

# 3: Every Pupil To Have The Opportunity For Continuous Improvement, Especially The Most Vulnerable Young Londoners

Children who go to school in London are likely to achieve better outcomes than pupils in any other region in England, but the profile of London's schools is also very different from the rest of England, reflecting the city's diverse population. In particular, pupils in London are more likely to come from a minority ethnic background or speak English as an additional language.

This section describes the demographic profile of the pupil population in London and how this varies across the city. Previous research has demonstrated how gaps in attainment are evident from an early age and continue to grow throughout school.<sup>81</sup> This section provides breakdowns of attainment in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile through to Key Stage 4 (and post-16 where available), and presents new analysis of the socio-economic gaps which exist in London.

## Demographic profile of school aged children in London

**Schools in London have a higher proportion of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds than the average for England: across the city, just under a fifth of pupils are eligible for free school meals.**<sup>82</sup>

Overall, there is a stark contrast between Inner and Outer London. Inner London has a higher rate of free school meal eligibility than any other region in England at both primary and secondary level, at 23.4 per cent and 28.3 per cent respectively; Outer London is in line with the national average. And there is considerable variation within the city. Amongst secondary pupils, the proportion of pupils in Tower Hamlets eligible for and claiming free school meals reaches 42.1 per cent, whereas it is only 7.7 per cent in Kingston-upon-Thames.<sup>83</sup>

**Schools in London also have a higher proportion of pupils from black and minority ethnic backgrounds than average. In fact, the proportion of pupils in the city's schools who are from black and minority ethnic backgrounds is more than double the England average.**<sup>84</sup>

These patterns vary by ethnic group. Both Inner and Outer London have higher proportions of Caribbean and African pupils than the national average. The proportion of Bangladeshi pupils in Inner London is several times both the proportion for Outer London and the England-wide average, whilst a higher proportion of Indian pupils are found in Outer London than in Inner London. Again there is variation between local authority areas. In Newham, 94 per cent of primary pupils are from ethnic minorities, compared with 33 per cent in Havering.<sup>85</sup>

**Given the high preponderance of ethnic minority pupils in London, it is unsurprising that London also has very high levels of pupils whose first language is not English. This is particularly the case in Inner London, where around half of pupils have English as an additional language.**<sup>86</sup>

It is a diverse picture across London. At one end of the spectrum, three-quarters of primary pupils in Tower Hamlets have a first language that is other than English, compared to one in seven primary pupils in Bromley.<sup>87</sup>

**The proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Inner London is higher than in any other region** (15 per cent of primary school pupils and 17 per cent of secondary school pupils, compared with 13 per cent of pupils across England in both primary and secondary phases)<sup>88</sup>. Outer London is much more similar to the national average. Again, there is wide variation in levels of SEN identified across London, ranging from 19 per cent of primary school pupils in the City of London to 9 per cent of primary pupils in Havering and from 20 per cent of secondary school pupils in both Hackney and Wandsworth to 7 per cent of secondary pupils in Kingston-upon-Thames.<sup>89</sup>

Figure 3.1: The characteristics of primary school pupils in London, January 2016<sup>90</sup>

