

PROMOTING ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS INTEGRATION IN SCHOOLS: A REVIEW OF EVIDENCE

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Contents

Executive summary	iii
Chapter 1 Introduction	7
Focus of the review	8
Structure of the report	9
Chapter 2 Schools' admission policies	10
Summary of recent Government policy on school admissions and segregation ...	10
Summary of evidence on segregation and school admissions	11
The role of parental choice in school segregation	14
Limitations in the value of international literature on admissions policies and integration	15
Key points	17
Chapter 3 School composition and the contact hypothesis	19
The contact hypothesis	19
Evidence from Northern Ireland	21
The complexity of the contact	22
Key points	24
Chapter 4 School level actions to promote integration	25
School linking	26
Parental involvement	27
Extra-curricular initiatives	30
The role of teachers	32
Key points	33
Chapter 5 Conclusions	34
The importance of ethnic and religious integration	34

<u>Admissions policies play a key role in increasing segregation, especially by religion</u>	34
<u>The limited value of international evidence to the UK context</u>	35
<u>Evidence that contact between pupils increases integration</u>	35
<u>School-based interventions and initiatives</u>	36
<u>Limitations in the evidence and gaps in the literature</u>	37
<u>References</u>	39
<u>Appendix: Literature search and analytical framework</u>	46

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Executive summary

Religious and ethnic segregation in schools is an issue of concern for educationalists and policy makers because it has implications for equality and for inclusion and social cohesion. This report was commissioned by the Department for Education to provide evidence on how segregation might be addressed by reviewing available evidence on approaches in place to promote religious and ethnic integration in education settings.

We look at a range of strategies and projects in place to reduce segregation, promote social mixing and improve relations between children and young people from different ethnic and religious groups. We look at the role of admissions policies in increasing levels of segregation and at approaches to reducing it. We look at a range of projects in place across the UK aimed at promoting integration, and at evidence of their success.

Our focus is on established communities rather than migrants, for whom different issues may apply and are covered in our recent research funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation (Manzoni and Rolfe, 2019). Partly for this reason, we do not look specifically at initiatives involving English as an Additional Language, at structural barriers, or at the promotion of British Values and anti-bullying strategies. Some of these are the subject of other DfE research projects.

The review was intended to cover all stages of education but focuses strongly on primary and secondary levels where evidence is available. We identified a gap in published evidence in relation to initiatives within Further and Higher Education.

The review focuses on the UK and, in relation to religious integration, draws on evidence relating to Northern Ireland. It also includes relevant international evidence while recognising that the UK context is quite different in some respects. However, the most useful evidence about what works, or has promise for wider application, is found from within rather than outside the UK and is a positive finding of the review.

Main findings

International evidence finds that the educational attainment of ethnic minority pupils (including migrants) is better in comprehensive systems with late selection to different ability tracks and worse in systems of high selectivity. Research in the UK strongly indicates that parental choice works to increase segregation, particularly by social class but also by religion and ethnicity.

Admissions policies have a very important role to play in reducing segregation, especially by religion, but also to an extent by ethnicity. The lack of transparency in

schools' admissions policies have particular implications for social class segregation where they enable schools to admit more advantaged and higher attaining pupils, but may also lead to under-representation of ethnic minorities. The review's findings strongly suggest a need for greater control and inspection of schools' admissions practices, as well as their policies. Ballots and banding systems should be examined for their effects on pupil composition by ethnicity and religion: their principal aim has been to achieve a more comprehensive intake across schools in a locality and they have potential for wider application.

A number of studies find that contact between pupils of different ethnic and faith groups has positive results in terms of attitudes and feelings. At the same time, there is a persuasive argument that contact alone is not enough and that particular types of interaction and activities can accelerate the process and closeness of integration.

The report summarises a number of initiatives and programmes carried out within and between schools, identifying some which are believed to have achieved some success in integrating pupils from different ethnic and faith groups. They include the Linking Network, twinning classrooms, the jigsaw – which facilitates cooperative learning and a peer support programme the Circle of Friends. These vary in the extent to which they have been systematically evaluated but their reports indicate a number of practices which appear to assist integration. There are also likely to be other projects in progress which we were not able to identify because their findings have not yet been published. The DfE might consider compiling a live database on existing programmes and initiatives as a source of information for schools wishing to improve their approaches to integration.

Our review also identified a number of extra-curricular projects intended to promote integration, but which have not been independently evaluated. The report includes examples of these, including within the arts, which would seem to offer potential for wider adoption, as well as evaluation to see which types of approach and activities work best.

Beyond discrete projects, the literature refers to the importance of curriculum materials, yet we were not able to find systematic research in this area. More widely, findings from a number of studies suggest a number of conditions which encourage integration within and beyond the classroom. These include creating conditions for classroom discussion and reflection on diversity which enable pupils to engage with different perspectives. They also include the need for preparation, training and support for teachers in delivering programmes and interventions. Existing evidence also highlights the importance of a whole-school ethos in creating an environment in which integration can be achieved.

Chapter 1 Introduction

As migration in the UK has increased, many communities have become more diverse but there is also evidence of increased segregation in some areas and within the education system. In its 2012 study the OECD confirmed these divisions, highlighting high levels of segregation of poorer and migrant pupils clustered in the same schools. This has a range of implications, including for equality as well as for social cohesion. The research for this report was commissioned by the Department for Education in 2018 to provide evidence on how segregation might be addressed, through reviewing available evidence on the most effective practices in promoting ethnic and religious integration in education settings.

As well as this broader social context, we have carried out the review at a time of perceived policy challenges in relation to ethnic and religious integration across UK society and its institutions, including schools. The Government has commissioned a series of enquiries into cohesion and integration. In relation to the role of the school system, its stated aim is:

‘To make sure all children and young people are prepared for life in modern Britain and have the opportunity for meaningful social mixing with those from different backgrounds’ (Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper, 2018)

The most recent Green Paper on integration and the earlier review by Dame Louise Casey have highlighted the place of schools in promoting integration: the Casey Review highlighted the extent of segregation in schools. It cites the figure that in 2013 half of all ethnic minority students were in schools where ethnic minorities were the majority and makes particular reference to the degree of segregation of pupils of Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage. It also considers evidence of segregation in faith-based free schools.

The Green Paper proposes that expectations on integration for new free schools should be strengthened. It also proposes that the Government should work with local admission authorities in the integration areas¹, promoting ‘meaningful social mixing’ and forging links between schools in areas of high segregation. Proposals in relation to social mixing were also made by the Casey Review and by Matthew Taylor’s 2015 Social Integration Commission report.

Our review of the evidence looks at what schools are doing to further the broad policy aims of these recent Government enquiries, since future intervention policy and guidelines should be based on evidence. Policy measures will need to take account of current school practices and approaches in relation to integration of ethnic minorities and religious groups, and evidence of their effectiveness. Duties on schools are not new: while concerns about integration have become more prominent in recent years, schools

¹ The 5 integration areas are Blackburn with Darwen, Bradford, Peterborough, Walsall and Waltham Forest.

have had a duty to promote community cohesion since 2006 and, more recently to promote British values within spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development (DfE 2014). But the extent to which schools are meeting these duties and, more importantly, succeeding in closer integration of pupils with diverse ethnic backgrounds and religions, is not known. This review was commissioned to help fill that gap in evidence.

Focus of the review

The review looks at strategies which improve relations between different ethnic and religious groups and promote social mixing. Its focus is on established communities rather than integration of new migrant pupils, although we have found practice covering newer and longer established groups. The review covers the use of admissions policies to promote integration as well as approaches within schools. It looks at practices implemented within and outside the classroom aimed at improving integration. We focus on primary and secondary schools, rather than other educational institutions. Although we included further and higher education in our searches, we found no published evidence relating to programmes aiming to promote ethnic and religious integration. We are aware of initiatives at FE and HE institutions which aim to increase inclusion² and it is possible that these, and others, are increasing ethnic or religious integration. However, evidence of their outcomes is not available. Our report does not cover the promotion of British values, safeguarding or English as an additional language provision. While learning a new language is crucial and language support is an instrument to promote integration, it is not the only contribution of schooling. Our review does not cover structural barriers, including poverty and different life-chances which affect integration of ethnic and some religious groups. The review also does not look at the role of anti-bullying and victimisation strategies in promoting integration. Some of these issues are the subject of other current DfE research projects.

Contact theory has achieved some prominence in debates about integration and we examine evidence on its validity, practice and possible limitations. Most importantly, our report looks at what works, or what appears to have promise, in terms of good practice in working towards religious and ethnic integration. And we look at the elements of success in relation to implementation, monitoring and long-term achievement of social integration. This evidence can be used to inform the future development of school-based approaches to integration, including through trials where evidence is not clear.

