

# Promoting engagement and academic achievement for black and mixed-ethnicity pupils in Wales

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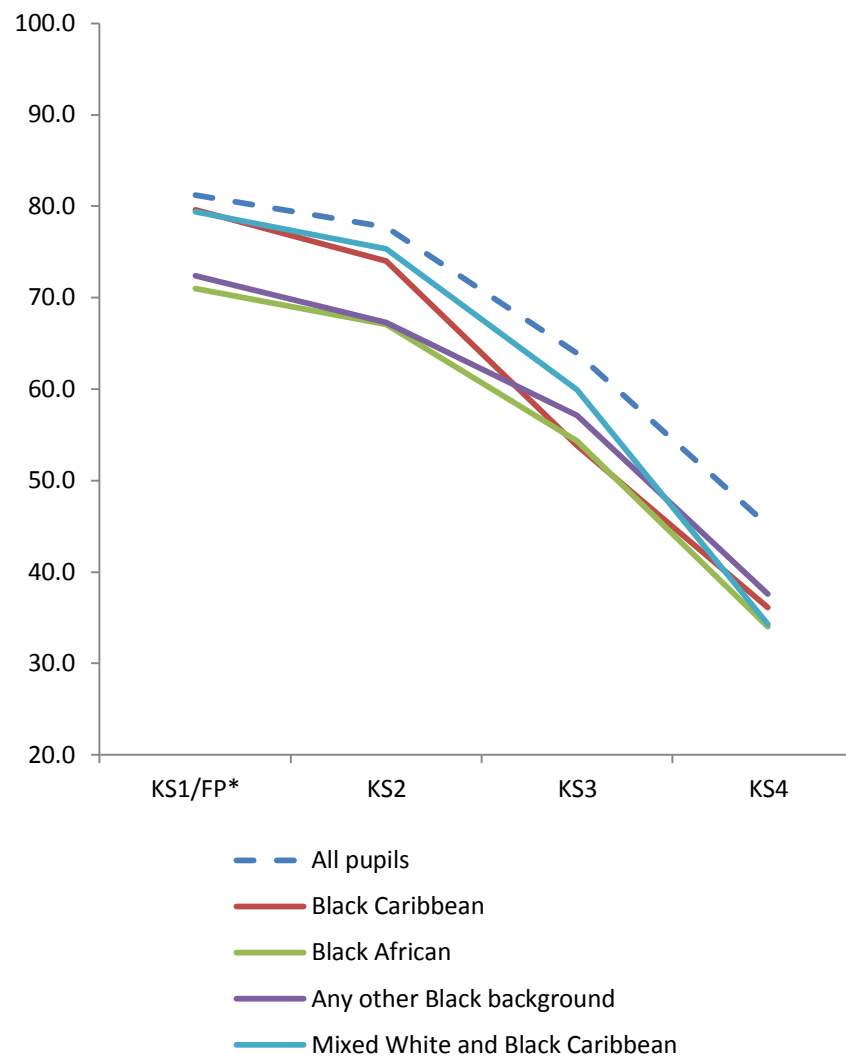
Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.  
This document is also available in Welsh.

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## Context and Background

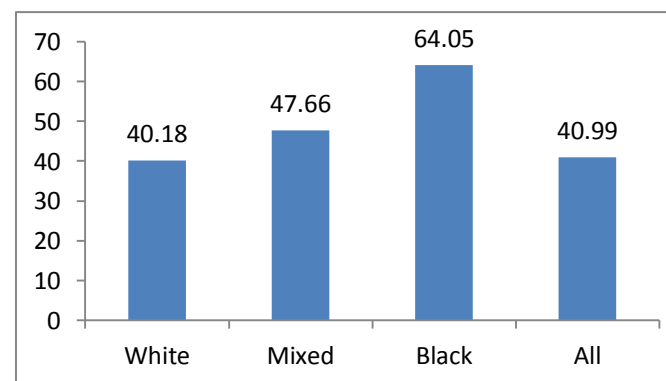
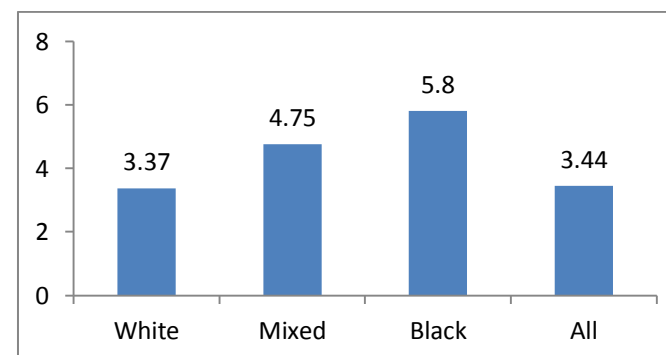
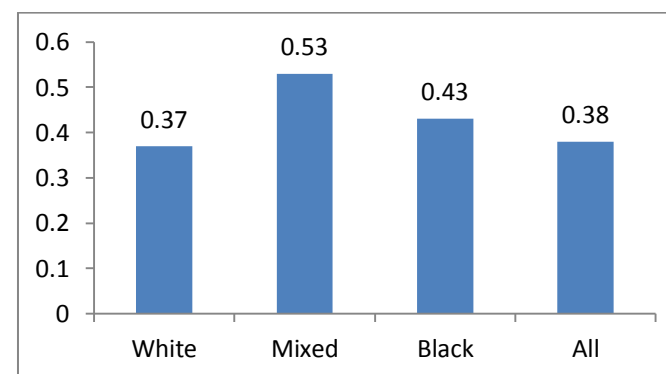
- Despite the positive attainment patterns of a number of minority ethnicity groupings and the academic success of many individual pupils, the grouped attainment figures for several Black and Mixed ethnicities are below national averages and some decline through the key stages. Promoting better engagement and raising academic achievement are vital to improving educational outcomes for Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils in Wales.
- In recognition of this concern, as part of its *Raising Aspirations – Minority Ethnic Achievement in Wales* conference held on March 20<sup>th</sup> 2014 in the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff, the Welsh Government organised two 50 minute workshops focusing on the issues and needs of Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils.
- A number of practitioners from within the education sector in Wales attended the workshops to discuss issues that might impede some Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils' engagement and academic achievement and to consider ways these might be addressed. Discussion topics were selected from a literature review of research.
- The Welsh Government commissioned Dr Jonathan Brentnall to facilitate the workshops and provide a write-up of the issues and needs identified in the research and workshop discussions.
- We are grateful to those who attended the workshops for their contributions.