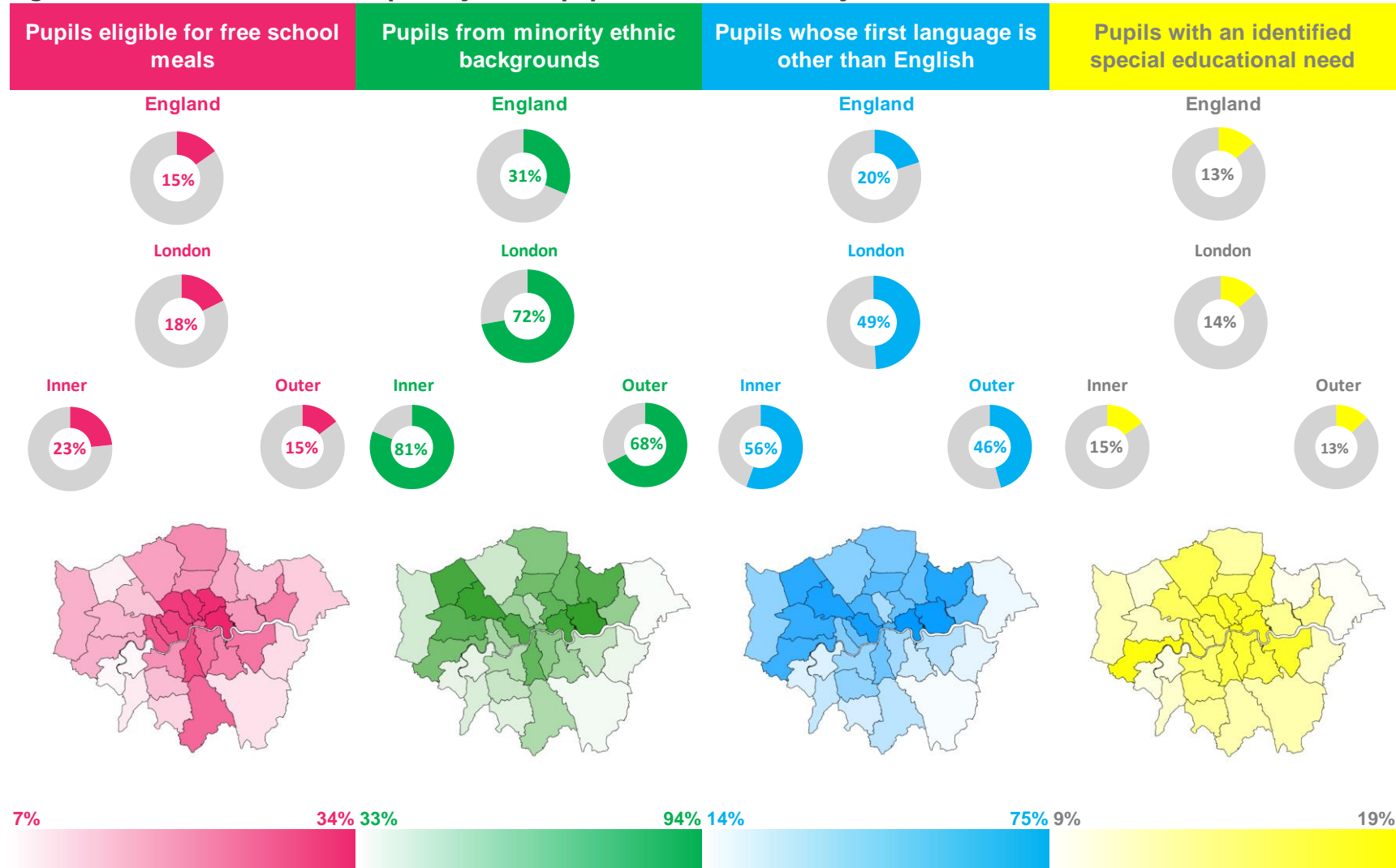
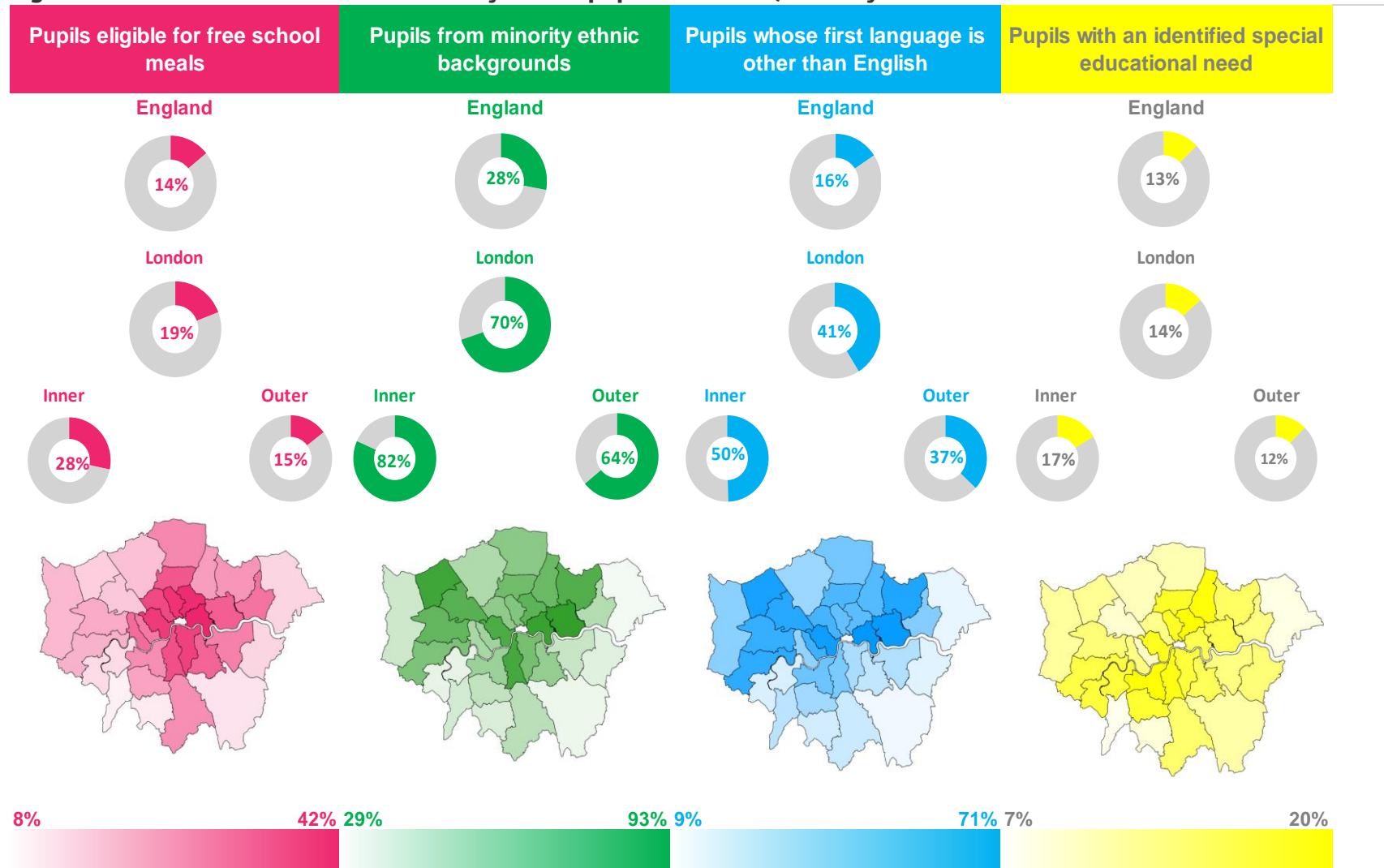


Figure 3.2: The characteristics of secondary school pupils in London, January 2016<sup>91</sup>



## Attainment by pupil characteristics

This section examines how different groups perform in the early years through to the end of secondary school by considering the proportion of pupils that:

- achieve the expected level in all early learning goals by age 5;
- leave primary school 'secondary ready'<sup>92</sup>; and
- end secondary school having gained five good GCSEs including English and mathematics.

