

River of Hope III
Summary of Key Findings
DRAFT

Acknowledgements and Data Sources

Peterborough Racial Equality Council (PREC) and the author wish to thank Marcus Richardson and Peterborough City Council Children's Services for their co-operation and for making available the statistical data for the years 2004 -2008 used in this report.

Data for 1999 is taken from the PREC's report 'River of Hope' (2001) using the data available at that time from the (then) Peterborough Local Education Authority.

Changes in groupings by ethnicity

Since 1999 the different ethnic groupings have changed, so comparisons have only been made with 1999 where the groups correspond to those used in 2008. The groups denoted by 'Black African' and 'Black African Caribbean' in 2004 – 2008 have been combined into a group denoted 'Black', which broadly corresponds to this group in 1999. This also means that the 2008 group is sufficiently large to give results that are statistically significant, and corresponds to a grouping used by DCSF. It should be noted, however, that at the national level these two groups show significantly different levels of achievement (see Demie and McLean, (2007)) and that locally the relative proportions of the population in the two groups have changed over recent years. The 'Black African' population at GCSE level is now larger than the 'Black African Caribbean' group, whereas in 1999 the latter was the much larger group.

The grouping, 'White European', includes those pupils denoted 'White European' and 'White Portuguese' but not 'White Italian'. This is because the latter constitutes an established, second and third generation community whereas the former are largely populations of recent migrants, often with EAL needs.

Data relating to socio-economic status

The only data available relating to socio-economic status is a measure of the proportion of pupils in a given group claiming free school meals. This provides an indicator of deprivation rather than the profile of a population in economic terms. Where data has been analysed against more detailed socio-economic categories there is a strong correlation at all levels between socio-economic status and school achievement (see, for instance, DfES (2006) and Hamnett et al (2007)).