² A number of [programmes](#), for example, have been funded by the Higher Education Equality Challenge Unit.

The review focuses on the UK and, in relation to religious integration, draws on specific evidence relating to Northern Ireland. It also includes relevant international evidence, including the USA and Australia, while recognising that some contextual factors are very different to the UK.

Structure of the report

Following this introductory chapter, we look in Chapter 2 at schools' admission policies and how they might be used to reduce segregation and increase integration. Chapter 3 looks at contact hypothesis theory and its implication on school composition while Chapter 4 looks into different practices implemented by schools to facilitate social mixing between students.

At the end of each section we provide a summary of evidence specifically on good, or promising, practice which might be implemented in schools more widely, or tested via a trial. Finally, Chapter 5 draws some conclusions and brings together evidence on what works and at where there is a need for further evidence and how schools might be assisted to increase their engagement with integration strategies and practices.

Chapter 2 Schools' admission policies

In this chapter we look at the role of schools' admissions policies in promoting segregation by ethnicity and religion. We look first at recent Government policy, in particular the Casey Review and the recent Green Paper on integration. We then look at evidence in relation to segregation presented in a number of recent studies. Finally, we look at evidence of the consequences of segregation, drawing on evidence from Northern Ireland and from countries outside the UK. We also give some consideration to the role of parental choice in furthering segregation, since support for it has influenced policies of successive governments in relation to admission (Dwyer and Parutis, 2012).

Summary of recent Government policy on school admissions and segregation

The Casey Review and Integration Green Paper give some attention to the role of admissions policies in segregation. In terms of its causes, the Casey Review states that parental choice, wanting to go to a school nearby or to be among pupils from similar backgrounds can be important factors. Both reports consider the role of faith schools in furthering segregation, particularly where these are also presented by ethnic minority groups, as is the case for Muslim, Hindu and Sikh schools.

Faith schools currently account for 34% of state-funded schools and, as the Green Paper points out, while many have a diverse intake in relation to ethnic and socio-economic background others do not. The Casey Review includes evidence of segregation in Free Schools. This is an important category given that Government policy means most new schools are now established as free schools or academies.

The review reported that Muslim, Hindu and Sikh schools are not ethnically diverse, despite the 50% faith admissions rule, but they are located in areas with high proportions of ethnic minorities and therefore tend to reflect the composition of local communities. However, a detailed review led by the Challenge found that faith schools tend not to do so (The Challenge, 2017:12). It should, however, be noted that their approach uses a simple distinction between White British and Ethnic Minority students and does not take account of the diversity within the latter category, for example pupils of Asian and of African heritage. It should also be considered that the profile of the intake of faith schools is likely to reflect parental choice rather than selection by schools. Christian Free Schools were also reported to be close to the ethnic composition of their areas and are more ethnically diverse than minority faith schools, with more of their intake being White British. Therefore, the Casey Review reports Church of England and Catholic schools as near the average for their localities for proportions of White and Asian pupils, although some 'other' minority Christian schools had fewer than average Asian pupils. These schools have been criticised for selection along other lines, in particular social class, as we briefly explain later.

In terms of promoting greater faith integration, the admissions criteria for new faith-based free schools requires them to offer 50% of their places to children from other, or no faith, where places are over-subscribed. State-funded schools must also have admissions arrangements that clearly state grounds for admission and the criteria used where places are over-subscribed. However, in practice, the requirement to enrol pupils of another faith or none has applied very largely to Catholic schools and has led the Catholic Church to choose not to open new schools under the Free School programme until the 'cap' is removed. Most other faith schools are not over-subscribed, and have been found to contribute to ethnic segregation in the sense that they diverge from the composition of their surrounding communities (The Challenge, 2017:12). The Green Paper commits to an assessment of the potential intake of neighbouring schools before a new school is approved (2018:29). As we show later, a number of researchers have concluded that faith schools impact on the degree of segregation found in neighbouring schools.

The Green paper recommends that the Government works with local admission authorities in the integration areas (see earlier) 'to help ensure the intake of schools are more representative of the wider area' and to 'strengthen expectations on integration for new free schools' (2018:12). It also states its support for new admission models which aim to increase diversity of their intake. The Green Paper highlights the example of the University of Birmingham's Free School model which uses four city-wide catchment areas. It also gives the example of Dixons Mixed Multi-Academy Trust which operates admission by randomised selection in Bradford and Leeds; and Blackburn Central High School, created through a merger of one school with 99% of pupils from Muslim families and the other a school with predominantly White British working class pupils (2018: 29).

Summary of evidence on segregation and school admissions

In addressing the issue of how admissions policies might be used to promote integration, or at least achieve an intake which balances local communities, it is important to consider current levels of segregation, and the factors which have led to these. Studies of school segregation date back to publication of the Cattle Report in 2001 which drew attention to the 'parallel lives' of White and ethnic communities (Cattle, 2001). Research by Professor Simon Burgess and colleagues, using School Census data for 2004 and 2006 found that levels of school segregation were higher than for residential segregation, especially for South Asian ethnic groups (Burgess et al, 2004). Research has also found higher levels of segregation in primary than secondary schools and more in London than other parts of the UK.

In a 2012 report the OECD reported levels of segregation higher than its other member countries³ and in particular that poorer and immigrant pupils are concentrated in the same schools. Using data from 2010 it reported that 80% of children of 'immigrant families' (which are defined as including second-generation ethnic minority pupils) were in schools with high concentrations of other immigrant or disadvantaged pupils (OECD, 2012). Another OECD report notes that England is one of only four out of 32 OECD countries looked at which allow religious selection within its school system (Musset, 2012).

In 2015 analysis carried out by Professor Simon Burgess and presented on the Demos Integration Hub⁴ found that ethnic minority pupils are much more likely than White British children to go to schools where ethnic minority pupils are in the majority. This is particularly true of children of Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Black Caribbean heritage. In total, 61% of ethnic minority children in England, and 90% in London, begin Year 1 in schools where most pupils are also in an ethnic minority. At the same time, around 94% of White British children are in schools where they are in the majority. While these figures are striking they represent a small decline in segregation of ethnic minorities, but also show persistence in some parts of the country, in particular the Midlands and parts of the North West. In these localities segregation does not simply reflect the size of its ethnic minority populations but additional concentration resulting from skewed intake.

Research consistently finds the degree of segregation by ethnicity to be higher at primary than secondary school level, which is explained by the difference in institution size and therefore scope for concentration. Nevertheless, segregation at primary school level might be considered more of a concern than at secondary, given what is known about the importance of connecting children to a range of cultures and opportunities at a young age (see later and Chapter 3).

The recent report 'Understanding School Segregation in England' by ICOCO, SchoolDash and The Challenge, examines the extent of segregation using data from the 2016 school census, applied to both the school population and the population of the local area. Unlike earlier studies, their local population comparisons included only people of compulsory school age who are likely to be more ethnically diverse. The project compared schools' intake in terms of ethnicity and take up of free school meals (as a measure of disadvantage) with those of the 10 schools nearest to them. It uses a categorisation of segregation based on measures of the degree of variation from the local

³ OECD countries are: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

⁴ [The Demos Integration Hub](#) is an interactive map presenting the changing dynamics between the UK's increasing diversity and the implications for social cohesion and social mobility.

population⁵. In relation to segregation by ethnicity, they find an increase, rather than decrease in levels between 2011 and 2016, with the more deeply segregated schools making little progress. The data also suggests an increase in segregation in areas that previously did not meet the criteria. The report identifies particular localities where segregation has increased, offering the potential to both explain and address the issue with reference to admissions policies and practices. However, this requires in-depth research which has yet to be done. With regard to school type, they find that:

- At primary level, both sponsor-led academies and free schools have higher proportions of ethnic minority pupils than nearby schools.
- Local authority maintained schools and converter academy schools overall are close to the average in terms of ethnic integration.
- At secondary level, Converter academies tend to have higher proportions of White British pupils than surrounding schools but free schools again have higher proportions of ethnic minority pupils than neighbouring schools.
- In relation to faith schools, at primary school level they are more ethnically segregated than non-faith schools:
 - Catholic schools are found to have lower proportions of White British students than non-faith schools;
 - Schools of non-Christian faith are more segregated than average in terms of the ethnicity of their intake.
- There is also considerable local variation in the practices of faith schools, with one London borough having faith schools which take between one and five times the proportion of White British pupils compared to the locality.
- Grammar schools tend to over-select ethnic minority students but, although this means that they may not match the profile of their area, grammar schools are less ethnically segregated overall than other schools.