[Source: Welsh Government data]

## Context and Background

- Attainment data reveal figures of particular concern for the Black Caribbean, Black African, Any Other Black Background and Mixed White and Black Caribbean sub-groupings.
- Exclusion figures show higher representation of Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils in all types of school exclusion.
- The pattern of higher exclusion rates for Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils has been observed for many years. Explanations put forward in studies locate the causes in: conflictual relationships, often between teachers and pupils; the influence of stereotyping and low expectations from teachers; pupils challenging authority; and harsher disciplinary responses to misbehaviour. Schools often react to instances of misbehaviour without trying to fully understand or address the underlying reasons, and they take too little account of the dimensions of race and identity when investigating incidents.
- Black and Mixed ethnicity boys, in particular, are often excluded for retaliatory behaviour against what they perceive to be personal or institutional racism.
- The use of restorative justice approaches can avert some exclusions.

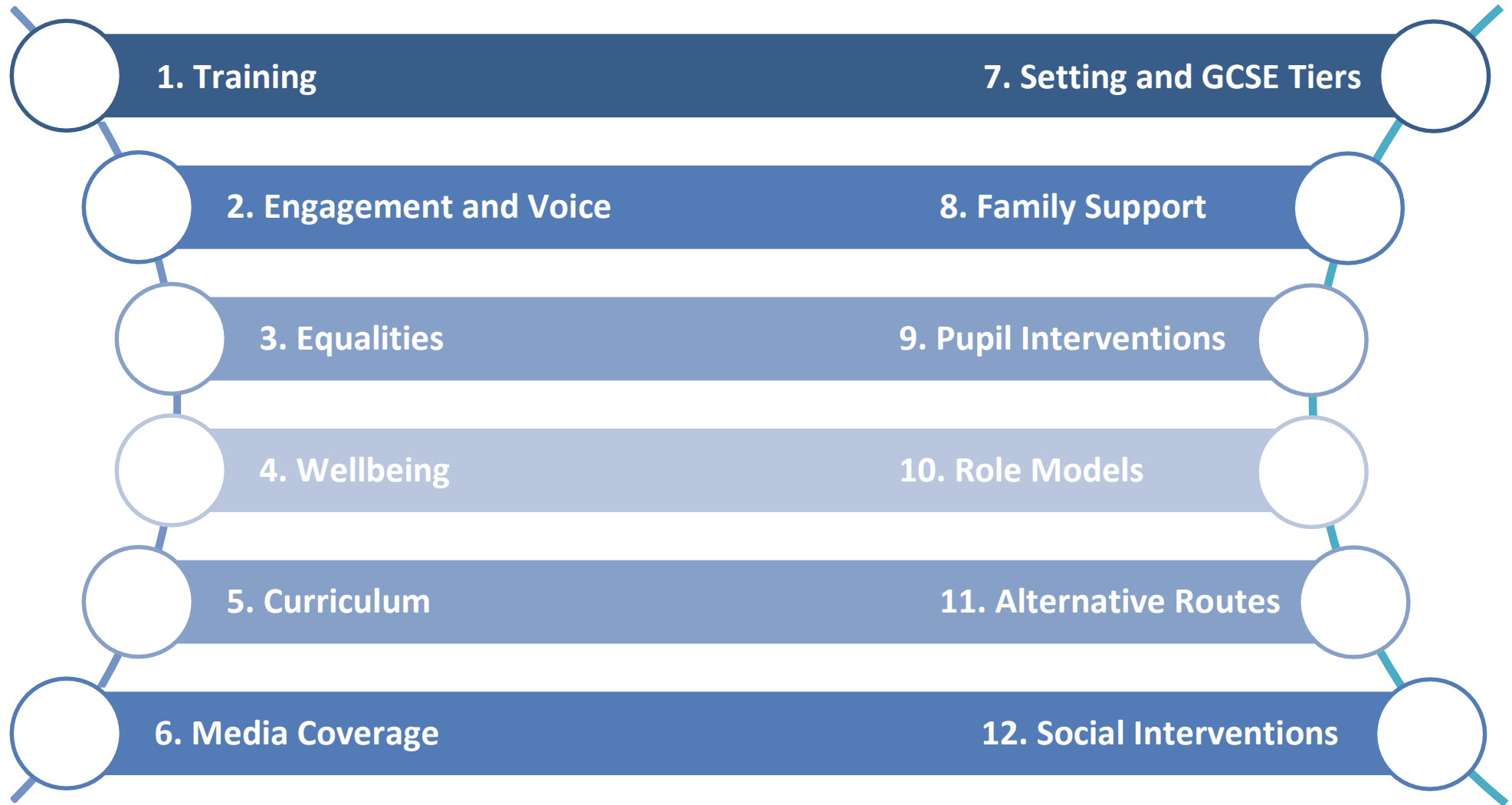


[Source: Welsh Government data]

Permanent exclusions (per 1000 pupils) 2008-13, Wales  
Fixed-term exclusions 6 days or more (per 1000) 2008-13  
Fixed-term exclusions 5 days or less (per 1000) 2008-13

## Twelve key topics were highlighted during the workshop discussions

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**The need for training was a recurrent theme across virtually all topics discussed.**

**There is a need to train all teachers and trainee teachers in:**

- diversity and equality matters;
- strategies for raising the attainment of minority ethnic pupils including those of Black and Mixed ethnicities;
- raising expectations of Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils and counteracting myths and stereotypes;
- behaviour management to eradicate any inequalities in the treatment of Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils.