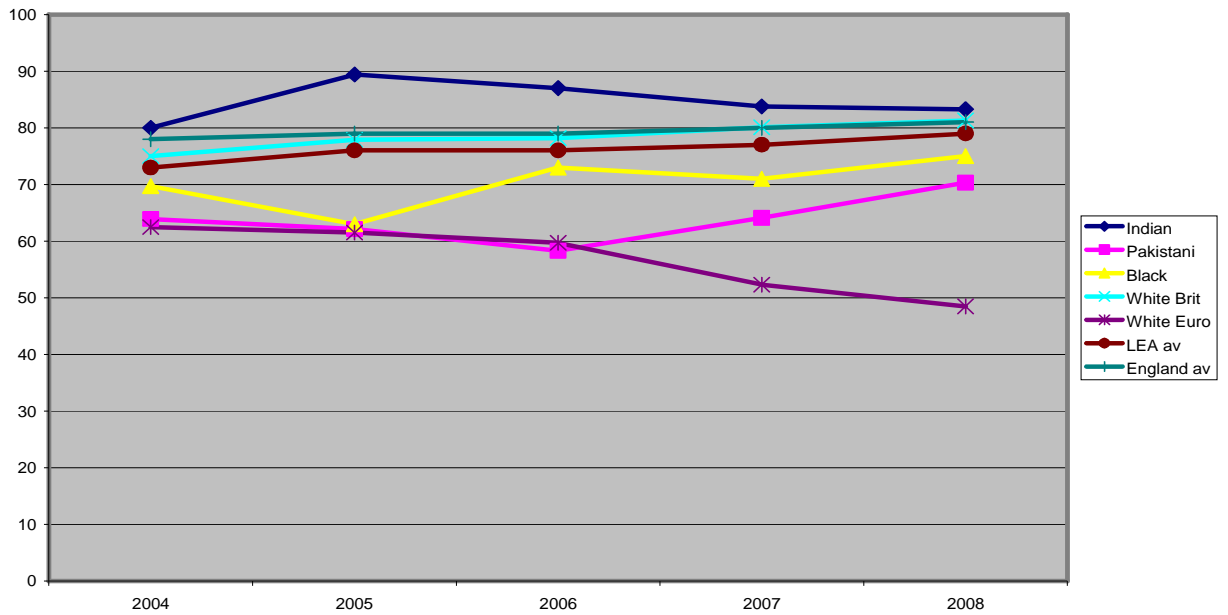
Key Findings

Patterns of achievement & improvement 1999-2008

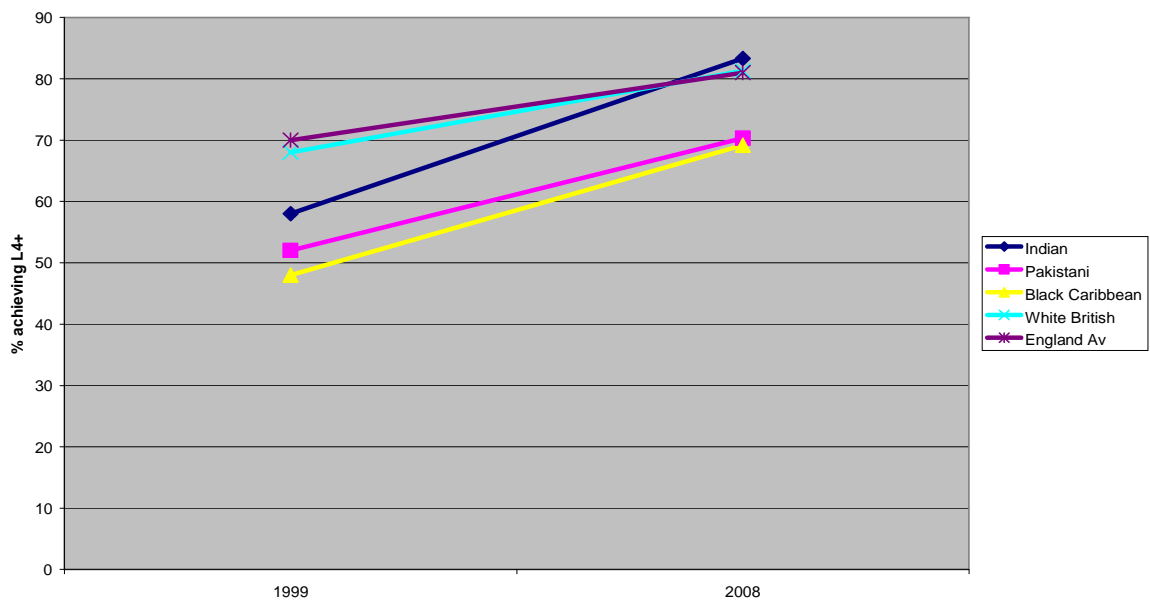
KS2 English

- White British on national average, Indian cohort above
- All other groups below national average
- White Europeans significantly (35%) below national average
- Pakistani group has made significant progress since 2006
- Since 1999 **all** groups have improved at a faster rate than national average