Based on these findings, the authors recommend that local government, faith authorities and schools should review admissions practice both in relation to individual schools and also consider the impact on neighbouring schools, encouraging joint inventions. However, they do not propose specific, school-level measures around admissions, emphasising the need for transparency, also raised in other research (IPPR, 2013). They recommend that schools publish details of the characteristics of their intake and monitor trends, involving governors in this process. The report also considers measures that schools might then take to ameliorate the negative impact of having a segregated intake, such as inter-school mixing (see Chapter 4).

⁵ A school is classified as high or low in terms of segregation of its intake if the proportion of pupils from either ethnic or socio-economic group differs from that in its local area by double (or half) or by more than 15 percentage points (The Challenge, 2017: 11).

Other research aims to explain the practices which lead to the degree of segregation revealed by the SchoolDash data. Analysis by Timo Hannay finds that while many faith schools are located disproportionately in poorer areas, their intake is more affluent. They explain the discrepancy with reference to ‘cream-skimming’ achieved through a range of largely opaque practices. Research by Rebecca Allen also found similar patterns (SchoolDash, 2016; Allen and Parameshwaran, 2016). Research on schools’ admissions policies finds some to be complex, and in the case of religious schools, include a requirement to complete supplementary forms which provide scope for subjective judgement and discrimination. It is argued that, in the interests of fair selection, schools admissions arrangements should be simplified and that schools should not be permitted to carry out their own admissions (Allen and Parameshwaran, 2016; West and Hind, 2016).

Other research has proposed specific measures in order to increase diversity of intake at area, rather than individual school, level. A report by the Sutton Trust (Noden et al, 2014) suggests that schools should widen the use of ballots in conjunction with catchment areas. Such methods allow a random allocation of pupils giving all parents the same chance of success. This system is already used in Brighton and Hove Council, where the balloting system is linked to six catchment areas⁶. Allen et al. (2013) analysed the effects of the scheme and found that along with changes to school catchment areas the admission system had reduced the segregation of lower ability and disadvantaged pupils. However, the emphasis of these methods is on achieving a comprehensive intake and the impact on integration by ethnicity and religion is not known.

The role of parental choice in school segregation

The emphasis of our review is on policies at government and school level which might promote integration by ethnicity and faith. However, it is important to acknowledge the role of parental choice, even though it is currently regarded as an important principle to be upheld by government policy. Faith schools are supported by a minority (YouGov, 2013; Burgess et al, 2014) but some are over-subscribed and there is evidence that where this is the case, their selection criteria includes social class bias (Gibbons and Silva, 2011; IPPR, 2013).

The ‘Understanding School Segregation in England’ report strongly states the importance of parental choice as a factor in schools’ variation from the ethnic and socio-economic characteristics of their local areas. The authors argue that ‘the prevailing impetus of parental choice combined with the current approach to admissions means that both schools and local authorities have limited powers to address this at individual level’ (The

⁶ <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/brighton-hove.gov.uk/files/Secondary%20Admissions%20Catchment%20boundaries%20for%202016-17.pdf>

Challenge, 2017:12). This is indicated most strongly in the case of London which experiences high levels of school segregation in many localities which is not matched by similar levels of residential segregation (ibid: 14).

Limitations in the value of international literature on admissions policies and integration

There is a reasonable body of international literature on schools admissions policies including from other European countries with similar concerns about segregation both in schools and in the wider community. This finds that the UK has higher levels of segregation than other European countries which invites comparisons of policy and practice. However, comparisons with other countries within, and also outside of, Europe are problematic for a number of reasons. Firstly, ethnic minorities are classified as 'immigrants' even if they are second generation residents and countries such as France do not collect data by ethnicity. Secondly, such pupils and their families are viewed as disadvantaged, with low levels of parental education frequently considered as a factor in pupils' educational achievements (see Karsten et al, 2006). A report to the European Commission by a network of experts on strategies for integrating 'migrant' (ethnic minority) children states that:

'Concentration of migrant⁷ children in schools hinders their academic performance. Minority children exposed to classmates with better performance and higher educational aspirations tend to increase their own'. (Heckman, 2008)

This is somewhat different to the UK context where some ethnic minority groups, and migrants, have out-performed White British pupils and integration is driven by a different set of concerns. A third possible factor which limits the extent to which the UK can be informed by international practice is the degree of segregation in some towns and cities in countries such as France, the Netherlands and Germany which, alongside parental choice policies, has created some highly segregated schools (ibid).

Despite having some limitations in relation to applicability to the UK context, there are indications about what does and does not work to reduce school segregation. In relation to effective practice, a cross-EU review concluded that the educational attainment of migrant [including ethnic minority] students is better in comprehensive systems with late selection of students to different ability tracks and worse in systems of high selectivity' (Heckman, 2008: 81). It also recommended desegregation as a means of improving

⁷ The report includes 'children/students of migrant background' in the category of migrants, arguing that 'immigration plays a key role in the biography of persons, whether they or their parents migrated'. This is clearly different to understandings of the term 'migrant' in the UK.

ethnic minority pupils' performance, which applies less to the UK than other European countries. A study for the OECD reports that systems which facilitate and encourage parental choice also increase segregation, especially by social class and therefore often ethnicity (Musset, 2012). This is especially the case where school choice is accompanied by opportunities to pay fees to secure a place, as in New Zealand, Australia and Chile (ibid.). The same report suggests the use of homogenous and fixed admissions criteria under central authority control to limit 'cream-skimming' which may result in ethnic segregation. It makes a strong case against permitting schools to apply selective academic and income criteria, arguing that 'this aggravates school composition segmentation. Its recommendations include the use of lottery systems or other formulas to achieve a heterogeneous mix of students, for example by establishing zones in which parents can make school choices (ibid.). It does acknowledge, however that these both require a level of centralisation and higher administrative costs.

In relation to what does not work, Karsten et al (2006) reports on a system used in one local government area in the Netherlands which involved bussing of 'Non-White' children, including Moroccans from a poor neighbourhood to 'White schools' in more affluent areas. The programme, which ran from 1981 to 1996, was discontinued because of lack of support from school boards and also from parents, although the paper is not specific about which parents were opposed. Another policy applied in the Netherlands involves pupil quotas, where parents are invited to consider an alternative school to reduce segregation. The scheme was reported to be of limited success, partly because schools described as 'non-White' were concerned that White Dutch parents would not fill vacancies where ethnic minorities enrol elsewhere. The emphasis of the policy appears to have been on moving ethnic minority pupils outside of their neighbourhoods and the author concludes that better information to ethnic minority parents about the Dutch system of choice in education might be a preferred approach (Karsten et al 2006). In the UK, bussing was practised in the 1960s and 1970s as a policy of 'dispersing' ethnic minority children in Yorkshire and in Ealing, as well as to a limited extent in other areas. It involved allocating places to Black and Asian children living in areas of higher migrant concentration to non-diverse schools in other localities. Evidence on the impact of the project has been recorded through the accounts of those who were involved as children but we have found no published reports. On-line accounts and a video produced as part of a research project at Huddersfield University explain that the practice was intended to help Black and Asian children learn English and to integrate through contact with White British children. However, available evidence suggests that integration was not achieved because pupils were not able to take part in after school activities because of the distance between their homes and the schools. There is also evidence that at least some pupils were taught in groups of other ethnic minority pupils and were treated by their schools as under-achievers. The practice would seem to have a number of serious limitations in terms of its ability to promote integration. There would be value in research

to formally record this practice and its place in the UK's education and integration history but not as a practice to be re-adopted.

Key points

- Levels of ethnic and religious segregation are higher in schools than in their surrounding communities. This applies particularly to primary schools and appears to have increased, rather than decreased over time.
- Measures of ethnic diversity should not simply distinguish between White British and ethnic minorities, since this is likely to neglect the degree of diversity of the UK's ethnic minority groups and the need to achieve integration across all groups.
- There is evidence that faith schools contribute to segregation both through reducing diversity of their intake, but also through impacting on the diversity of neighbouring schools. This extends beyond ethnicity and faith to social class. However, literature does not seem to appreciate that Islam, in particular, is a multi-ethnic religion and therefore may over-state the extent to which such schools are ethnically segregated.
- Parental choice contributes to segregation, and there is evidence that more economically advantaged families have been able to exercise more choice than others.
- The emphasis on parental choice and the degree of autonomy by academies and free schools over admissions presents challenges to policies aimed at increasing segregation through changing the pupil intake.
- There are a range of admission policy models which have been found to increase the ethnic and faith diversity of schools.
- It is argued that social mixing in school has positive impacts on young people's skills but there is a need for more evidence on the ways in which integration of pupils by ethnicity and religion can have individual and group effects.
- There are indications from the literature about what does and does not work to reduce segregation in schools. This includes comprehensive intakes, reduced parental choice and fixed admissions criteria under the control of a central authority. Busing was practiced in the past in the UK, as well as in other countries, and has been found to have negative consequences for ethnic minority children.
- International literature on the use of admissions policies to provide a more diverse intake is of limited value in the UK context because the policy drivers are different – focused less on integration and inclusion more on the notion that ethnic minorities

benefit academically from contact with native pupils rather than that integration benefits all pupils.