**Coverage of these matters in ITT is inadequate to sufficiently prepare trainee teachers.**

- Workshop delegates felt that the coverage of and approach to diversity, equality and minority ethnic achievement issues in Initial Teacher Training was tokenistic and inadequate.
- The time available in the university components of ITT is too short to adequately cover all the content required and government priorities dominate, leaving insufficient room to address the needs of Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils.
- Many Newly Qualified Teachers starting their teaching career in schools appear to have a very superficial, 'cosmetic' understanding of race, diversity and equality issues.

**The way teachers are trained to manage behaviour must be improved in relation to Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils.**

- Teacher training institutions and Continuing Professional Development must address the issue of behaviour management.
- Having more consistent approaches to behaviour management has improved matters in some schools but implementation of these approaches is not uniform across Wales. Restorative Justice models in Monmouth and Cardiff have worked well.
- Internal exclusions policies need to be examined to see if the apparent reduction in fixed term exclusions is simply being replaced by a rise in internal in-school exclusion/isolation.
- Better statistical evidence is needed to illustrate that pupils of certain backgrounds are being disproportionately represented for Behavioural Emotional & Social Difficulties (BESD) on SEN/ALN registers, in internal exclusions and in fixed-term exclusions.
- Any training model for behaviour management needs to be very well thought through.

## Training contd.: Suggestions to address the issues

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### What could schools do?

Provide training for all teachers and Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) so they:

- communicate high expectations of Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils, directly and frequently, in classroom, pastoral and disciplinary interactions;
- draw on aspects of pupils' identity related to race, ethnicity, nationality, culture and faith, in order to make them feel fully included and equally valued;
- deal confidently with topics relating to race, ethnicity and religion;
- use appropriate teaching and learning strategies with EAL/WAL learners of Black, Mixed and other minority ethnicities;
- appreciate the level of understanding and sensitivity needed when handling matters of behaviour with Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils.

Train school leaders and governors:

- to avoid bias in exclusions procedures and to put in place alternative measures to keep Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils engaged with education.

### What could local authorities and other local partners do?

Train workers to:

- be aware of the way deep-rooted stereotypes and personal prejudices affect attitudes and behaviours;
- understand why colour-blindness is an inappropriate attitude and approach to adopt when providing services for Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils and service users.

### What could Welsh Government do?

- Make sure the needs of Black, Mixed and other minority groupings are taken into account from the outset of planning any changes to education and teacher training in Wales.
- Ensure that Estyn accurately evaluates the quality and effectiveness of provision for Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils.
- Hold Consortia and local authorities to account for any unequal and inequitable outcomes for Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils.



**There is a need to increase the opportunities for Black and Mixed ethnicity people's voices to be heard.**

**Pupils', parents' and community members' representation, influence and voice should be increased in education decision-making.**

- Some Black and Mixed ethnicity parents and community members feel they are not well-represented and have little influence over education policy.
- Parents' expectations and desires for their children must be valued alongside those of the education system.
- Pupils and parents must be involved, listened to, have their views respected and should know where to go to share their concerns.

**More direct engagement is needed with pupils, parents, carers and community members to improve levels of confidence in schools.**

- Any attempt to engage with parents and communities must be done properly, sensitively and in a systematic and system-wide way, not tokenistically, if confidence in schools is to increase.
- Token 'consultation' with community leaders or selected representatives is not adequate.
- Imaginative senior managers, who are open to suggestions and welcome the involvement of community members, can create an ethos for Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils to flourish.
- Schools where pupils of Black and Mixed ethnicities are successful have well-developed partnerships with their communities. Parents know they are welcome and valued and they feel confident interacting with the school.
- The Cardiff Black Caribbean and Somali Achievement Projects have had success in engaging with and involving parents and community members in education as well as supporting their children and young people.

**More work needs to be done to encourage BAME people into the teaching profession.**

- There are too few Black and Mixed ethnicity teachers working in schools in Wales.
- There are too few trainees of Black and Mixed ethnicities entering the teaching profession.
- More accurate published data and better monitoring are required.

## Engagement and Voice contd.: Suggestions to address the issues

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### What could schools do?

- Actively involve Black and Mixed ethnicity community members, parents and pupils in the processes of school development planning in a supportive environment.
- Promote greater participation, cultural exchange and mutual understanding about Early Years and Pre-School provision.
- Identify what Black and Mixed ethnicity people's desires and needs are for post-16 and adult qualifications.
- Demonstrate genuine interest in pupils' individual and collective experiences as children and young people of Black and Mixed ethnicities.
- Use positive action to recruit school governors of Black and Mixed ethnicities.

### What could local authorities and other local partners do?

- Listen to and build trust with minority ethnic Black and Mixed ethnicity service users, so public services can be better tailored to meet their needs.
- Work with organisations such as Race Equality Councils and Show Racism the Red Card to challenge racism outside and inside school.
- Liaise closely and work in partnership with BAME women's rights groups.
- Engage with young people in areas where gangs operate, and tackle extremism by working closely with people in churches, mosques and other local groups who are trying to deal with it in their communities.

### What could Welsh Government do?

- Improve representation of Black and Mixed ethnicity voices in political processes.
- Support community-based initiatives that enable BAME communities to work together to hold public services to account.
- Ensure that Black and Mixed ethnicity parents and pupils are fully involved as stakeholders in the processes of policy consultation.
- Use positive action to recruit, retain and remove barriers to promotion of Black and Mixed ethnicity teachers and education professionals.