For free school meal eligibility and special educational needs status, it is possible to give additional consideration to the proportions of pupils that:

- achieve five good GCSEs, including English and mathematics, by the age of 19
- achieve level 3 post-16 qualifications by the age of 19; and
- attend higher education as a sustained destination, as a percentage of those entered for level 3 qualifications.

For looked after children, statistics are available for the proportion who leave primary school 'secondary ready', and who end secondary school having gained five good GCSEs including English and mathematics.

## Pupils from low income backgrounds

As in other parts of the country, pupils from low income backgrounds achieve lower results than their peers in all stages of education. However, **the gap is narrower in London than elsewhere and pupils from low income backgrounds (eligible for free school meals) in London achieve higher results than similar pupils elsewhere.** 60 per cent of children in London who are eligible for free school meals reach the expected level in all Early Learning Goals by age 5; this is 11 percentage points lower than their more affluent peers.<sup>93</sup> By the end of secondary school there is a 19 percentage point gap in the proportion of pupils achieving five good GCSEs including English and mathematics. However, **pupils from low income backgrounds are almost 50 per cent more likely to achieve this standard in London than elsewhere**<sup>94</sup>.

Post-16 London students from low income backgrounds are more likely to have achieved five good GCSEs including English and mathematics by the age of 19 than their peers in other parts of the country (57 per cent in London, compared with 45 per cent nationally)<sup>95</sup>. However, smaller proportions of pupils are 'catching up' to this standard between 16 and 19 in London than elsewhere.

**The proportion of students from low income backgrounds progressing from level 3 qualifications to higher education is higher in London than is seen nationally.**<sup>96</sup> But the premium associated with being in London is smaller than is seen in earlier outcomes (a disadvantaged pupil is 17 percentage points more likely to achieve level 3 in London than elsewhere, but amongst those with level 3 qualifications, disadvantaged students in London are only 12 percentage points more likely to enter higher education than similar students nationally).<sup>97</sup> If London is to be significantly ahead of other regions, an additional focus

on post-16 education is required to ensure disadvantaged students have the right qualifications, at the right level, to progress into higher education.

### **Pupils with special educational needs**

**Pupils identified with special educational needs in London outperform pupils identified with special educational needs in other parts of the country at all stages of education.** In London, 29 per cent of pupils with SEN achieved a good level of development by age 5 – four percentage points higher than pupils with SEN nationally.<sup>98</sup> At the end of secondary school, 30 per cent of SEN pupils in London achieve five good GCSEs including English and mathematics – 6 percentage points higher than nationally.<sup>99</sup> This pattern continues post-16, where 41 per cent of pupils with SEN in London achieve level 3 qualifications – 12 percentage points higher than nationally. Among those pupils entered for level 3 qualifications, a higher proportion with SEN in London transition into higher education as a sustained destination (47 per cent, compared with 39 per cent nationally).

### **Pupils from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds**

**Black pupils are the lowest attaining major ethnic group nationally at all three stages. At the end of primary school, black pupils perform 6 percentage points behind the next lowest ethnic group (54 per cent compared with 60 per cent for white or mixed pupils).**<sup>100</sup> Their attainment is however still higher than black pupils nationally (51 per cent). These patterns were similar under the old Key Stage 2 assessments prior to 2016, although the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard was higher across the board.

**The attainment of black Caribbean boys in particular is low. In 2016, 42 per cent of black Caribbean boys in London achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.**<sup>101</sup> Whilst ahead of black Caribbean boys nationally these pupils are currently 12 percentage points behind the national average of all pupils and 17 percentage points behind the average across London. This gap is the equivalent of over 600 black Caribbean boys ending primary school non-secondary school ready.

At the end of secondary school, the proportions of pupils achieving the expected standard of five good GCSEs including English and mathematics have fallen since 2013, due to the introduction of stricter rules on which qualifications are included in national performance measures, and the counting of first GCSE entries rather than the best grade achieved in each subject. **In London, the result of these changes has been that black pupils have fallen further behind their peers,**<sup>102</sup> which is also the case nationally.

It may therefore be the case that some of the reforms are having, at least in the short term, a disproportionately negative impact on pupils from black backgrounds. These reforms relate to school performance measures, and not necessarily the final qualifications that individuals achieve at Key Stage 4.