KS2 English % achieving L4+



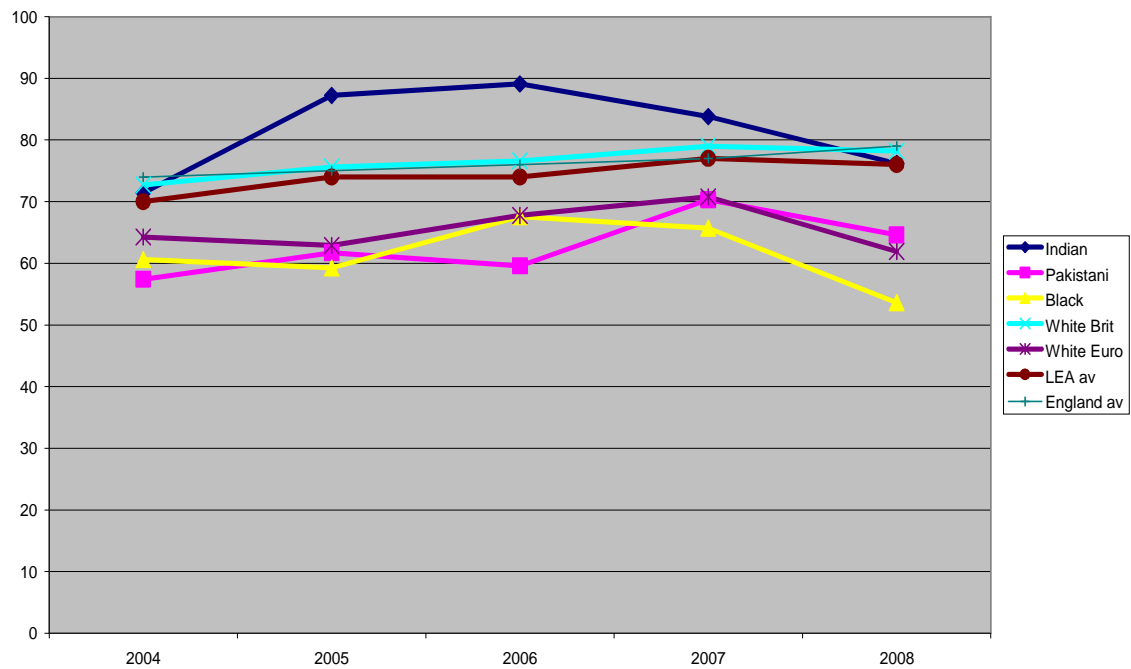
KS2 English improvement 1999 - 2008



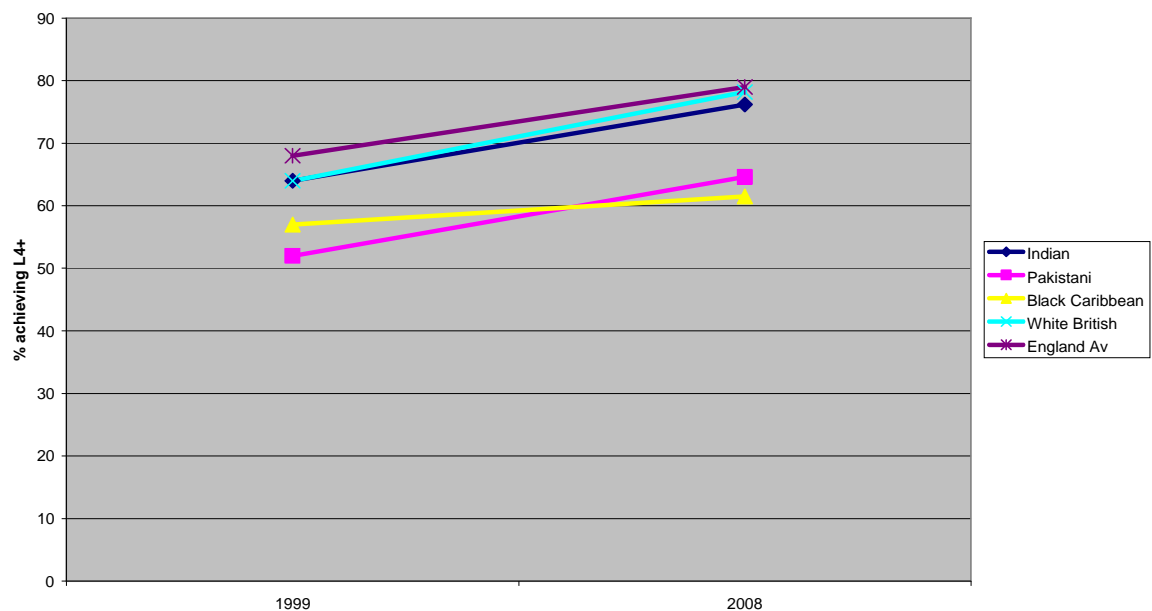
KS2 Maths

- All groups below national average in 2008
- Pakistani, White European & 'combined' Black, significantly below
- All apart from White European have improved at approx same rate as national average
- Science similar to Maths