Chapter 3 School composition and the contact hypothesis

In this chapter we look at the evidence-based studies that use contact theory to explore ethnic and religious integration of pupils in school settings. In particular we look at evidence on the validity of contact hypothesis and possible limitations of social mixing. We review specific evidence relating to studies carried out in Northern Ireland. We also look at studies that analyse school desegregation interventions.

The context of our report is the need for greater integration and cohesion across communities in the UK. Concern about pupil segregation is underpinned by a number of analyses that have been carried out on the degree of segregation by ethnicity in schools and more widely by the perceived implications of lack of integration. In reviewing the literature on evidence-based theories addressing how to best promote integration and mixing in educational settings it became evident that much of the literature has theoretical foundations rooted in contact hypothesis. The idea that contact between people with different ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds is likely to provide the opportunity to reduce negative stereotypes and prejudices towards other ethnic religious or cultural groups, and to foster more positive attitudes towards it, is widely supported by many studies across disciplines.

The contact hypothesis

The contact Hypothesis was first elaborated by Gordon Allport (1954) and further developed by Pettigrew (1997), Connolly (2000) and Dixon, Durrheim and Tredoux (2005). According to intergroup contact theory, positive attitudes and tolerance towards an 'out-group' are more likely to occur when some specific core conditions are verified. These conditions are:

- equal status between groups;
- share of common goals;
- protection against competition and
- institutional support and legitimacy of the contact.

If these conditions are met, individuals will learn to accept and respect the views of those who are different (Pettigrew, 1997). Moreover in their meta-analysis of 713 independent samples from 515 studies, Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) found that intergroup contact typically reduces prejudice between groups. Also, the positive effect of interethnic contact on out-group attitude extends to the entire out-group and is not limited to the group members directly involved in contact. Different studies stress that the contact process should not be limited to friendship between different ethnic or religious groups; it should

be based on acknowledging the legitimacy of different points of view between groups and individuals (Connolly, 2000; Dixton et al. 2005).

Intergroup contact hypothesis has been extensively tested in different settings, including educational and classroom contexts. Educational researchers have found contact hypothesis particularly attractive arguing that pupils educated in a school where intergroup contact is promoted are more inclined to be positive about diversity, as opposed to pupils educated in schools segregated by faith or ethnicity (Levinson, 1999).

Focusing on interethnic class composition in the USA, research by Holme et al (2005) has found that the experience of mixed schools helped graduates to break barriers with students of different cultures and 'increased sense of comfort in interracial settings' (ibid, p. 14). Tropp and Prenovost (2008) show that ethnic out-group attitudes of European-American adolescents were more positive in ethnically balanced classrooms.

Other studies, based in the UK and other European countries, have found a significant link between ethnically diverse classes and favourable attitudes between ethnic groups (Janmaat 2012, 2014; Bubritzki et al. 2018). Janmaat presents evidence on attitudes of 14 year old native students across Western countries and found a positive effect on inclusive views among native children, but particularly in relation to second-generation 'migrants' [ethnic minorities] (Janmaat, 2014). In their study in Lancashire (UK), Billings and Holden (2007) found that social interactions between young adults of other faith and ethnic groups produce positive attitudes between them. A recent study commissioned by the Department for Education (2017) examined the extent to which mixing in school can 'improve attitudes towards outgroups and intergroup relations'. Focusing on the contact between White-British and Asian-British Muslim pupils at secondary schools in Oldham, research has found that:

'There was consistent evidence that attitudes relating to trust and tolerance of other groups differ amongst White-British pupils in mixed vs segregated schools. Attitudes were more positive and, as would be expected, mixing was more frequent in mixed than segregated schools' (Hewstone et al, 2017:12).

The authors go on to argue that:

'Mixed schools do result in more social mixing between ethnic groups over time, and mixing is reliably associated with more positive views of the outgroup' and 'attitudes of pupils who mix with other backgrounds were more positive compared to those who remain with their own ethnicities' (ibid:12-14).

Several studies have also found that successful participation in school life and pupils engagement, which both are considered indicators of integration, are positively associated with school and classroom composition (Faas, 2010). Research on pupil

friendships finds evidence that cross-ethnic relationships increase children's resilience to ethnic discrimination, as well as having a positive effect on community cohesion (Badji et al, 2014).

Recent research by Simon Burgess and Lucinda Platt lends weight to contact hypothesis and to the influence of school composition over other factors. The study used data from a cross-European study measuring 'warmth of feeling' along with information about friendships, attitudes to multi-culturalism and personal and school characteristics. Their analysis found that pupils from one ethnic group feel more positive towards another group where there are more pupils from that group in their school. They also combined warmth of feeling, number of friends from the other group and views on multiculturalism into a composite measure which they found positively related to the number of pupils from that group within the school. Importantly the project considers contact between the two main minority groups – Asian British and Black British – and reports the same findings. The results also show that school ethnic composition is more important than Local Authority composition, in finding that the attitudes of White British pupils are significantly more positive towards ethnic minority pupils where they are more numerous in their school. The authors conclude that policy should focus on how to encourage mixed schools and how to encourage contact (Burgess and Platt, 2018).

Evidence from Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland provides a potentially valuable example of integration policy and practice because of its experience with religious and political segregation of communities and schools. In Northern Ireland the contact approach aiming at reducing ethno religious conflict in education settings has been extensively studied and tested. The research and policy interest is justified by the separate educational system where Catholic and Protestant schools play an ambiguous role in sustaining or ameliorating the conflict. The growth of the integrated 'religiously mixed' school sector allows comparison between mixed and separated schools. Integrated schools are schools with a planned intake which allows that no religious group become dominant amongst pupils, staff or boards of governors. In these mixed settings, the ethos of the schools is to provide shared education as well as a proactive acknowledgement of difference which are not only confined to religiously shared education. (McGlynn 2003; Bekerman 2004).

While the particular circumstances do not apply to the rest of the UK, there are some research findings of relevance to segregation by ethnicity and religion in UK schools. In particular, it is believed in the context of Northern Ireland, that pupils in schools which are segregated by ethnicity and religion hold more prejudiced views towards other groups than pupils in integrated settings. These prejudices are considered to have led to hostile behaviour among young people which extend, and potentially increase, in adulthood. A paper by Hayes et al (2013) presents comprehensive evidence on both the extent of

segregation versus integration in Northern Ireland's schools and on the impact of integration on young people's attitudes. At the time of the research, there were 1,800 pupils in integrated schools, accounting for 6% of the school population. Using data from the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (pooled sample from 2005-2009) they find that pupils of each faith who attended an integrated school were more likely than others to say they had 'a lot' of understanding of the other religious community and also that they had 'a lot' of respect for its culture and traditions. The authors consider the possibility that these findings reflect selectivity among parents but, countering this possibility, find that pupils who attended integrated schools were less likely than others to say that their parents influence their views. These findings may be considered relevant in the British context, but it should also be recognised that the segregated school system in Northern Ireland is both of long-standing and reflects deep divisions.

Hughes et al (2013) analysing the impact of out-group attitude of pupils attending mixed and separated post primary schools in Northern Ireland find that the mix of the student body is the key factor in promoting cross-group relations, more than the type of school. The authors suggest that the policy implication of such evidence should be a shift from the current preoccupation with the opportunity to fund or not faith schools to the focus on how all school can become more inclusive.

The complexity of the contact

The UK has become more ethnically and socially diverse over time, but contact between different groups cannot be assumed to take place. Despite diversity, high levels of segregation may limit opportunities for mixing (Laurence, 2015). When there are few opportunities for contact or frequency of contact is limited, it becomes difficult to tackle negative attitudes and anxiety. For years contact hypothesis has guided interventions to promote schools desegregation. However these attempts at desegregation have often failed because strong contextual factors such as demographic circumstances, housing policies and parental school choices are difficult to neutralise by school or national educational policies (Vedder et al. 2006).