### **Pupils with English as an additional language**

**Pupils whose first language is not English have lower outcomes in the early years, but match the performance of other pupils by the end of secondary school.** 67 per cent of

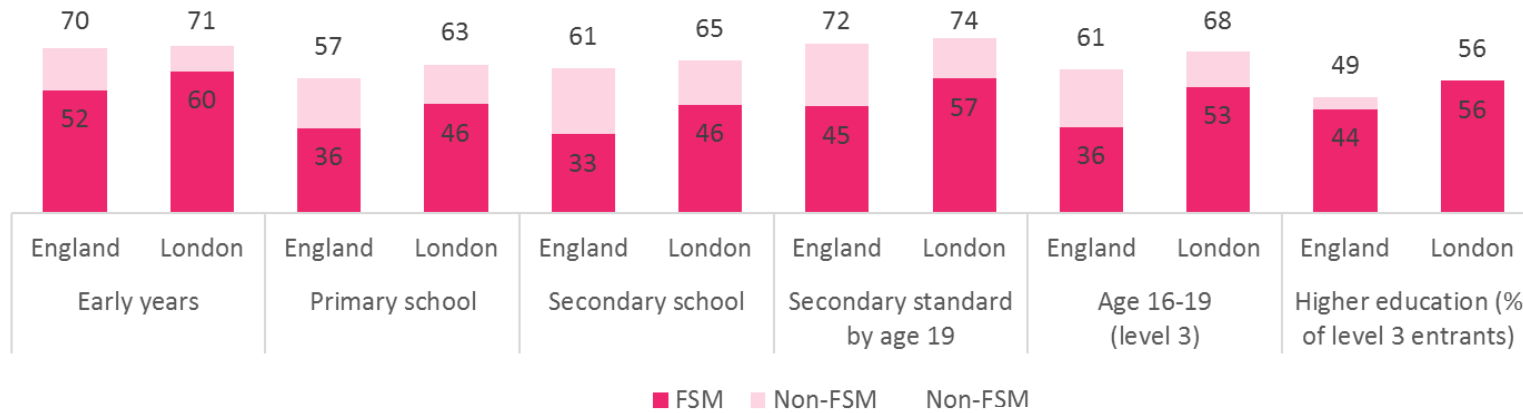
children whose first language is other than English in London reach a good level of development at age five, 7 percentage points behind other children. At the end of secondary school, 61 per cent achieve five good GCSEs including English and mathematics, on average, the same as other pupils.

### **Looked after children**

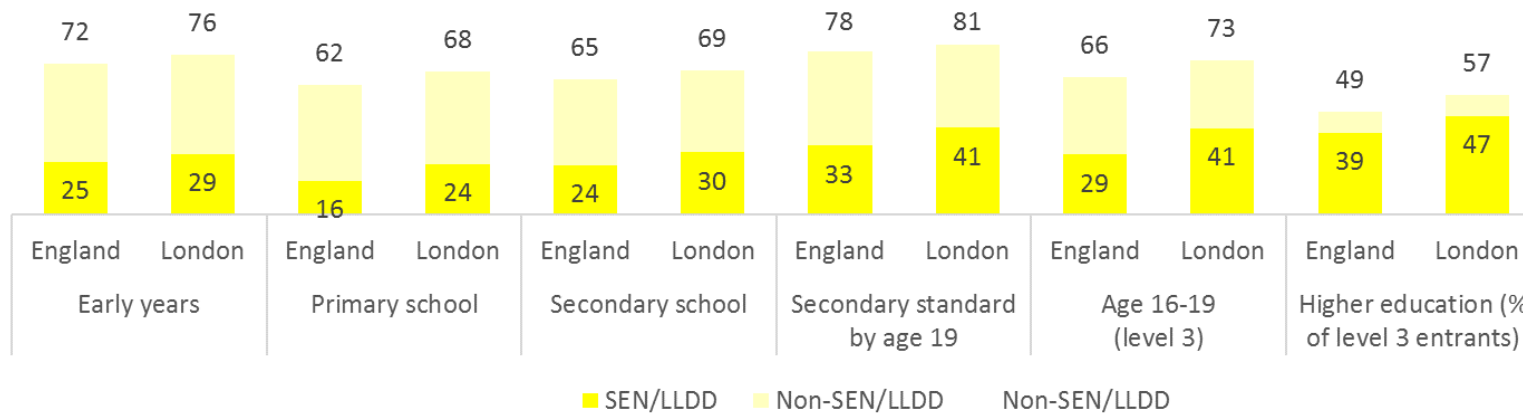
**Both in London and nationally, looked-after children have very low attainment rates, and just 17 per cent in London achieved five good GCSEs including English and mathematics in 2015.** This was 3 percentage points ahead of national attainment for this group. This means that, London schools provide a smaller advantage relative to schools elsewhere for looked-after children than they do for those from low-income backgrounds, or those with special educational needs.<sup>103</sup>