**A more rigorous focus on Equalities in education is required.**

**Not all schools are doing enough to address their Equalities duties or challenge racial inequality.**

- Reduced requirements for race equality policies and reporting racist incidents are contributing to less rigorous monitoring and accountability.
- Attention to the equality duties in many schools could be described as ‘tokenistic’, although some schools are much more effective than others.
- Parents are concerned that less Equality information is available and that a reduced focus on race equality will have detrimental effects on children and young people of Black, Mixed and other minority ethnic backgrounds.

**Equality plans need to be more effective.**

- There is not much evidence of schools producing, implementing or evaluating full Equality plans.
- Schools are tending to use Local Authority-produced models of Equality policies and simply personalising them by changing a few pieces of information to match the school, rather than developing a policy and plan directly relevant to their local situation.

**Inspection of Race Equality and BAME pupil provision are not sufficiently rigorous.**

- Inspection requirements of local authorities’ and schools’ provision for BAME pupils and race equality are not rigorous enough. Not all inspectors are well-trained or specific enough in their evaluation of schools in respect of race equality and education provision for BAME pupils.
- Other than Gypsies and Travellers, pupils of all minority ethnicities are grouped together in Inspection guidance, rather than distinguished by extended sub-groupings, so the particular needs of small numbers of Black, Mixed or other minority ethnicity pupils are much less likely to be identified.
- If the data and information provided by schools and the inspections themselves do not highlight any issues concerning Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils, it is unlikely any will be prioritised for action in school planning.
- Selection processes and small numbers in the interview samples can filter out representation of Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils and parents/carers.

## Equalities contd.: Suggestions to address the issues

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### What could schools do?

- Send clear messages from the governing body to the school community about the school's stance on race equality and ensure that the whole school fulfils its equality duties.
- Assert zero tolerance of racism in all its forms.
- Ensure that, when school inspections are carried out, parents of Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils are well-represented and fully involved in the process.

### What could local authorities and other local partners do?

- Use proactive interview selection processes, internships and job-shadowing to encourage Black and Mixed ethnicity people to actively participate in politics and public service provision.
- Challenge discriminatory employment practices of rejecting Black and Mixed ethnicity applicants for interviews or not employing BAME candidates when they are as qualified or capable of doing the job as applicants of other ethnicities.
- Estyn should train all school inspectors effectively to ensure that schools' compliance with equality duties is inspected rigorously and with a well-informed understanding.

### What could Welsh Government do?

- Identify how education reforms might disadvantage particular sections of Wales' population, including people of Black and Mixed ethnicities.
- Strongly encourage positive action to equalize significant differences in employment profiles for people of Black and Mixed ethnicities in Wales, using placements, internships and job-shadowing to increase opportunities.

**Improvements are needed in the provision of pastoral care, counselling and mental health services.**

**Matters of mental health and social welfare provision for Black, Mixed and other minority ethnicities extend beyond schools.**

- There is a wider societal issue about the provision of care for Black and Mixed ethnicity people's mental health and social welfare, especially for asylum seekers, refugees, people experiencing long-term unemployment and those living in areas of multiple deprivation; but the personal well-being of Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils is also an issue for schools.

**BAME pupils in general and Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils in particular are not engaging with counselling and youth provision.**

- Uptake and referrals for schools' counselling services are much lower for pupils of BAME backgrounds but the percentages of Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils accessing the *online* counselling services are higher.
- BAME young people are not engaging well with mainstream youth service provision either and there is insufficient provision tailored specifically to them. The work of the Swansea EYST (Ethnic Youth Support Team) is tailored to them and has been hugely successful.

**Pastoral care, counselling and mental health services must be sensitive to, and take account of, cultural differences.**

- Cultural perspectives on how pastoral care and counselling should be provided differ. The types of service currently offered follow a predominantly Western European model which may not be appropriate for pupils of all backgrounds.
- Some of the issues relating to culture, faith, language, status, family circumstances, abuse and racism are highly sensitive and complex. A high level of expertise is needed to deal effectively with them.
- There are not enough teachers or counsellors of minority ethnic backgrounds, who understand minority languages or have sufficient understanding of cultural differences to offer appropriate pastoral care to all pupils of Black and Mixed ethnicity who need it.

## Wellbeing contd.: Suggestions to address the issues

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### What could schools do?

- Build positive relationships with Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils to reduce the potential for conflict between them and teachers.
- Develop an atmosphere of trust and respect such that pupils will feel comfortable confiding in the professionals who can help them resolve a range of personal and educational issues.
- Train teachers and other school staff to spot signs of concern and to handle controversial issues with confidence.
- Ensure that pupils are confident to report racism and know they will be completely supported by the school when they do so.

### What could local authorities and other local partners do?

- Develop specific programmes for pastoral care, mental health and wellbeing of Black, Mixed and other minority pupils.

Provide guidance and information:

- for social workers, education psychologists, school counsellors and teachers with pastoral care responsibilities, on the pastoral care and mental health needs of Black and Mixed ethnicity families and school pupils, especially on responding to the emotional, psychological, social and cultural needs of traumatized children, asylum seekers and refugees, and victims of racism.

### What could Welsh Government do?

- Examine the reasons for the lower uptake and referral for schools' counselling services compared to online access amongst Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils.
- Evaluate pastoral care, counselling and mental health provision for Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils, identify any inadequacies and make changes to ensure more equitable service provision, including the recruitment of more BAME trained staff.
- Evaluate the practices of recording, monitoring, tracking and reporting racist incidents, and analyse bullying incident data to ensure that racism is not being concealed within categories such as bullying related to 'appearance', 'language', 'clothing' etc.