Some local authorities have promoted desegregation by merging schools with non-diverse intakes to form a more diverse school community. This strategy, which has been described as 'forced integration' (Miah, 2012) is reported to have mixed results. Hewstone et al (2017) in their research on the outcomes of the merger of two ethnically segregated schools into a single mixed school in Oldham, find that 'over a four-year period, intergroup anxiety significantly decreased, and positivity and outgroup contact significantly increased for both Asian-British and White British pupils'. However, a less positive picture is presented by Miah in his analysis of school mergers in Leeds, Burnley, Blackburn and Oldham, where he states that 'despite the government's intention of creating mixed schools, the Muslim presence was considered deeply problematic in the

local public discourse of school mergers' (2012: 34). Particularly in the case of school mergers in Leeds and Burnley, the author finds that racial tensions and attacks on Muslim pupils increased, amplifying feelings of insecurity they experienced. In their research on integrated secondary schools in Northern Ireland, McKeown and colleagues (2016) studied classroom seating choice, using maps and numbered questionnaires where participants self-reported religious identity. They found that although the conditions for successful intergroup contact might be considered to be in place, religious segregation was evident in the majority of classrooms.

While diversity offers potential for positive intergroup contact, not all forms of intergroup contact will improve intergroup attitudes. Research by Barlow et al. (2012) shows that negative contact may be more strongly associated with increased racism and discrimination than positive contact is with its reduction. Indeed 'The beneficial effects of numerous positive intergroup encounters may be counteracted by the relatively infrequent but powerful effects of negative intergroup encounters' (pg. 1640). A paper by Laurence and Bentley (2017) presents comprehensive evidence that in more diverse communities, the increased frequency of contact is both positive and negative in nature. Using data from the 2014-15 European Social Survey (ESS7) authors argue that increasing diversity may lead to a polarisation in attitudes towards immigration as a result of intergroup contact and not necessary as a result of the lack of contact.

It is argued that the apparent simplicity of the contact hypothesis can mask and hide the complexities which grow when diverse groups are mixed together. Simply having opportunities for contact does not guarantee social mixing. Putnam (2007) suggests that alongside contact theory, the conflict 'perspective' is relevant when investigating the impact of ethnic diversity on civic attitudes. Ethnic competition theory (Blalock 1967) places emphasis on the competitive relation between ethnic groups, suggesting that intergroup conflict reinforces mechanisms of social identification producing more positive in-group attitudes and more negative out group attitudes. While this theory is generally applied to context where competition is produced by scarce economic resources, evidence suggests that in classrooms cultural competition may play a role. The 'ethnic density' hypothesis (Halpern 1993; Fleischmann et al. 2012), argues that students benefit by being surrounded by co-ethnic peers as their presence reinforces social support, safeguarding against discrimination and isolation. There is also evidence that, even in highly diverse schools friendship groups remain homogeneous (Clack et al., 2005). However, there is limited research into the issue of inter-ethnic friendships. More generally, there is limited evidence about what kinds of contact are most positive and promote integration.

A further criticism of contact theory is made by research on Muslim pupils attending Islamic schools in UK and the USA which finds that separation of Muslims in Islamic schools does not necessarily produce isolation from pupils of other faiths, unless this

physical separation is amplified by residential and socio economic segregation (Hussain and Read, 2015). The authors argue that despite the common discourse, a delayed inter-group contact can be beneficial as 'Islamic schools can facilitate the participation of Muslims in mainstream institution by equipping them with the cultural capital needed to navigate in non-Muslim arenas' (p.556). Their research therefore challenges contact hypothesis by suggesting that the type of contact occurring matters and a 'delayed inter-group contact' may help students navigate mainstream areas more successfully.

Key points

- Creating conditions for successful intergroup contact is considered key by exponents of contact theory, with schools considered to be an appropriate setting.
- Studies consistently find that contact between different ethnic groups of young people in schools creates more positive attitudes and can increase cohesion. This is particularly strongly endorsed in recent findings by researchers at the University of Bristol and LSE.
- Evidence shows the importance of contact between different groups in reducing segregation. In particular research in the context of Northern Ireland suggests that integrated education may reduce divisions, although pupils in such schools are, by definition, from families who are likely to be open to integration.
- Other evidence suggests that, even in the case of integrated and mixed schools, the contact between ethnic and religious groups often bears little resemblance to the optimal conditions theorized by contact theory. When the core conditions of the contact are not carefully considered, segregation persists even in multicultural and diverse schools.
- It is crucial to take account of the counterbalancing influences of both positive and negative contacts in diverse settings. Evidence suggests that contact is not always positive and not all forms of intergroup contact will improve intergroup attitudes.
- There is a need for greater understanding of what type of contact and activity is positive and can promote integration. There is currently limited evidence on this question.

Chapter 4 School level actions to promote integration

Successful integration of ethnic and religious groups involves a whole range of policy domains and the practices that schools use to facilitate integration play a crucial role. Existing evidence points to a wide range of actions that schools can take to promote ethnic and religious integration of students. In the UK schools have local autonomy to adjust their curricula, for example integrating cultural, ethnic and faith diversity. Moreover, schools are free to decide dress codes and arrangements to celebrate Non-Christian faith holidays. A report by the OECD (2015) suggests avoiding concentration of students with an immigrant background in disadvantaged schools, demonstrating to all pupils the value of cultural diversity. The evidence reviewed by the OECD indicates a consensus that effective practices include a safe and supportive environment, a positive school climate as well as academic and linguistic support for those pupils who do not speak English as their first language. In particular the report states that:

‘Positive intergroup relations help immigrant students to adjust to their new surroundings... Students’ perceptions of support and caring from teachers and peers are related to motivation, perceived competence and investment of effort – all factors that clearly contribute to academic performance’ (p40).

The OECD report (2018) explores the link between school policies and practices and the chance that students with an immigrant background (who in the UK would be considered ethnic minorities rather than immigrants)⁸ have to obtain academic proficiency and achieve positive outcomes and experiences. In a discussion of the learning environment and how it is related to students’ academic, social and emotional, and motivational resilience, the authors state that it significantly influences student performance and engagement at school (Engerström, 2009; Thapa et al., 2013). The disciplinary climate i.e. the level of student discipline in class is reported to be a strong predictor of students’ sense of belonging at school, academic achievement and well-being (Arum and Velvez, 2012; Chiu et al., 2016; OECD, 2003).

Some studies focus on specific interventions involving definite practices (i.e. workshops, curriculum projects, events, actively recruit teachers with ethnic or migrant backgrounds) while others explore longer terms programmes (i.e. linking classrooms, peer education and mentoring programmes) (Sirius 2013; INTO, 2015).

⁸ In the OECD report students with immigrant background include both first- and second-generation immigrant students.

School linking

The school linking is a programme that brings together two classes from demographically diverse schools. A number of studies suggest **school linking** as a strategy to overcome the lack of diversity due to classroom composition and to facilitate contact and understanding of diversity between different groups. Dyson and Gallannaugh (2008) examining literature on 'community cohesion' in schools found that the majority of the studies (37) were related to school linking interventions which have been evaluated by different researchers (Raw 2006, Raw 2007, Kerr et al. 2011). Based explicitly on the theoretical foundation of contact hypothesis the first linking programme was launched in Bradford in 2001 pairing different primary schools in the City. Pairing schools involves:

- a targeted training for teacher involved in the programme;
- an initial day where the paired classrooms spend a day together at a neutral venue;
- a minimum of two contacts per term;
- a number of shared activities.

After 2001 the programme was extended to the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and an evaluation of impact was conducted by Anni Raw (2006). The qualitative and quantitative evaluation focuses on 28 schools out of 61 involved in the School Linking Project for the year. Evaluators concluded that:

'The project can, even within the short timescale of a single academic year, and comprising a minimum of seven (mostly whole day) contacts between linking classes, achieve considerable increases in understanding and trust amongst a majority of participating children separated by cultural, ethnic or religious differences' (ibid: 57).

Evaluators measured the impact of the programme using different indicators, including the numbers of named cross-cultural friendships in their friendship circle, resulting from participating in Linking Schools, the observed willingness to share resources, co-operation and teamwork between children from different cultural, ethnic or religious backgrounds during classroom activities as well as from interview statements before and after the programme.

In 2007 the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) launched a pilot national school linking programme in England, which has been evaluated by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) (Kerr et al. 2011). The aim of the programme was to give students of different schools the opportunity to meet and learn from students of different faiths, ethnicities and cultures. To take part in the programme, schools needed to commit to a year-long involvement which includes three link days and a series of structured activities e.g. bringing a box where pupils put objects that have a special meanings, card games exploring 'who I am', co-operative physical indoor or

outdoor play, museum visits, music making, art games and drama games. Primary and secondary school classes were paired from different areas and the process is led by either local authorities or charities.