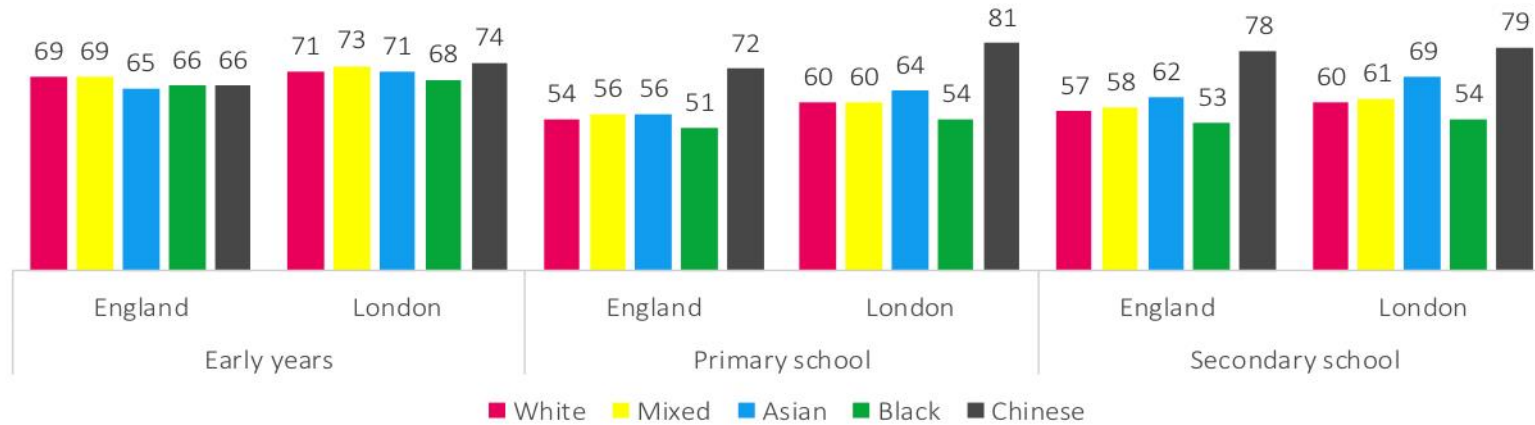
**Figure 3.3: Percentage of pupils meeting expected standard in the early years (2016), primary school (2016), secondary school (2015), post-16 catch-up (2015), post-16 level 3 (2015), and higher education destinations (2014); by eligibility for free school meals.<sup>104</sup>**



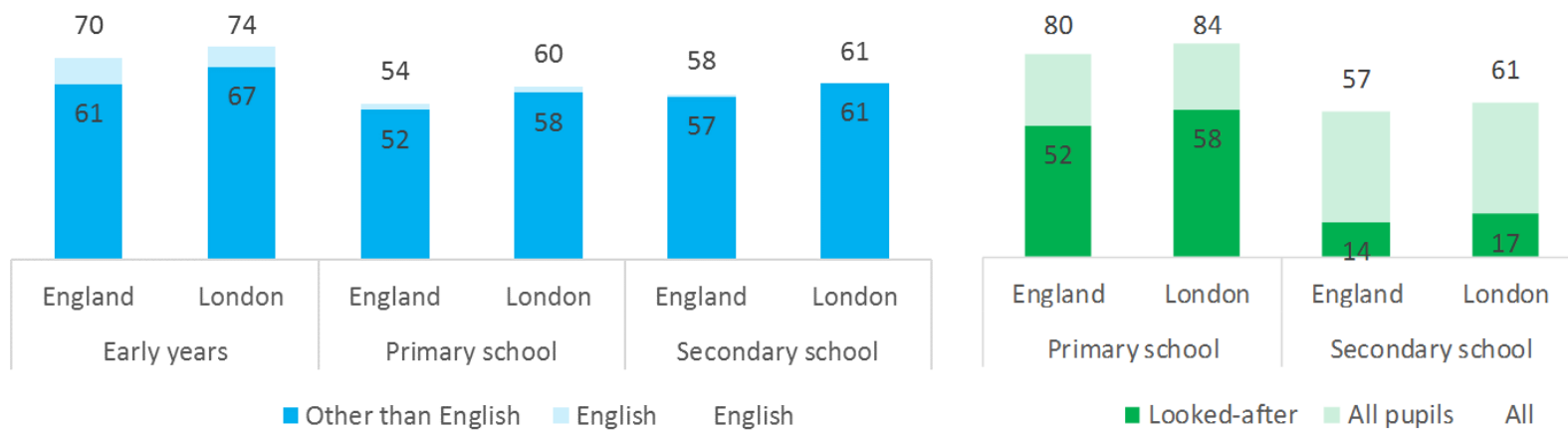
**Figure 3.4: Percentage of pupils meeting expected standard in the early years (2016), primary school (2016), secondary school (2015), post-16 catch-up (2015), post-16 level 3 (2015), and higher education destinations (2014); by special educational needs / learning difficulties or disabilities.**



**Figure 3.5: Percentage of pupils meeting expected standard in the early years (2016), primary school (2016), and secondary school (2015); by major ethnic group.**



**Figure 3.6: Percentage of pupils meeting expected standard in the early years (2016), primary (2016) and secondary school (2015) by first language (left-hand); and in primary (2015) and secondary school (2015) by looked-after child status (right-hand).**



### **Case Study: Good outcomes for all young Londoners – Redbridge College and the Peer Outreach Team**

Vulnerable groups in general are less likely to achieve the same standard of education as their peers. The following case study outlines how Redbridge College and the Mayor's Peer Outreach Worker team, young Londoners aged 15-25yrs old from diverse backgrounds, have worked in partnership to provide great outcomes for Redbridge's vulnerable students.

- **Presenting a new and engaging approach to education**
- **Providing innovative pastoral support**

Redbridge College is a vocational college offering a wide range of courses to 3,000 students across two campuses in Chadwell Heath and Ilford Town Centre in north east London. Redbridge College has a varied intake, many of their students have challenging backgrounds.