**Lack of diversity in the curriculum contributes to disaffection amongst Black, Mixed and other minority ethnic pupils.**

**More diverse content including Black history, minority and world studies should be incorporated within the school curriculum.**

- Commonly, work that refers to Black people is too narrowly focused on slavery, colonialism and human rights with little 'positive Black content', or it is restricted to Black History Month rather than studied throughout the year as an integral part of the curriculum.
- The history curriculum needs revising to ensure appropriate coverage of slavery and colonialism. Work on historical slavery could be linked to modern slavery. There needs to be informed input into the Curriculum Review but it is not clear by whom, when or how this will happen.

**Integration of diversity in content and resources across the curriculum varies between schools.**

- There is a challenge in getting buy-in from schools to integrate diversity across the curriculum as normal content.
- The extent to which diversity in the curriculum is addressed depends on the location, the community make-up, the school and the pupil cohort to some degree. Some schools treat it cosmetically and tokenistically.
- In some schools, Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils rarely see their racial, ethnic, national or cultural identities reflected in curriculum content or resources.

**A diverse curriculum needs to be part of a genuinely inclusive whole-school ethos.**

- Positive recognition of Black and Mixed identities in schools boosts pupils' engagement, commitment and achievement.
- Schools with an inclusive ethos that respects the identities and values the achievements of Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils are successful at encouraging pupils to remain engaged with education and to do well academically. Positive tone, praise, reward and good relationships between staff and pupils are central to the ethos of such schools.
- Teacher development and training on teaching a diverse curriculum are needed.

## Curriculum contd.: Suggestions to address the issues

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### What could schools do?

- Identify how and where to integrate positive content about diversity and the achievements of Black and Mixed ethnicity people, through all curriculum areas.
- Encourage BAME pupils to contribute input about themselves and their cultural knowledge to curriculum lessons, sharing it with their peers.
- Include accurate, balanced information about current affairs and international events in nations around the world in assemblies, PSHE, RE and across other subject areas.
- Support the development of pupils' first languages towards proficiency and enable them to be entered for first language GCSEs.
- Differentiate classwork appropriately to support language development and maintain cognitive challenge so EAL/WAL pupils can be fully included.
- Study the various manifestations of racism and allow pupils to discuss ways of challenging them.

### What could local authorities and other local partners do?

- Evaluate the way schools engage pupils with current affairs and international events as they happen, to improve their handling of potentially controversial topics that impact on the lives of pupils, particularly those of Black and Mixed ethnicity backgrounds.
- Provide regular information for schools about equality and diversity matters of local relevance with guidance on how to address them with pupils.

### What could Welsh Government do?

- Evaluate the new curriculum to ascertain how much content refers to Black, Mixed and other minorities, how much of that content focuses on the negative experiences of colonialism, slavery, apartheid and civil rights and how much examines and celebrates positive aspects of Black identity, culture and history.
- Integrate topics of study in the school curriculum that are relevant to Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils, such as positive content about Black History, the achievements of modern and historical Black and Mixed ethnicity people and their contributions to Wales' and the world's cultural development.



**Media coverage still perpetuates stereotypes and depicts too many negative portrayals of minorities.**

**Negative press coverage on achievement, behaviour, migration and religion needs to be challenged.**

- This is a wider social issue than just for education, and these matters need to be addressed locally, by taking into account local situations.
- The PREVENT strategy and Cardiff Raising Achievement Project Somali (RAPS) have addressed some of these issues but many schools are reluctant to engage with the PREVENT agenda. They are resistant to addressing these matters and many do not see them as issues. In some schools, teachers are even 'scared' of pupils who have come from abroad; they are afraid to challenge them or support teachers working with them because they are afraid of being called 'racist'.

**Teachers need to be trained to address these matters effectively.**

- If teachers are expected to tackle these matters in class lessons, they need training because they lack the confidence, knowledge and appropriate language to do it well.
- Good literacy teaching in schools could address the issue of media representation by choosing and interrogating relevant texts. It would form part of developing 'Critical Literacy'.

**Representations of minorities in the media and public life must be improved.**

- There remain few Black and Mixed ethnicity people in positions of authority in Welsh local and national government.
- In particular sections of the press, representations of minorities, especially Black youth and Muslims, are still characterised by negative headlines and biased stereotypes.
- This can undermine pupils' self-image and reinforce a sense of alienation from areas of society where Black and Mixed ethnicity people are not shown as represented. It limits the range of aspirational role models and desirable occupations for young people, and subliminally reinforces stereotypes amongst the whole population.

## Media Coverage contd.: Suggestions to address the issues

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### What could schools do?

- Develop all pupils' critical literacy through interrogating media-misinformation that presents a biased, stereotypical or stigmatising view of particular groups of people, particularly those of Black African origins.
- Counteract misinformation about Black underachievement by drawing attention to the many Black and Mixed ethnicity people who are successful, both in school and in public life.
- Provide teachers with training and information to improve their knowledge and use of appropriate language in these areas.

### What could local authorities and other local partners do?

- Take account of local circumstances to identify and address specific issues affecting pupils and families.
- Challenge expressions of xenophobia and racism in the locality and evaluate practices for eradicating racism in the area.
- Challenge misinformation about race, current affairs and international events in the public domain by proactively dealing with it in public discussions and by presenting accurate information about racial inequalities, injustices, prejudices and discrimination.

### What could Welsh Government do?

- Use positive action to encourage Black and Mixed ethnicity people into the media industries in Wales and to improve representation in the mainstream media.
- Challenge the media to use responsible research and issue balanced reports, by working with media organisations and holding them to account about the programmes, stories and articles they publish.
- Actively encourage the media to project positive images and messages about diversity, including Black and Mixed ethnicity people in Wales.