Key stage 2 Maths % achieving L4+



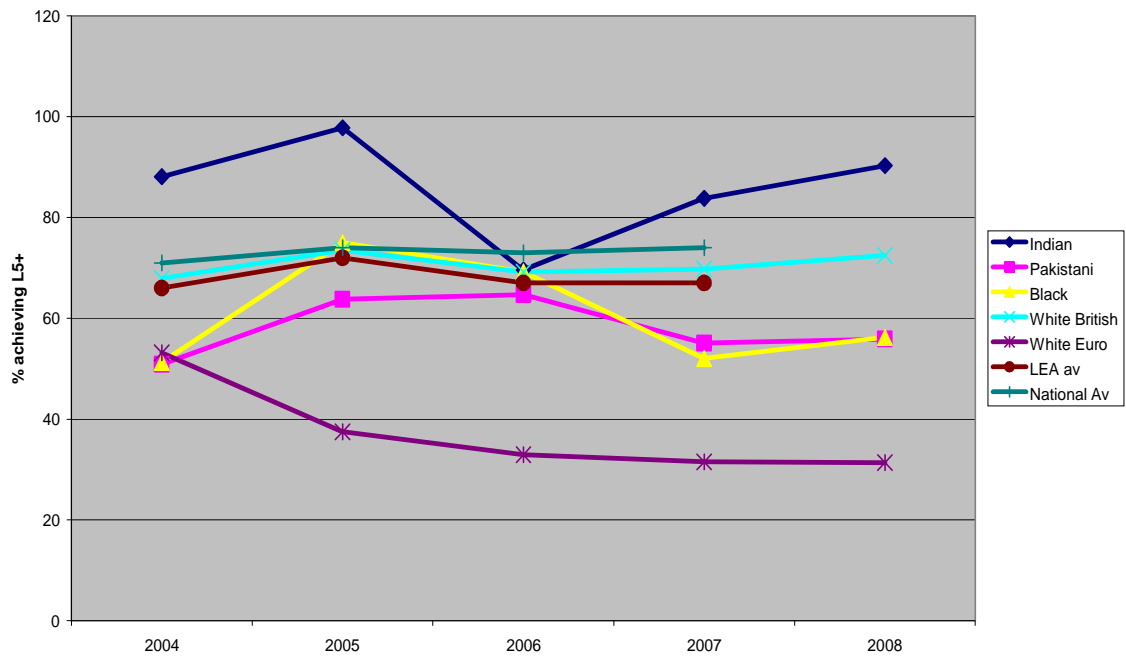
KS2 Maths improvement 1999 -2008



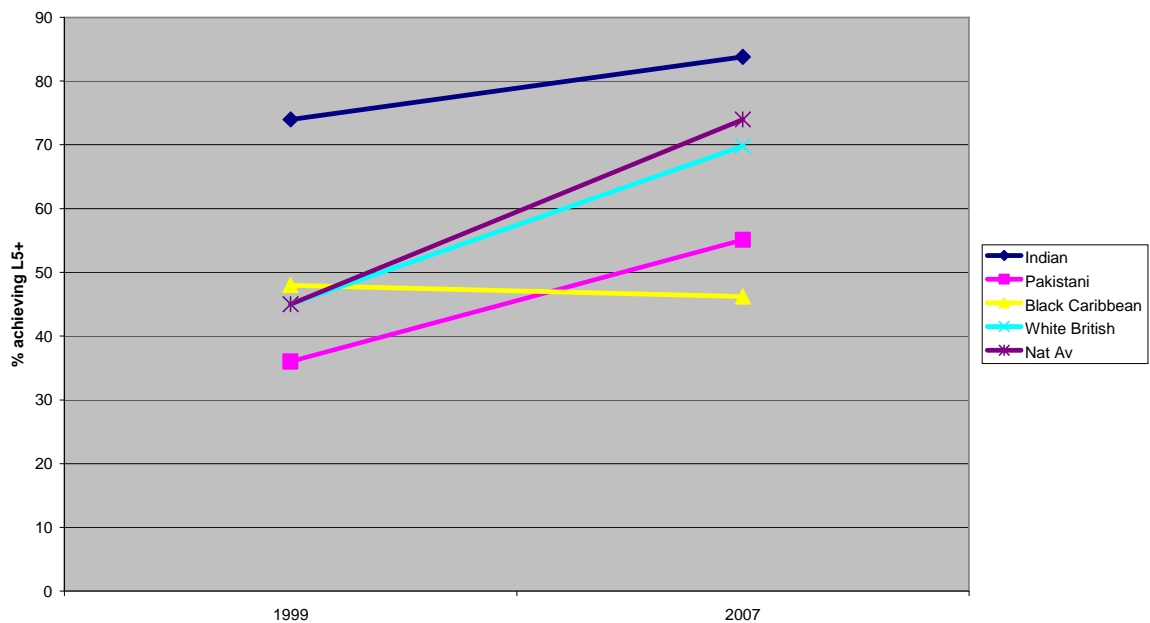
KS3 English

- All groups apart from Indian below national average
- Pakistani, White European & 'combined' Black, significantly below
- All apart from White European have improved since 2007
- Indian cohort made significant dip in 2006, now recovered
- Since 1999 all groups have improved but at a lower rate than the national average