#### **Presenting a new approach to education**

Redbridge College aims to provide a completely new atmosphere to re-engage and focus their students, many of whom have had negative experiences of education. The college has worked hard to develop strong links with businesses and other partners to ensure students have a learning experience that is relevant to the real world. This is achieved by embedding real life business briefs in curriculum areas.

#### **Providing innovative pastoral support**

To address some of the pastoral needs of their students, Redbridge College have asked the POW team to work with approximately 15 of their most in need students each year. Most of these students have learning disabilities, criminal justice records or have been in the care system.

This programme has been in place for 7 years, consisting of sessions led by the POW team. These vary in approach from group discussion and debate, to performance and role play. The aim is for students to explore key issues and identify how as a group, and as individuals, they can be active in the resolution.

#### **Outcomes**

The students that participate in the programme are predicted not to achieve the key educational measures. However, since the beginning of the programme there has been a 90% success rate in terms of transitions into Further Education, training, apprenticeships and work; some have even gone on to become members of the POW team. Within these overall successes, there are also personal stories. One such example is that of Connor (14) who, after being bullied in previous educational settings, arrived at Redbridge with such low levels of confidence and esteem he was unable to fully participate in his education. After taking part in the POW team programme Connor is thriving at school. His journey culminated in a solo music performance at City Hall celebrating the end of his course.

## Exploring the disadvantage gap in London

For several years, London has been recognised as being at the forefront of England's efforts to close the gap in attainment between children from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers.<sup>105</sup>

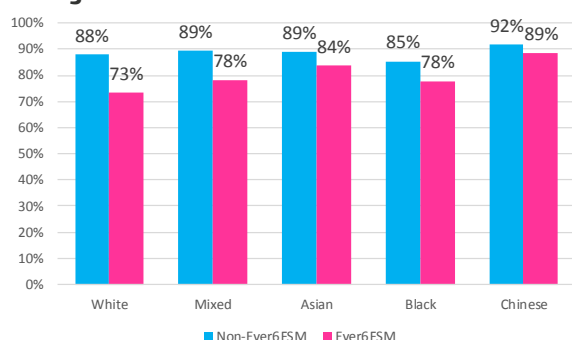
This section examines the attainment gap further by considering how the disadvantage gap varies for pupils from different ethnic groups and how the disadvantage gap has changed over time – including considering the gap in London in comparison to England.

### Disadvantage gap by ethnic group

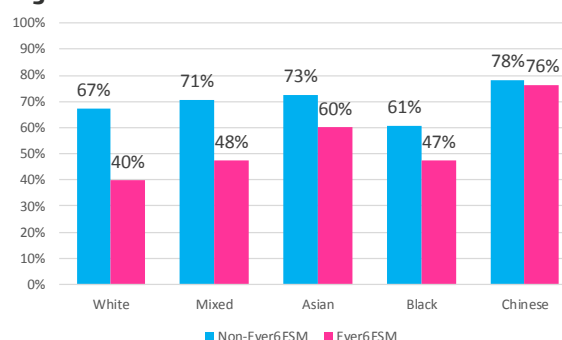
The disadvantage gap in London is evident across all ethnic groups but is widest for white pupils at both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 (Figure 3.7). At both Key Stages, white disadvantaged pupils are the lowest performing group followed by pupils from black and mixed disadvantaged backgrounds. However, when considering non-disadvantaged pupils then it is pupils from black backgrounds that are the lowest performing. In fact, non-disadvantaged black pupils are only marginally ahead of *disadvantaged* Asian pupils at primary and secondary level.

**Figure 3.7: Attainment at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 by disadvantage and major ethnic group, London 2015<sup>106</sup>**

**Key Stage 2 - Percentage level 4+ in reading, writing and mathematics**



**Key Stage 4 - Percentage 5+A\*-C including English and mathematics**



### Comparing London's disadvantage gap between Key Stages and over time

In terms of the attainment gap between disadvantaged children and their peers, London performs proportionally best compared to England in early years. Here, disadvantaged children are 2.7 months behind their peers in London (compared to 4.3 in England)<sup>107</sup>. The next strongest stage is the end of secondary school and finally the end of primary school.

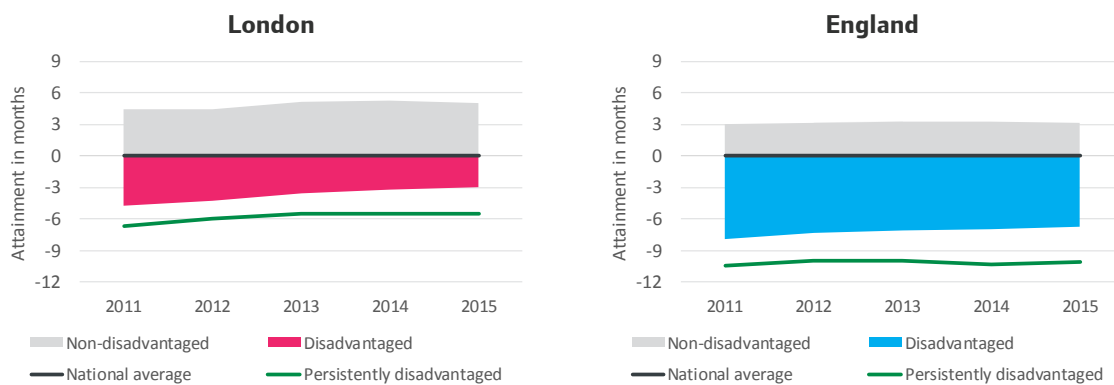
**Despite the smaller gaps, London's disadvantaged children are almost 3 months behind by the time they start primary school.<sup>108</sup>**

## Primary schools

### Attainment Gap

**At the end of primary school, the gap in reading, writing and mathematics in London is almost 2 months smaller than it is in England as a whole** (8.1 months, compared with 9.9 months).<sup>109</sup> This gap has reduced by just over one month since 2011, for both London and England. However, the most persistently disadvantaged children in London are over 10 months behind non-disadvantaged children by age 11 (a gap of 10.6 months, compared with 13.3 months nationally).