**Some Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils are disadvantaged by their placings in sets, streams and exam tiers.**

**Too many Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils are placed in lower groups, sets or exam tiers.**

- A number of studies have found that proportionately more pupils of Black Caribbean, Mixed White and Black Caribbean and some Black African backgrounds are placed in lower ability sets and examination tiers than pupils from most other groupings. More are 'classed' as having BESD. Fewer are regarded as being more able, gifted or talented. These practices are affected as much by teacher expectations as by actual performance, with some evidence of pupils being placed prior to testing.
- This is a matter of great concern to parents of Black backgrounds and it directly contributes to disaffection and lower examination grades for some pupils. By being 'set to fail' and placed in classes with pupils of lower ability, some children and young people become disruptive because they are not being stretched.

**Better data analysis is required to determine the extent of these practices and to monitor impact on pupil groupings.**

- More evidence and hard data are needed to identify the extent that this happens in schools in Wales.
- Addressing the issue is about data analysis, moderation and assessment and it requires training to raise awareness of the issue and how it arises.

**Schools should take great care when using predictive tests and prior attainment for setting, streaming and tiering BAME and EAL/WAL pupils.**

- A variety of baseline reading, literacy, numeracy and non-verbal reasoning cognitive academic tests are used by schools to help them 'predict' what pupils are likely to achieve. In some cases, schools use predictive information to group and set their pupils or to select their subject course choices and examination tiers. This information is less reliable for EAL/WAL and some minority ethnicity pupils because of differences in prior education, levels of proficiency in English/Welsh and other socio-cultural and institutional factors.

## Setting and GCSE Tiers contd.: Suggestions to address the issues

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### What could schools do?

- Establish a strong ethos of respect for diversity, positive encouragement and praise for good quality work.
- Communicate high expectations of Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils in coaching, feedback, marking, setting and banding.
- Examine whether or not Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils are being disadvantaged by the school's setting, streaming and GCSE tiering practices and, if so, change them.
- Ensure that Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils are not being misdiagnosed as either having or not having particular types of SEN/ALN, especially BESD.
- Offer a wide range of pupils' first languages at GCSE level, so those with the capability to do so can opt to take the exam.
- Use first language assessment alongside any English/Welsh-medium assessments to ensure that the most accurate evaluation of pupils' academic ability and prior knowledge can be obtained.

### What could local authorities and other local partners do?

Improve the knowledge and understanding of education workers about:

- the influence of negative stereotypes of people of Black and Mixed ethnicities on personal attitudes, and how these can sub-consciously affect expectations, decisions and personal interactions;
- the tendencies among teachers to ignore giving academic support to Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils and to over-react to their disruptive behaviour;
- the root causes of disruptive behaviour displayed by Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils.

### What could Welsh Government do?

- Put in place a step in the procedures for national test production, drawing on expert advice, to assess content and style for potential cultural bias and disadvantage to pupils from a range of backgrounds, including those of Black and Mixed ethnicities.
- Evaluate the implementation procedures of national tests, to identify if any aspects of the process disadvantage pupils of Black, Mixed or other ethnicities, and to determine whether any improvements can be made to ensure full access.
- Impress on schools the need for holistic, developmental assessment profiles for every child, and for a broad range of information to be used to inform placings.

**More targeted support should be provided for families of Black and Mixed ethnicity children and young people.**

**Grouped data indicate notable issues in the family circumstances of Black and Mixed ethnicity children and young people.**

- There are significantly higher numbers of lone parent families of Black African, Caribbean and Mixed White and Black backgrounds in Wales compared to other groupings.
- Proportions of Black and Mixed ethnicity children and young people in local authority care are larger than for other ethnicities.
- There is a shortage of minority ethnic adoptive and foster parents and some children of Black and Mixed ethnicities can be in care for a longer period than others due to the difficulty of finding suitable placements. BAME children who are placed in families of different racial or ethnic backgrounds sometimes experience difficulties and encounter racism arising from differences between them and their placement family.

**Family support services need to be much more sensitive to race and culture.**

- There is some evidence that family, relationship and domestic abuse support services are not sensitive enough to the needs of people from Black, Mixed and other minority backgrounds; that workers often adopt a 'colour-blind' approach, treating all service users the same; that support services are underused by BAME people and that greater care should be taken in understanding the needs of children and young people of Black and Mixed backgrounds living in difficult family circumstances.
- Family support must be broader than just schools and must involve multiagency partnerships, including 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations.

**Family support has to cater for a diverse range of needs.**

- Many successful adults of Black and Mixed ethnicities attribute their academic success to the influence of their parents, especially their mothers, and sometimes other extended family members.
- Some young Black and Mixed ethnicity males without suitable male role models pursue exaggerated masculine stereotypes or gang association. Others adopt a responsible lead male role in their household. Boys and families in both situations could benefit from additional support.
- Providing children with academic support can be an issue for many Somali parents whose formal education in Somalia was disrupted due to war and who have been unable to continue their education in Wales.

## Family Support contd.: Suggestions to address the issues

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### What could schools do?

- Provide children and young people of Black and Mixed ethnicities with security, support, clear boundaries, confidence and strategies to handle conflict.
- Promote positive attitudes to academic success and encourage goal-oriented motivation.
- Encourage the development of values of morality, personal betterment and doing good to others through PSHE.

### What could local authorities and other local partners do?

- Reach out to parents of Black and Mixed ethnicity children through family learning and third sector parent support groups.
- Be sensitive to cultural differences and the dynamics of inter-racial relationships, and deal confidently with racist incidents through appropriate set procedures in all public service areas.
- Provide targeted interventions to support lone parents raising Black and Mixed ethnicity children.
- Support community-based initiatives to encourage more Black and Mixed ethnicity fathers to maintain positive, committed relationships with their children.
- Work closely and supportively with Black and Mixed ethnicity families who are having difficulties to help them maintain positive relationships and reduce the need for children to be taken into care.
- Provide adult language, literacy and education classes in community centres, schools and other locations accessible to community members.

