2002 (Final) and 2003 (provisional)* and DfES Statistical First Release 08/2005 *National Curriculum Assessment, GCSE and Equivalent Attainment and Post-16 Attainment by Pupil Characteristics in England 2004*

Table 2. Percentage pupils aged 15 at the start of the school year achieving 5 or more GCSE A*-C grades or equivalent in *English* maintained schools

Ethnicity	2003			2004			Change 2003 to 2004		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
White	46.2	56.7	51.4	47.4	57.4	52.4	1.2	0.7	1.0
White British	46.1	56.6	51.3	47.3	57.3	52.3	1.2	0.7	1.0
Irish	58.4	61.8	60.1	54.0	62.5	58.3	-4.4	0.7	-1.8
Any other White	47.6	57.9	52.6	49.9	60.9	55.2	2.3	3.0	2.6
Multiple heritage	45.2	57.9	51.9	44.9	54.9	49.9	-0.3	-3.0	-2.0
White and Black Caribbean	32.4	46.8	39.9	34.1	44.9	39.7	1.7	-1.9	-0.2
White and Black African	40.1	55.8	48.2	43.9	51.6	47.7	3.8	-4.2	-0.5
White and Asian	61.1	68.9	65.1	61.6	70.1	65.9	0.5	1.2	0.8
Any other multiple heritage	45.2	57.9	51.9	47.2	57.5	52.6	2.0	-0.4	0.7
Asian	47.6	59.4	53.3	50.0	61.9	55.8	2.4	2.5	2.5
Indian	60.5	70.6	65.5	62.0	72.2	67.0	1.5	1.6	1.5
Pakistani	36.1	48.4	41.9	39.1	52.4	45.5	3.0	4.0	3.6
Bangladeshi	39.0	52.8	45.8	41.6	55.5	48.9	2.6	2.7	3.1
Any other Asian	55.8	66.5	61.0	57.1	67.4	62.0	1.3	0.9	1.0
Black	30.0	44.4	37.4	32.7	47.3	40.1	2.7	2.9	2.7
Black Caribbean	25.2	40.4	33.0	27.3	43.9	35.7	2.1	3.5	2.7
Black African	36.4	50.0	43.5	39.4	52.2	46.0	3.0	2.2	2.5
Any other Black	27.7	40.6	34.0	30.3	43.5	36.7	2.6	2.9	2.7
Chinese	72.0	81.0	76.2	71.8	81.6	76.5	-0.2	0.6	0.3
Any other ethnic group	44.1	53.8	48.6	46.1	57.5	51.5	2.0	3.7	2.9
Unclassified	43.2	52.3	47.4	42.8	52.1	47.2	-0.4	-0.2	-0.2
Total	45.7	56.2	50.9	47.0	57.2	52.0	1.3	1.0	1.1

Source : Web tables available at the DfES Research and Statistics Gateway (www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/) associated with DfES Statistical First Release 04/2004, *National Curriculum Assessments and GCSE/GNVQ Attainment by Pupil characteristics in England 2002 (Final) and 2003 (provisional)* and DfES Statistical First Release 08/2005 *National Curriculum Assessment, GCSE and Equivalent Attainment and Post-16 Attainment by Pupil Characteristics in England 2004*