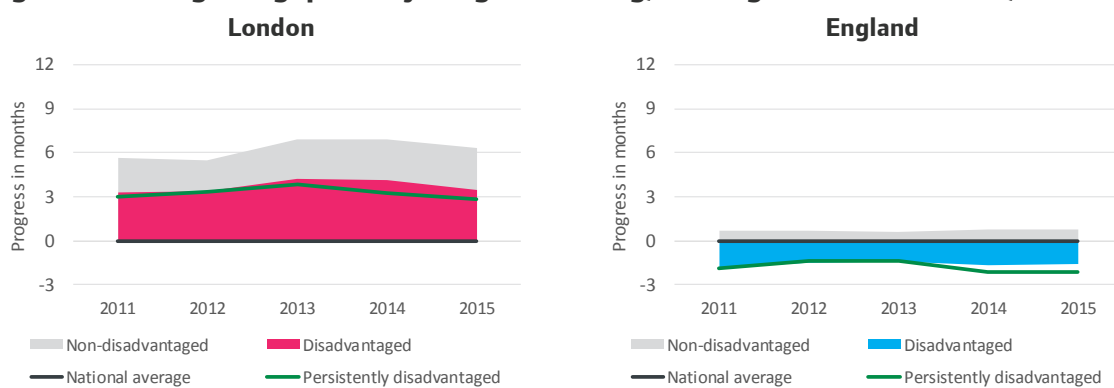
**Figure 4.8: Attainment gap in Key Stage 2 reading, writing and mathematics, 2015<sup>110</sup>**



### Progress Gap

**Disadvantaged children in London make more progress than non-disadvantaged children nationally** (in 2015, disadvantaged pupils in London made 2.8 months more progress between ages 7 and 11 than the average non-disadvantaged child in England).<sup>111</sup>

**Figure 4.9: Progress gap in Key Stage 2 reading, writing and mathematics, 2015<sup>112</sup>**

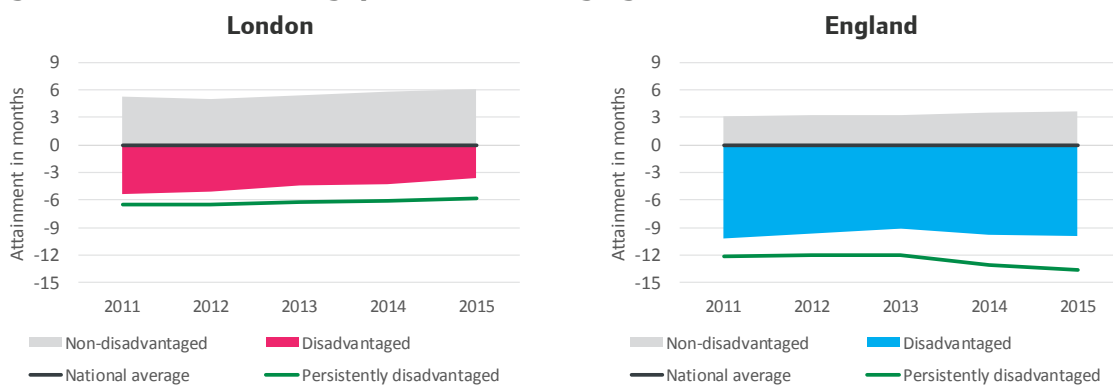


## Secondary schools

### Attainment Gap

The attainment gap at the end of secondary school is around a third larger than at primary level.<sup>113</sup> However, **London’s attainment gap for average GCSE grades is around 4 months smaller than the same gap nationally** (9.7 months compared with 13.8 months). **The gap has decreased by just over one month (1.3 months) since 2011 in London and just under one month (0.9 months) in England as a whole.** The most persistently disadvantaged children in London are 12 months behind non-disadvantaged children by the age of 16, and this has barely changed since 2011<sup>114</sup>. The national gap for persistently disadvantaged children is even larger, at 17.6 months, and has increased by 0.7 months since 2011.

