

# Summary: The State of Black Education in Britain



*The State of Black Education in Britain*, a report developed by Black Equity Organisation (BEO) and funded by Mission 44, aims to investigate the persistent challenges and systemic inequities facing Black pupils, parents, teachers and communities in the UK education system. Through an in-depth analysis, including focus groups and survey data, the report illuminates how power dynamics within schools disadvantage Black communities, limiting their influence, access to resources and representation. Drawing on the lived experiences of Black pupils, parents and educators, the report exposes the ways in which the education system perpetuates socioeconomic disparities and undermines Black communities' empowerment within educational settings.

The **key findings** reveal multiple layers of disempowerment and inequity, beginning with significant **barriers to empowerment** for Black pupils and parents. Black pupils frequently feel that their voices are marginalised and their cultural identities undervalued, particularly in instances of discriminatory incidents and in curriculum content that does not reflect their heritage. Black parents, meanwhile, report that navigating the education system is made harder by a lack of accessible information on their rights, reducing their ability to advocate effectively for their children. Additionally, Black pupils and parents often encounter school structures that favour wealthier families, further entrenching inequalities based on race and socioeconomic status.

A second key finding highlights the **lack of representation** across the teaching workforce and curriculum content. Black teachers are disproportionately under-represented in senior roles, despite high application rates, which restricts opportunities for Black pupils to see themselves reflected in authority figures and role models in schools. The curriculum remains largely Eurocentric, often failing to incorporate Black histories and contributions beyond tokenistic observances. This lack of meaningful representation contributes to a sense of exclusion among Black pupils and reinforces an environment that does not fully respect or support diversity.

The report also addresses the impact of **racism within school policies and practices**, particularly in disciplinary actions. Black pupils are frequently subject to misinterpretations of their behaviour and harsher disciplinary measures, often due to racialised biases among staff. This systemic racialisation not only affects students' academic progress but also perpetuates stereotypes that position Black pupils as 'disruptive' or 'intimidating'. Additionally, Black parents report feeling disempowered and perceived through stereotypical lenses, which hampers their ability to advocate for their children, especially when compounded by the challenges of navigating **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)** processes.



**Recommendations** arising from BEO's findings include comprehensive reforms designed to rebalance power, foster representation and promote an equitable educational environment. Key recommendations include establishing **equity councils** in schools, where Black pupils and parents can voice concerns, challenge discrimination and contribute to policy development. Additionally, the report advocates for **peer-led advocacy programmes** for Black pupils, empowering them to assert their rights confidently and address issues independently when institutional support is lacking. For Black parents, the report recommends **legal and policy literacy programmes** to equip them with knowledge on educational rights and SEND protocols, enabling them to challenge biases and hold schools accountable.



To address the lack of representation, the report suggests expanding **recruitment and mentorship programmes for Black teachers** to support career progression into leadership roles, helping to counter tokenism and foster diverse representation in school governance. **Curriculum reform** is critical, and the report recommends granting Black teachers greater autonomy to incorporate Black histories and perspectives year round, complemented by independent **equity audits** to ensure genuine inclusivity in school content.

The report calls on Ofsted to enhance accountability by revising inspection criteria to include anti-racist practices and implementing **cultural competency training** for inspectors, ensuring that schools are evaluated on both academic and inclusivity standards. At a governmental level, it recommends **legislative support for inclusive curricula** that cover diverse histories, and incentives for schools demonstrating measurable anti-racism initiatives, aligning funding with equitable educational outcomes.

School governors should be tasked with **embedding equity into governance frameworks**, as well as establishing **equity-focused monitoring structures**, ensuring that they are not only adopted but are effective and continuously improved upon. This alignment ensures that the theoretical frameworks proposed by BEO are actively incorporated into the tangible mechanisms that govern educational institutions, thereby fostering a truly inclusive and equitable educational environment.

In conclusion, ***The State of Black Education in Britain*** provides both a thorough analysis of systemic inequalities and a roadmap for structural reform, aimed at fostering a fair and inclusive educational landscape. By implementing these recommendations, the UK education system can work towards an environment where all pupils, regardless of race or socioeconomic background, are empowered to succeed and where Black communities are recognised and respected within educational structures. This report is a call to action for policymakers, educators, and communities to dismantle barriers and create an equitable education system. Developed with the Education Advisory Board, it builds on the foundations of previous work, highlighting the urgent need for bold, systemic reform. In partnership with others, we are committed to creating an inclusive system that empowers all.

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