The School Linking Network evaluation carried out by NFER used a two-stage quasi experimental research design with students, teachers and local authorities involved in the programme. The evaluation involved quantitative surveys with 3902 pupils responding to both the pre- and post- questionnaire and eight case studies where in-depth interviews were conducted with teachers and members of the school's senior management. The evaluation also involved focus groups conducted with selected pupils involved in the linking activities. Overall it appears to be a robust and in-depth examination of the programme's impact. Their report outlines the positive impact that the programme may have on many aspects of pupils' skills, attitudes, perceptions and behaviours, particularly their respect for others, their self-confidence and their self-efficacy, as well as broadening the social groups with whom pupils interact. The evaluation finds that school and local authority staff also benefit from involvement in the intervention. The programme was considered by the evaluators to be highly cost effective in relation to the impacts and outcomes it achieved. However the report concludes that linking schools requires careful preparation and planning of activities and there is a need of resources to support the whole process of school linking which includes coordination of links, training activities and support for teachers as well as monitoring and evaluation of post-link activities. The evaluation finds that programmes led by local authorities tended to be more successful due to the level of support provided throughout the linking process and in terms of access to expert training and resources, which ultimately produced effective linking processes and practices (Kerr et al. 2011).

Evaluators have found that the type of activities that were more frequently used by secondary schools were 'sports/outdoor activity', followed by a 'drama, art, film or music project' and 'learning about different cultures or religions' (both 32 per cent of pupils) (ibid: 50). The School Linking Network model suggests a minimum number of four link activity meeting all over the year. One of the key findings of the evaluation is that the programme is more likely to have an impact if there is a 'sustained involvement (two or more visits) of the pupils in the programme'. The teacher role is crucial in delivering activities and, for successful impact, teachers should meet for training and have access to high quality classroom resources (ibid).

Parental involvement

Parental involvement has a positive effect on the well-being of their children and is considered a key element of a socially connected school where all actors work together to create a positive learning environment (OECD, 2018). Parental involvement includes providing adequate information through various communication channels as well as use

of interpreters when parents are not proficient in English. . The linking project model includes parents' involvement in events organised by pupils as a strategy to disseminate to the rest of the school and to the wider community the linking activities. In the evaluation of the Bradford Schools Linking project, Raw 2006 states that one of the aims of the intervention is to 'providing opportunities for adults who work with the children, to meet to share ideas and broaden perspectives' (p3). However, firm evidence on the impact of parental involvement on pupil's integration is lacking.

Curriculum based initiatives

The distinctiveness of The Linking Network's schools linking programme is that it is rooted in the curriculum (Akhtar at all. 2017). The school linking evaluation (Raw, 2006) reports evidence of positive impact on critical thinking skills and emotional literacy for pupils where the linking activities were introduced as part of the curriculum e.g. citizenship or history. Pupils from different faiths, ethnicities and backgrounds are encouraged to engage in open and honest dialogue and to discuss and develop critical thinking skills. It is argued that the impact of the Linking Network's schools linking programme goes beyond children and includes parents and communities (Akhtar at all. 2017).

Besides the one connected with the linking programme, schools promote other activities which involve curriculum or extra-curricular based interventions aiming at developing students understanding of diversity and respect. Diversity education includes inter-faith interventions as well as intercultural education which have been added to the National Curriculum for all students. Another addition to the curriculum was civic education, which was initially introduced in response to the need for greater integration and cohesion across communities in the UK for the promotion of fundamental British values. There is no evidence on the extent to which it has increased integration of by ethnicity and religion among pupils. In relation to the curriculum, the 'Living with Difference' Butler-Sloss Report (2015) suggested reconsidering religious education as a means of promoting integration. While many schools, especially faith-based, teach only a single doctrine, the report argued that plurality of views about faith and non-faith doctrine should be encouraged. The authors stressed the importance of providing religious literacy to all children as a way to facilitate free choice at adulthood as well as understanding diverse faiths. However their recommendation is not supported by published evidence. The report also underlines the inadequacy of teacher training and many syllabuses stating that 'They fail to reflect the reality of religion and belief, having a rather sanitised or idealised form of religion as their content' (p.34). As above, this may be a reasonable point but is not something on which there is published evidence.

Providing the opportunity to discuss and reflect on diversity and cultural differences is seen as beneficial to pupils' well-being and their family relationships (OECD, 2015). Christopher and colleagues (2018) in their teacher toolkit suggest that talks and

discussion need to be deep and address divisive issues and difficult questions should not be avoided. While this seems a reasonable point, it is not supported by evidence in relation to specific interventions or programmes. Research conducted in some integrated schools of Northern Ireland finds that inter-group dialogue and debate is not always facilitated and classroom discussion involving sensitive topics, such as religion and identity are avoided (Ben-Nun 2013; Donnelly 2008). In their study, McKeown and colleagues (2017) examine whether a value-in-diversity storybook intervention encouraged 6-year olds' interactions with their racially diverse peers. The authors argue that after having listened to the story that presented diversity as something valuable and after subsequent classroom discussion, children no longer displayed racially segregated seating behaviour. However the effect was short-lived leading the authors to emphasise the importance of combining specific interventions, such as the one presented, into the curriculum with a broader focus on multicultural approach to diversity.

The Shared Space Project promoted by the University of Bristol with the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) explored how Contact Theory could be applied usefully to the Religious Education setting to promote tolerance and understanding. The authors suggest three approaches which develop discussion and listening skills, enable pupils to engage with different perspectives and promote structured interaction. The toolkit produced by researchers provides practical guidance on strategies and specific learning techniques teachers can use to promote community relations in classrooms. Among the different learning techniques mentioned, the toolkit describes the 'Jigsaw'⁹ as a classroom-based approach to achieve collaborative learning and conversation across groups. The Jigsaw technique has been invented and developed by Elliot Aronson and his students in the US and since the 1970s it has been implemented in different classrooms. The aim of the approach is to 'reduce racial conflict among schoolchildren'. Wolstenholme and colleagues (2016) evaluated the impacts of teaching PSHE with Jigsaw on primary schools that have purchased the programme. The programme includes 6 units (known as Puzzles), each lasting for half a term and designed to cover all aspects of PSHE. The focus is on social skills and emotional literacy, spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development as well as British values and personal development. The evaluation includes a quantitative and qualitative sample design and while it is not representative of the full population of school purchasing Jigsaw, it seems to be robust. Evaluators have found that teachers reported that it impacted positively on their pupils' social skills and relationships.

Evidence suggests that curricula materials can be as important as curriculum itself. Textbooks are one of the main educational resource for teaching and learning and the UNESCO and the Georg Eckert Institute (GEI) report (2017), stresses the crucial role of textbooks in encouraging mutual understanding among diverse individuals and

⁹ To find out more about the jigsaw technique see <https://www.jigsaw.org/#overview>

communities and promoting tolerance and critical thinking. The report's authors suggest that textbooks should be free from divisive stereotypes and prejudices 'employing inclusive language, representing diverse identities and integrating human rights' (p.12). This would seem to be a valid point, although the extent to which this is a problem does not feature in the literature.

Learning formats may also be relevant: Ahad and Benton (2018) argue that digital technologies may enable more experimental and personalised learning and could facilitate and support the inclusion of ethnic minorities and migrant background students and their peers. Authors suggest technologies could relieve teachers from routine and time consuming tasks and could facilitate communication with pupils' parents. The report also suggests that technologies could particularly help language learners providing extra capacity through on line courses, activities and targeted resources. Authors suggest 'flipped classrooms' could benefit particularly language learners in allowing them to overcome language barriers before the class. Moreover technologies could reduce barriers for pupils educated in out of school settings using distance learning and social media to interact directly with tutors.

Extra-curricular initiatives

While we were unable to find full evaluation reports on extra curricula activities, we found some examples of interesting projects aimed at promoting integration. Within extra curricula based initiatives Van de Vyer and Abrams (2017) describe the potential of art-based interventions to promote community cohesion and engagement. They illustrate a community arts festival arising from People United's 'Best of Us' project which involved primary schools in Newington, in the London Borough of Southwark. The aim of the project, which took place in 2015, was to celebrate the human character through art, focusing on qualities such as courage, compassion, forgiveness and hope. The mixed method evaluation found that the arts-based project significantly impacted on pupils' community connectedness and engagement, both of which are considered crucial ingredients for overcoming divisions. In particular the researchers report that:

'The programme creates opportunities for children, teachers and parents to explore kindness qualities, to celebrate and reflect on the positive role models in their lives and to understand the benefits of being kind to ourselves and others' (People United, 2015, p.22).