### What could Welsh Government do?

- Support community-based initiatives that empower and promote greater equality for women in Black and Mixed ethnicity communities.
- Support programmes which promote literacy development in community members' first languages and English/Welsh.
- Encourage participation in Family Literacy, Family Learning and Parenting initiatives within BAME communities.

**More targeted interventions should be introduced to improve pupils' levels of engagement and academic success.**

**The approach to providing interventions for Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils needs to be re-examined.**

- The need for targeted funding for Black, Mixed and other minority ethnic pupils who are not EAL learners must be highlighted.
- There is an issue about targeted interventions being perceived (by both White and BAME people – pupils, parents and teachers) as 'singling out' Black or BAME pupils because of race, as giving them preference and support when their White peers may have very similar needs but are not getting additional support. Such interventions need to be re-examined from the outset and the significance of race and identity in Black pupils' engagement and academic success needs to be made clear.
- Parents, pupils and community members have to be involved in constructing the type of support offered, rather than just sending additional teachers or mentors into schools. Interventions need to be long-term and sustained, building relationships.
- Some interventions aimed at tackling extremism have been perceived as ineffective or counterproductive.
- Awareness has to be raised and interventions must be based on needs.

**The racial dimension of behaviour incidents and sanctions involving Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils must be fully examined.**

- Compared to pupils from other backgrounds, Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils are sometimes disciplined more readily and more harshly.
- Schools may react to instances of misbehaviour without trying to fully understand or address the underlying causes, and they may take too little account of the dimensions of race and identity, including Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex and Asexual (LGBTQIA) identities, when investigating incidents.
- Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils, boys in particular, are more frequently excluded from school than pupils of the other main ethnicity categories. They are sometimes excluded for retaliation against personal or institutional racism, and for instances of bad behaviour that do not result in exclusion for pupils of other backgrounds.
- Asking the right questions, listening to pupils' responses and using restorative justice approaches can prevent some exclusions.

## Pupil Interventions contd.: Suggestions to address the issues

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### What could schools do?

- Promote the use of restorative justice models of dealing with misbehaviour and discipline issues.
- Ask the right questions to get to the bottom of any racist, homophobic or other components of behavioural incidents.
- Engage intelligently and sensitively with young people of Black, Mixed and other ethnicities about religious extremism and its dangers.

### What could local authorities and other local partners do?

- Work closely with pupils, parents and community members, listening carefully to what they say about how best to organize interventions to promote academic engagement and success.
- Provide pupils who are exposed to negative, anti-education influences with alternative spaces and groups to interact with.

Maintain support networks:

- for pupils who move so they can keep in touch with friends and members of the same communities in different parts of the country;
- for LGBTQIA young people, that are inclusive of Black, Mixed and other minorities and a range of religious and cultural traditions.

### What could Welsh Government do?

- Commission an investigation into why larger proportions of Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils are excluded from schools in Wales.
- Examine data to ascertain whether or not there is any ongoing bias against Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils in illegal exclusions, pupil isolation and internal, non-formal discipline, which are being increasingly used instead of formal exclusions.
- Direct some of the Pupil Deprivation Grant and Education Improvement Grant to specifically address the needs of Black & Mixed ethnicity pupils living in low income households.
- Expand and maintain intervention programmes using Black and Mixed ethnicity mentors and role models to work with young people.
- Identify the most effective strategies for working with young people whose religious commitment may be leaning towards extremism.



**Black and Mixed ethnicity young people benefit from having strong role models and mentors.**

**More positive role models need to be provided for pupils, particularly those associated with academic success.**

- Interaction with positive role models from a wide range of professions and areas of society can help young people of Black and Mixed ethnicities to develop racial and cultural literacy and strengthen their self-image.
- Mentors and youth workers who coach young people can also function as positive role models if constructive relationships can be maintained.

**Mentoring has been found to be a successful strategy with Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils.**

- Mentoring from respected teachers or external 'role models' from the community works well with young people of Black and Mixed ethnicities, making them feel valued, helping them stay engaged with personal targets and raising their own expectations of what they can achieve. Mentoring has also been useful in breaking ties with gang membership and re-engaging young people in education.
- Good links need to be made between the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector and schools but it is important to consider how this can best be coordinated and to identify what opportunities there are to get volunteer mentors into schools to work with pupils.
- The way mentoring programmes are organised needs to be thought through carefully.

**Peer support can work as a form of mentoring.**

- If a group of young people can be brought on board to help one another to strive for excellence, then positive peer pressure to aim high and eschew more anti-academic attitudes can yield really positive benefits.

## Role Models contd.: Suggestions to address the issues

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### What could schools do?

- Encourage children and young people to identify with good Black and Mixed role models in their family, in the wider community and in public life.
- Ensure teaching resources have good representation of people of Black, Mixed and other minority ethnic figures in a variety of circumstances.
- Communicate the importance of young people taking responsibility for their own decisions and making positive choices about their lives, pointing out the benefits of education and the demerits of anti-education attitudes.

### What could local authorities and other local partners do?

- Work with schools to identify significant individuals who can act as motivators, mentors and role models for Black and Mixed ethnicity young people.
- Create opportunities to improve racial and cultural literacy, where issues of racial, ethnic, social, cultural and religious differences can be discussed in safe environments within families, between friends, in local community youth groups and in schools.

### What could Welsh Government do?

- Hear what parents and carers have to say about what is needed to guide and support their children.
- Identify how best to encourage young people whose religious commitment supports their engagement with education and drive for self-improvement.
- Identify people of Black and Mixed ethnicities who can come into school and work with pupils to broaden the diversity of their learning experiences.
- Commission a study to find out why so few successful Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils go on to become teachers.