KS3 English achievement 2004 -2008



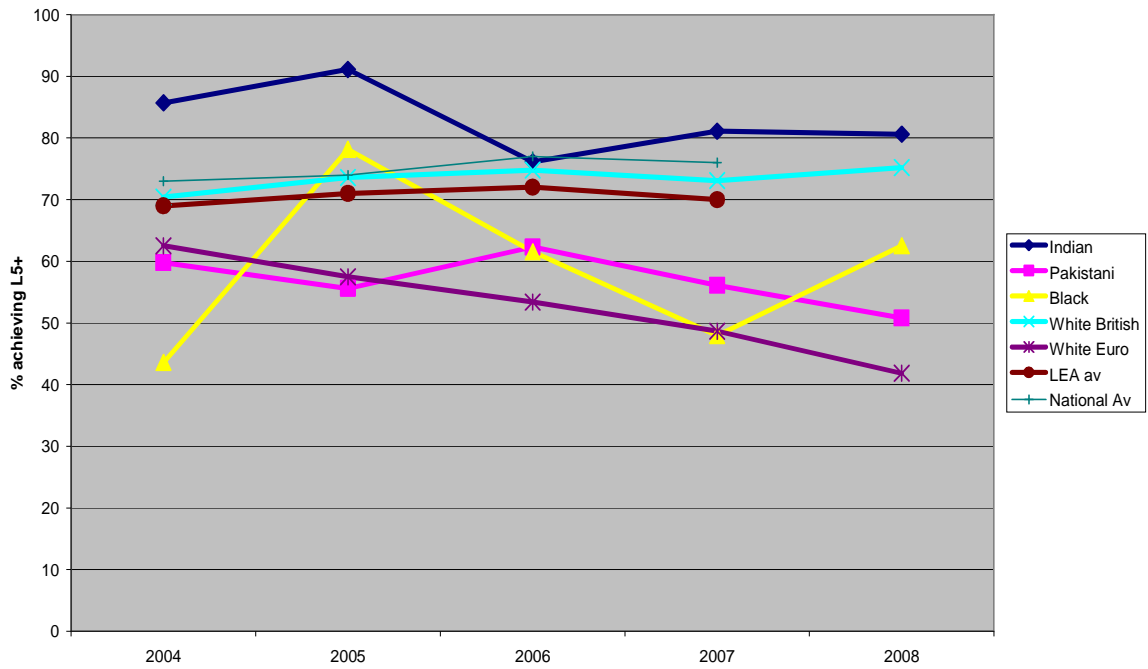
KS3 English improvement 1999 - 2007



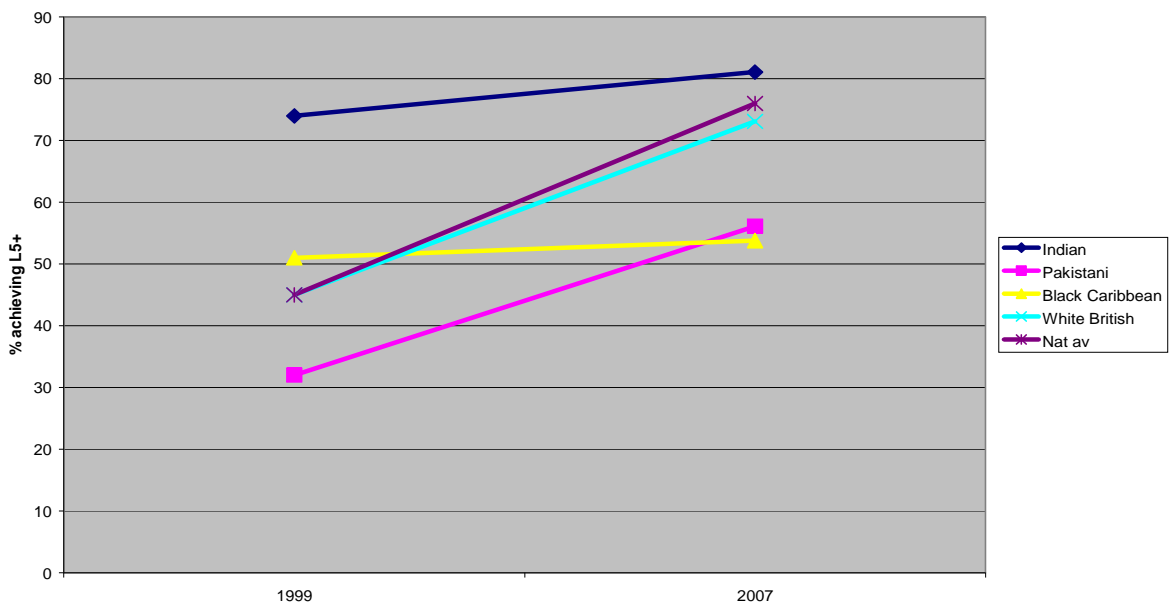
Maths

- All groups apart from Indian below national average
- Pakistani, White European & combined Black, significantly below
- Pakistani and White European have declined since 2006
- Since 1989 all groups have improved at a lower rate than the national average