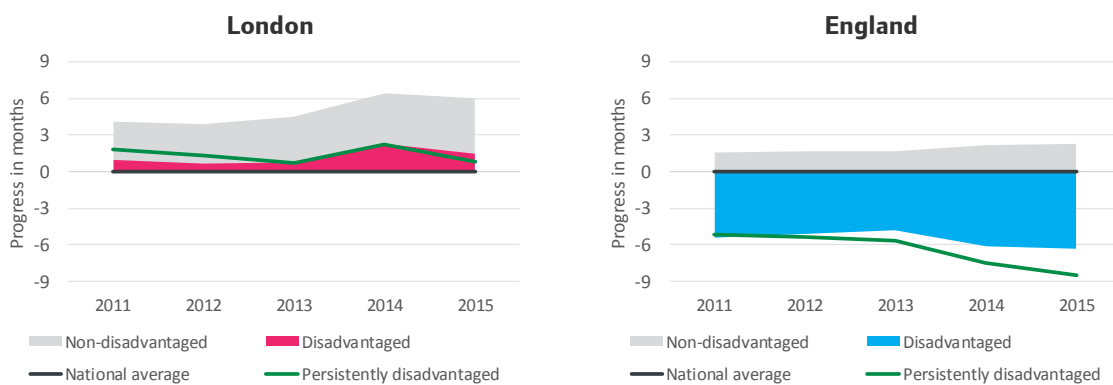
**Figure 4.10: Attainment gap in GCSE average grade 2015<sup>115</sup>**



### Progress Gap

Over the course of secondary school, disadvantaged children in Inner London continue to make more progress than the average non-disadvantaged child nationally. The difference between these groups was an additional 0.6 months of progress between ages 11 and 16 in 2015. In Outer London, disadvantaged children continue to make more progress than the average child nationally, but less than the average non-disadvantaged child nationally.<sup>116</sup>

**Figure 4.11: Progress gap at GCSE average grade 2015<sup>117</sup>**



## **Comparative regional trends since 2006, by FSM eligibility and first language**

The Mayor's world class ambitions for London require the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers to be closing faster in London than elsewhere.

The Education Policy Institute's Annual Report 2016 found that overall, London has seen the largest regional increases in attainment since 2006, particularly in primary attainment, but also in secondary attainment.<sup>118</sup>

As attainment is impacted by the characteristics of pupils, progress can serve as a more accurate measure of performance in regional comparisons. **London has not the achieved the top rank, in terms of improvement in pupil progress since 2006, for FSM eligible and EAL pupils.**<sup>119</sup>

### **Primary schools**

Overall, improvement in the progress made by pupils in London's primary schools (between the ages of 7 and 11) was slightly lower than in the North East. Within London, improvements have been larger for pupils with English as an additional language and/or pupils eligible for FSM, resulting in reduced progress gaps. However, London was not the best performing region for these groups of children. Improvements were greater in Yorkshire and the Humber (for children with English as an additional language) and the North West (for pupils with EAL and/or those eligible for FSM).<sup>120</sup>

### **Secondary schools**

While London remained in the lead overall on improvements in pupil progress during secondary school, it was behind the North East in terms of improvements for pupils who were eligible for free school meals and/or had English as an additional language.<sup>121</sup>

It was also behind both the North East and Yorkshire and the Humber in terms of improvements for pupils who were eligible for FSM and had English as their first language (this group is mostly white British working class children but also includes working class BAME children whose home language is English).<sup>122</sup>

### Case Study: Developing teachers as EAL Champions.

Some teachers in schools lack expertise and confidence about first and second language acquisition and how to best meet the individual needs of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL). As part of the London Schools Excellence Legacy Fund (LSEF) Glebe Primary / Knowledge Centre have been working in collaboration with the Institute of Education (IOE) at UCL to improve this by:

- **Developing teacher confidence and knowledge**
- **Providing teachers with a deep understanding of relevant EAL research**
- **Identifying strategies to better identify the progress of each learner**
- **Sharing pedagogy and practices across four geographical School Hubs**

A subject knowledge audit of teacher confidence and knowledge identified five areas for teachers' development:

- ▶ having strategies to assess EAL language development
- ▶ understanding second language acquisition
- ▶ knowing EAL learners cultural and linguistic background
- ▶ analysing language demands, needs and opportunities
- ▶ promoting the inclusion of an EAL perspective

#### **Providing teachers with a deep understanding of relevant research**

The programme offers teachers access to an EAL subject knowledge expert. They are learning about various themes including exploring reflective narratives, autobiographical writing and the importance of children guessing in the overall reading process.

#### **Building in strategies to better identify the progress of each learner**

With increased knowledge and confidence about EAL pedagogy and practices, teachers have been creating: tools for pupil tracking, detailed pupil profiles and ways of capturing narrative stories. Each EAL Hub now has a clear focus:

**EAL Hub Harrow:** 'How can we support EAL children to improve their competence in using tenses accurately in their English?'

**EAL Hub Harrow** 'How can we support EAL learners with improving and understanding comprehension?'

**EAL Hub Hillingdon** 'How can we explicitly teach vocabulary so that our EAL pupils are able to use appropriate vocab in the right context and so they can communicate in full sentences?'

**EAL Hub Brent** 'How can we improve engagement in reading for EAL boys?'

#### **Outcomes**

Although the project is not yet complete teachers are incorporating learning from the programme and are saying:

*'I'm not simply relying just on phonics as the only way to teach language.'*

*'I'm trying to model the language I want – rather than correct the pupils.'*

*'Many EAL learners find it difficult to understand homophones – so I have learnt to be more careful about what I say and how I say it.'*



### **London's key challenges**

Outcomes for black pupils, especially black Caribbean boys, and those from white working class backgrounds are particularly low.

There remains an attainment gap for the most persistently disadvantaged children which has barely changed since 2011.

There is a wide range of outcomes across London's schools so sharing knowledge and understanding the best practice in London and from elsewhere in the country should be a priority.

London will not achieve a higher benchmark against other comparable international systems until further progress is made on closing the gap for disadvantaged pupils.