**A variety of education and qualification routes are needed for people of Black and Mixed ethnicities.**

**There are too few adequately-funded alternative, supplementary and vocational education routes.**

- Good quality lunchtime and afterschool activities, revision sessions, exam preparation and catch-up classes after school, at weekends and during holidays all help to keep Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils engaged and focused on high achievement.
- A range of education routes are needed to provide support for parents, late arrivals, EAL/WAL learners, those preparing for exams and those with poor school experiences who wish to re-enter formal education or revisit qualifications.
- Some pupils receive inadequate advice about post-school options and feel that some advisers resort to stereotyped expectations, offering them a narrower set of choices.
- Available vocational and continuing education courses are sometimes ill-matched to the needs of post-16 learners.

**Adult qualification and employment profiles differ between the various Black and Mixed ethnicity communities.**

- Unfamiliarity with UK education and employment affects the input some Black African parents can offer their children. Many Somalis have had disrupted education due to war and have difficulty accessing education as adults.
- A sizeable proportion of Black African background adults have Level 4 qualifications. By contrast, few adults of Mixed White and Black Caribbean backgrounds have Level 4 qualifications and more than a quarter have no formal qualifications at all.
- Black African and Mixed ethnicity adults are more highly represented amongst the unemployed and those on low incomes. However, Black Caribbean women are well-represented in middle to high status professional and managerial jobs.

**Discrimination and limited opportunities restrict social mobility amongst Black and Mixed ethnicity adults.**

- There are suggestions that discrimination in employment practices takes place, especially for well-qualified Black African adults.
- Opportunities to study for further qualifications are often limited because learning providers are not available near the locality or in locations convenient for access, particularly for women and parents requiring childcare.
- The inability to have foreign qualifications recognized, or to pursue further qualifications due to lack of availability, can keep some families in poverty, lower their self-belief and undermine their confidence in the system which should be supporting them.

## Alternative Routes contd.: Suggestions to address the issues

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### What could schools do?

- Provide additional summer schools, lunchtime and after-school classes where pupils, including those of Black and Mixed ethnicities, can engage in academic and non-academic learning in less formal environments.
- Offer careers advice and routes tailored to the circumstances of young Black and Mixed ethnicity people in each community.

### What could local authorities and other local partners do?

- Evaluate the provision of careers guidance, to determine whether or not it is meeting the needs of Black and Mixed ethnicity young people.
- Engage with communities to identify what Black and Mixed ethnicity people's desires and needs are for post-16 and adult qualifications, and to determine the best means to access them.

Target interventions to:

- encourage more parents with lower levels of education to enrol on suitable courses to add to their qualifications and skills;
- improve skills of presentation, CV writing, employability development for Black and Mixed ethnicity young people and adults.

### What could Welsh Government do?

- Evaluate the range of vocational or academic courses for young people and adults, to identify any shortages or inadequacies that might be disadvantaging people of Black and Mixed ethnicities.
- Ensure that routes are made available for adults of Black and Mixed ethnicities to pursue further education in ways that accommodate the demands of family life, childcare and transport.
- Fund more work with BAME parents and families to improve adult literacy and education levels, including school-based education programmes.

**A broad range of social, economic and cultural issues may affect adults and young people of Black and Mixed ethnicities.**

**A large proportion of people of Black and Mixed ethnicities in Wales live in more socio-economically deprived areas.**

- Across Wales, up to 70% of the Black ethnicity population live in areas that are more, rather than less, deprived according to the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation. Some of the local communities in which Black and Mixed ethnicity people live suffer from high levels of multiple deprivation.
- Whilst many Black and Mixed ethnicity pupils show considerable resilience by succeeding academically, the 'deprivation odds' are stacked against them.

**Social and behavioural issues in communities directly affect young people's lives and education.**

- Many parents of Black and Mixed ethnicity young people fear that peer pressure to conform to the negative aspects of street culture is an ever-present threat for their children, and they have to work hard to keep their children safe.
- The presence of gangs, drugs and underage alcohol use in local communities places considerable social pressure on young people, including those of Black and Mixed ethnicities. It is often hard for young people to resist participation and avoid the detrimental consequences.
- Within the Somali community, many wives and mothers feel that the cultural practice amongst males of chewing khat has negative consequences for their young men, for families and for the wider community.
- Forced marriages, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and attitudes to women's and LGBTQIA rights affect some young people.

**Targeted initiatives are needed to counter the disadvantages of poverty, unemployment and poor community environments.**

- Several of these issues need to be addressed by other authorities beyond education and need to be incorporated as strands within the Welsh Government's national initiatives to tackle poverty and social deprivation.

## Social Interventions contd.: Suggestions to address the issues

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### What could schools do?

- Raise awareness and provide guidance for pupils on a range of social and cultural issues which could cause them harm or affect their human rights.

### What could local authorities and other local partners do?

- Support Black, Mixed and other parents in bringing up children in communities where gangs, drugs, alcohol and illegal activities are present, to help the children to build 'resilience' in their resistance to these threats.
- Provide support networks for lone parents of Black and Mixed ethnicity children that take account of race, class and gender differences and do not privilege dominant White middle class agendas.
- Provide more adequate, culturally sensitive support for struggling parents, for foster families and adoptive families of children of Black and Mixed ethnicities.

### What could Welsh Government do?

- Identify the key issues affecting community cohesion in local areas where Black and Mixed ethnicity people live, and increase the focus on constructive co-working.
- Identify what issues of racism are prevalent in different areas of Wales and develop ways of dealing with them effectively.
- Support community-based initiatives and socially active religious and secular organisations that work to improve quality of life and expand opportunities for young people and families in Wales' poorer local communities where large proportions of Black and Mixed ethnicity people live.

Maintain support networks for:

- women and girls who experience negative or abusive treatment, or who live under restrictions that hinder them from achieving their personal goals;
- wives and mothers who are having to deal with the extremist views or ambitions of husbands and children wanting to travel abroad and get involved in conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa;
- victims and survivors of forced marriages, so-called honour-related violence, FGM, trafficking, sexual exploitation and other illegal activities.