A similar project aiming at promoting cohesion in schools and the wider community is the 'Creative Community' project delivered by Tower Hamlets Council. The project started in September 2016 and finished in summer 2017. It involved seven student council groups based within schools in the borough. Schools agreed a community issue which impacts negatively on community cohesion and coordinated with groups and organisations to tackle the issue. The project included different activities aimed at creating a space for pupils to raise issues and reflect on concepts around hate crime, cohesion and equalities

(London Council, 2017). These activities include three 'Train the Trainer' training sessions for pupils and staff to facilitate cohesion projects, sharing good practice on community cohesion across the world, identification of cohesion issues followed by peer feedback and a 'wind milling' activity. There is as yet no evidence on the outcomes of this recent project. Other relevant projects aiming at promoting religious integration have been implemented by different schools. Ten schools across England joined the ACT 'Building Resilience' project¹⁰ which supported teachers in developing innovative teaching strategies to build pupil's criticality and resilience to extremism. These strategies include learning resources such as practical lesson plans, short videos, schemes of work, teaching resources and approaches to assessing pupils' progress and the impact on learning. The aim of the project was to support pupils to:

- think critically, explore and discuss controversial and sensitive issues;
- recognise and challenge extremism and terrorist ideologies;
- build resilience to radicalisation; and
- understand the value of democratic citizenship.

The evaluation measured the impact of nine interventions implemented by nine different schools showing no significant changes in students' opinions or beliefs. However, the qualitative interviews conducted with students and teachers showed a more positive picture. Teachers were generally happy they had taken part in the project and had gained confidence by the end of the programme. Students appreciated the opportunity to tackle the issue, making it less of a taboo (Jerome and Elwick 2016).

Another school-based intervention is 'the circle of friends' approach¹¹ which was first developed by Forest (1993) in North America. The approach is designed to create a support network around individuals in the school community who are experiencing social difficulties because of their disability, ethnic and religious diversity or behaviour. The circle of friends process is based on peer mobilisation of a group of volunteers with the aim of building a relationship that enables them to carry out problem solving social difficulties. As soon as the targeted pupil has been identified the role of the teacher or facilitator is to arrange the induction session with the group of volunteers. The group completes a Relationship Circles Activity focusing on the targeted child and a selected small group of volunteers is chosen to deliver the intervention. The next step is to communicate to the targeted child that the group will support him/her for the following 6-8 weeks. While a specific child is the target, the process is considered a rich learning experience for all members of the circle. While the impact of the programme does not appear to have been established through a full evaluation, a rigorous review of the

¹⁰ <https://www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/act-building-resilience-project>

¹¹ <https://inclusive-solutions.com/circles/circle-of-friends/circle-of-friends-article/>

approach sees it as an important tool for enhancing social cohesion of pupils in schools (Newton and Wilson, 2003).

The role of teachers

Some consideration has been given to the role of teachers in meeting the needs of pupils and parents from a range of cultural, ethnic, religious and linguistic backgrounds. Authors of the OECD report (2015) argue that the role of the teacher requires a specific set of skills to support diverse learners that are not easily acquired through formal training. In particular, teaching staff need to develop a pedagogical approach that embraces diverse learners and their families, facilitating a reciprocal dialogue. In practice this involves, for example, helping pupils to develop good relationships with their peers as well as maintaining positive attitudes towards values of their families, manage complex classroom conditions, ensuring collaboration between language teachers and classroom teachers. The report suggests that a large proportion of teachers across countries feel unprepared and in need of more professional support in teaching in diverse and multilingual settings. Ahad and Benton on their report (2018) on how Europe's education system can boost migrant inclusion stress the importance of training teachers to update their skills to meet what are seen as the challenges of diversity. The authors suggest visual aids and games as strategies to vary the proportion of speech, promoting student interaction and productive language use. However, these are practices which apply more to the integration of newer migrants rather than established ethnic minority communities who are the focus of our review.

Evidence suggests that ethnic and religious integration can be supported by recruitment of teachers with ethnic or migrant backgrounds. This is because teachers with ethnic or migrant background could influence positively pupils learning experience and sense of belonging (EPRS, 2016). Minority ethnic teachers are more likely to drop out of initial teacher education, leave their post or not to be promoted (McNamara et al, 2010). In England and Wales the Teacher and Training Agency (TTA) introduced measures to make the teaching profession more accessible, attracting more ethnic minorities to the profession. However, the OECD report (2015) suggests that hiring teachers with an immigrant background (in the UK context encompassing religious and ethnic minorities) should not be the only strategy to ensure effective teaching for migrant children. Evidence also focuses on the role of teachers expectations on the attainment levels and on the aspiration levels of students from an ethnic minority backgrounds showing that a cycle of low expectations, low aspirations and low attainment has been generated for certain groups such as Black Caribbean pupils (Brind et al, 2008). This points to the importance of training and monitoring of all teachers.

Key points

- Schools have the autonomy to adjust their curricula to facilitate ethnic and religious children's integration in ways which might promote integration.
- Evidence provides examples of positive practices implemented by school curriculum or extra curriculum based interventions aiming at developing students' understanding of diversity and respect, examples include:
 - The Linking Network is a programme which helps children to develop positive skills and attitudes towards those from other ethnic, religious and social class groups. Twinning classrooms from different areas has been found to be a cost effective way to tackle school segregation.
 - The circle of friends is a peer support programme which has been described as successful in promoting pupils inclusion. However, we were not able to find evaluation of its impact on religious and ethnic integration.
 - The jigsaw is a classroom based learning technique which facilitates cooperative learning between pupils
- Across projects there is evidence that creating conditions for classroom discussion and reflexion on diversity enable pupils to engage with different perspectives.
- Across projects there are indications that preparation, training and support for teachers engaged in delivering initiatives is important to their success.
- There are a range of extra-curricular projects which show promise in promoting integration by race and ethnicity but few have been fully evaluated.
- Teachers play a crucial role in facilitating the integration process between pupils. It has been argued that the school workforce needs to be more diverse in terms of ethnic and religious background, but that this is only one of many strategies which should be used.
- Curricular materials and flexible learning formats are considered to facilitate and support integration by race and ethnicity, but we were not able to find systematic research in this area.

Chapter 5 Conclusions

The importance of ethnic and religious integration

The purpose of this literature review was to expand the Department's evidence base concerning how to improve relations between different ethnic and religious groups, in particular how to promote social mixing where it does not occur despite diversity. The issue is important because current levels of segregation have implications for equality as well as for social cohesion. The authors of the report 'Understanding School Segregation in England' found the period from 2011 to 2016 saw an increase in segregation by ethnicity (ICOCO, SchoolDash and The Challenge, 2017). This is troubling because, as the authors conclude, mixed school intakes not only influence pupils, but have a wider impact:

'Children form friendships, go to each other's home and attend out of school events together on an ongoing basis. Moreover, parents also meet at the school gate and through school-based activities and therefore are drawn into the friendship networks of the child'

It is hard not to agree that integration can have such benefits, and that mixing reduces levels of prejudice and prepares children and young people for life in diverse Britain. De-segregated schools may not ensure social integration of pupils from different religious and ethnic backgrounds, but do provide conditions under which it can be achieved. These include a range of interventions and initiatives including school mergers, linking and school-based projects. Our review has looked at the contributions of admissions policies, school and classroom-based initiatives in promoting religious and ethnic integration.

One general finding of the literature review is that it often works with a simple distinction between White British and ethnic minority pupils which does not consider the degree of divergence within the latter group. It also frequently works with an assumption that the chief beneficiaries of integration are ethnic minorities, rather than all pupils. International literature, particularly where ethnic minorities are categorised as migrants, is particularly problematic in this respect.

Admissions policies play a key role in increasing segregation, especially by religion

We reviewed evidence on the role of admissions policies in increasing or reducing segregation. They play an important role, particularly in view of the fact that levels of ethnic and religious segregation in schools do not simply reflect the composition of their local areas. They are higher than the areas in which they are located, reflecting schools' admissions policies as well as parental choice. Faith schools in themselves increase the

extent of segregation found in neighbouring schools, especially by social class but also by ethnicity. A number of studies, including by leading education experts, highlight the lack of transparency in schools' admissions practices. These have particular implications for social class segregation, but may also lead to under-representation of ethnic minorities in some schools. These findings strongly suggest the need for greater control and inspection of schools' admissions practices, as well as policies. In view of the impact of the policies of schools on others in their locality, this should not be considered an issue for individual schools.

A number of approaches to fairer admissions have been proposed, including ballots and banding. However, these have not been introduced with the explicit aim of promoting religious and ethnic integration, but to achieve a more comprehensive intake. Their success in achieving these more specific goals is not known.

The limited value of international evidence to the UK context

Practices of other European countries and in countries such as the USA and Australia have limited value in the UK context since integration projects, and research, is conducted within a 'deficit' model where ethnic minorities (often referred to as migrants) are often seen to need contact with white children in order to raise their aspirations, rather than for the benefit of all pupils in a diverse society. However, international evidence does indicate that the educational attainment of migrant (including ethnic minority) pupils is better in comprehensive systems with late selection to different ability tracks and worse in systems of high selectivity. Systems which facilitate and encourage parental choice also increase segregation, including by ethnicity. International sources are also instructive about practices which do not work, and these include busing of pupils which was briefly practiced in parts of the UK.

Evidence that contact between pupils increases integration

A number of studies suggest that contact has positive results, in particular those which look at cross-ethnic friendships and at levels of trust and positive attitudes. This includes evidence from contact between White-British and Asian-British pupils at secondary schools in Oldham. Research in the context of Northern Ireland suggests that integrated education may reduce divisions, although pupils in such schools are, by definition, from families who are likely to be open to integration and its benefits. Recent research by Burgess and Platt on contact between pupils from different ethnic groups adds considerable weight to evidence that contact encourages positive inter-group attitudes and feelings. There is also a persuasive argument in literature on integration that contact in itself may not be enough and that we need a better understanding of which types of interaction between children and young people promote integration.

School-based interventions and initiatives

Duties on schools to promote religious and ethnic integration are not new. While concerns about segregation have become more prominent in recent years, the duty to promote community cohesion dates back to 2006 and has since been reinforced. However, the extent to which schools are meeting these duties and, more importantly, succeeding in more closely integrating pupils of diverse ethnicities and religions, is not known. There is a need for research to establish what schools are doing which meets, or goes beyond, these requirements. In the absence of this information, the available literature focuses largely on specific initiatives. We have looked at evidence relating to a number of interventions which would seem to have been successfully implemented and provide an indication of what works to improve integration. They include:

- The Linking Network: a programme which helps children develop positive skills and attitudes towards those from other ethnic, religious and social class groups.
- Twinning classrooms from different areas has been found to be a cost effective way to tackle school segregation.
- The jigsaw is a classroom based learning technique which facilitates cooperative learning between pupils.
- The circle of friends: a peer support programme which has been described as successful in promoting pupils inclusion. We were not able to find evaluation of its impact on religious and ethnic integration. However, evidence from other projects which include an element of classroom discussion also suggests this component can have a positive impact on pupil activity, for example seating behaviour.

Across projects there is evidence that creating conditions for classroom discussion and reflexion on diversity enable pupils to engage with different perspectives. There are also indications that preparation, training and support for teachers engaged in delivering initiatives is important to their success. Findings from a number of projects also suggest that the whole school ethos, learning and disciplinary environment help to encourage integration of ethnic minorities, but particularly those of a migrant background.

Curricular materials are also considered to assist greater mutual understanding between pupils from different backgrounds, although we were not able to find evidence of systematic research on this area. Research also refers to the importance of teachers' background, skills and training in promoting integration. Again, it is reasonable to assume that this is an important factor, but it has not been investigated in published research findings.

Our review included a number of extra-curricular projects intended to promote integration. These projects are considered to have been successful although there has been little independent evaluation of such initiatives. Examples in the report include arts projects, which would seem to offer potential for wider adoption, as well as evaluation to see which types of approach and activities work best.

Limitations in the evidence and gaps in the literature

Our review has identified a number of limitations in the literature for establishing how religious and ethnic integration can be promoted in educational settings. First, studies work with different understandings of segregation and integration. Much research on school segregation is primarily concerned with social class divisions and disadvantage, especially in relation to schools admissions policies. The impact on segregation by ethnicity is relatively un-explored and tends to be subsumed within debates on faith schools. The literature often works with a simple distinction between White British and ethnic minority pupils which does not consider the degree of divergence within the latter group. Schools' practices aimed at promoting integration often fail to distinguish between target groups, for example ethnic minorities, religious minorities or migrants and, new arrivals, yet these would seem to present different issues. This is particularly true of international literature which commonly fails to distinguish between recent migrants and ethnic minorities, treating both within a 'deficit' model whereby integration is seen to benefit minorities rather than majorities too.

We identified a range of approaches, initiatives and approaches which would seem to have potential to promote integration. These include admissions policies and practices as well as a range of projects at school, between school, classroom-based and extra-curricular levels. However, some reports provide limited evidence of outcomes, but also processes which lead a project or intervention to success. Establishing impact is often difficult, but future practice could be informed through understanding softer, as well as hard outcomes where these cannot be established. One area where evidence is particularly lacking is the impact on parents and families of schools' work on integration, yet such information could be very helpful in informing wider strategies.

There are important gaps in knowledge about integration at particular stages of the education system. We had intended to include Further and Higher Education, yet could find no published reports on interventions with these aims. It is likely that there are projects, interventions and initiatives at local level which have not been evaluated or reported. Therefore, future research should be carried out to establish the level of current activity and its outcomes.

It is even more likely that there are many such projects at primary and secondary school level. New research is needed to establish the extent to which schools are taking action to promote integration in a range of areas: from admissions, through to the curriculum, to extra-curricular activities, community engagement and links with other schools. At present, the evidence base is small and likely to substantially under-represent the work being carried out by schools. A full investigation of all integration activities can then identify gaps both in types of intervention but also where such activity takes place in terms of school type and locality.

The shortage of literature which describes interventions and their outcomes is not only a problem for researchers and policy makers. It represents a lost opportunity for schools and other education settings to develop their own practice through learning from the experience of other institutions and programmes. Reports on existing initiatives commonly include limited information about programme content, organisation and delivery. There is therefore a need for such information to be compiled, along with previously unpublished information, to assist schools and other education settings in their integration strategies and activities. This should indicate, where possible, contextual factors which might affect the feasibility or impact of programmes.

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Appendix: Literature search and analytical framework

This evidence review took a systematic approach. We started our search utilising a broad definition of 'integration practices' in promoting ethnic and religious mix in schools. The Department confirmed their interest in focus on schools, rather than on communities. And the primary focus of the review was ethnic and religious practices implemented by schools to promote integration. The key areas that guided the research included: evidence based theories addressing how to best promote integration/mixing in schools; admission policies and their implication on integration and particular practices on how to promote social mixing where it does not occur despite diversity.

The search was initially limited to material published from 2005 onward. However, to explore the relevance of particular theories or approaches some older papers were included. The search prioritised English language articles but was not limited to UK focused material. We included material from countries with comparable approaches to education and ethnic and religious diversity (Europe, Australia and USA). The search focused on a restricted number of relevant databases and included media articles and government documents. The databases used were: Google Scholar, JSTOR, Ingentaconnect and Researchgate. Other search locations included:

- European bodies such as OECD, EC, EPRS, and Cedefop
- Research organisations/think tanks such as Institute for Public Policy Research, National Foundation for Educational Research, Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Economic and Social Research Council
- Other organisations such as the Inter Faith Network, the Sutton Trust, School Linking Network

A primary set of search terms were used to identify relevant material: integration practices in schools, ethnic integration in schools, and religious integration in schools. Secondary terms used to refine the primary search were: faith schools, admission policies, multiculturalism and contact hypothesis. The search process produced a long list of material (approximately 9,000 documents).

Key details of all identified material were downloaded in an EndNote database library. A set of inclusion/exclusion criteria was developed and agreed with the Department. After a check for duplicates, the documents were sifted on the basis of title and abstracts. The inclusion/exclusion criteria comprised the publication date (material published before 2005 was removed) and relevance (material clearly irrelevant was removed). This process reduced considerably the material allowing the second stage of the analysis which involved the prioritisation only of the materials of greatest relevance. The final

selected papers were reviewed and assessed for methodological quality, geographical coverage and perspective.

The extracted evidence was synthesized in line with the focus of the review. During this process some papers were excluded because outside of the main focus and replaced by others using a citation search based on key materials used by authors of relevant papers.

The review finds that there is a diverse and multidisciplinary body of research literature (academic and grey) on the practices schools are implementing which promote, or limit, ethnic and religious integration in the UK. The literature provides information about the effect of admission policies in producing and reinforcing ethnic and religious segregation, the relevance of the contact hypothesis theory on the school composition and the ways in which schools seek to address and promote contact and social mixing where it does not occur despite diversity. Some evidence evaluates the impact and/or effectiveness of specific desegregation or school linking interventions.

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