KS3 Maths achievement 2004 -2008



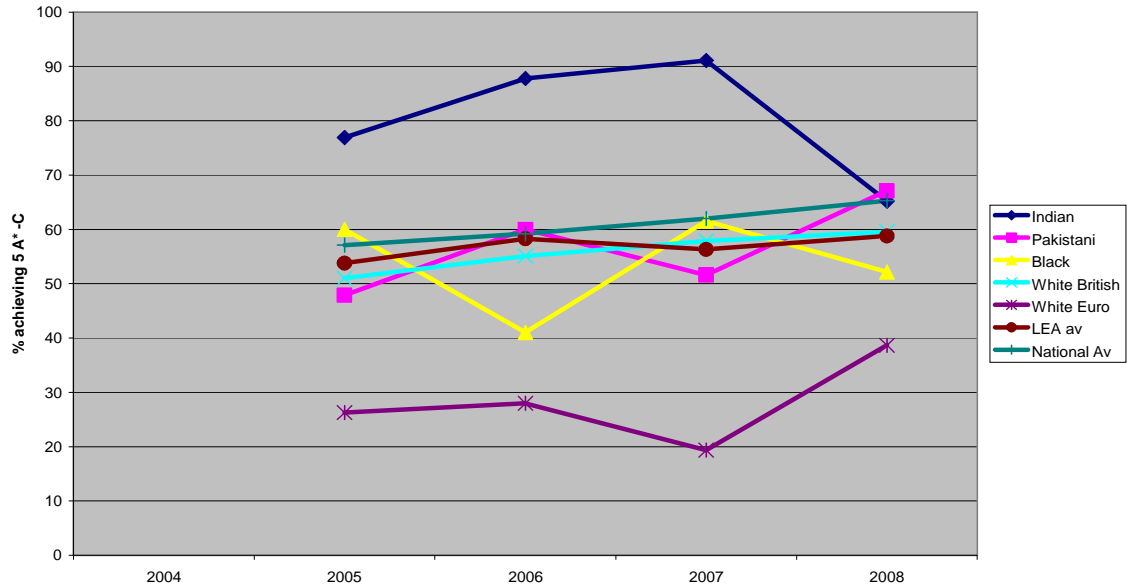
KS3 Maths improvement 1999 - 2007



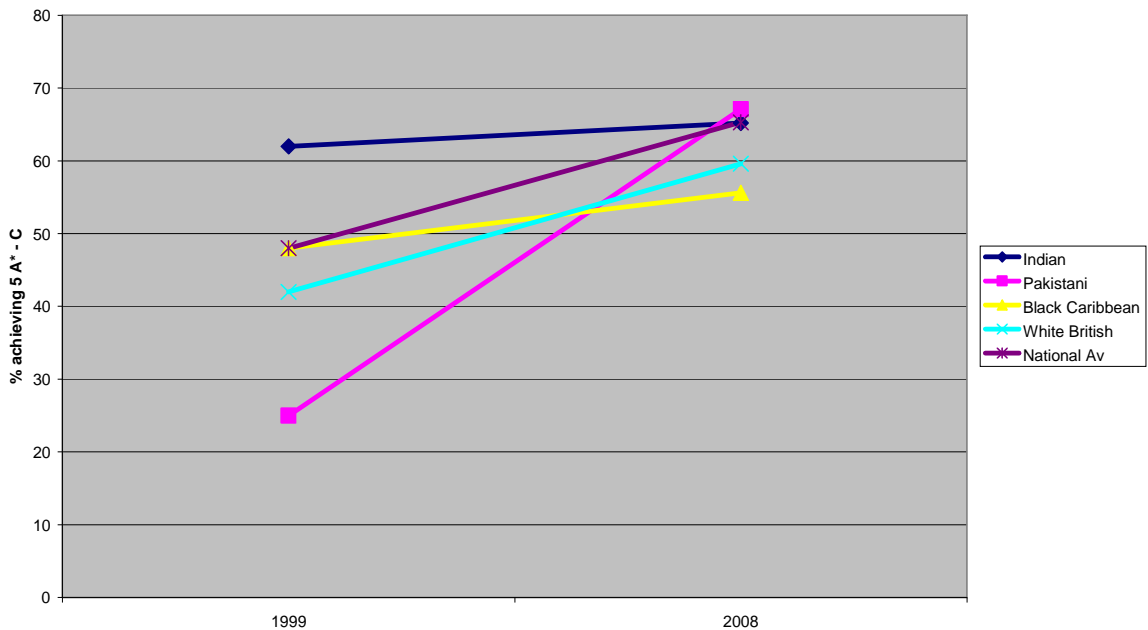
GCSE 5 A* - C

- In 2008 Pakistanis above national average, all other groups below
- White European & 'combined' Black, significantly below
- Indians declined significantly between 2007 and 2008 (same cohort in 2006 KS3)
- Since 1999 Pakistanis have improved at a faster rate than national average, White British at same rate, Indians and combined Black at a slower rate.

GCSE achievement 2005 -2008

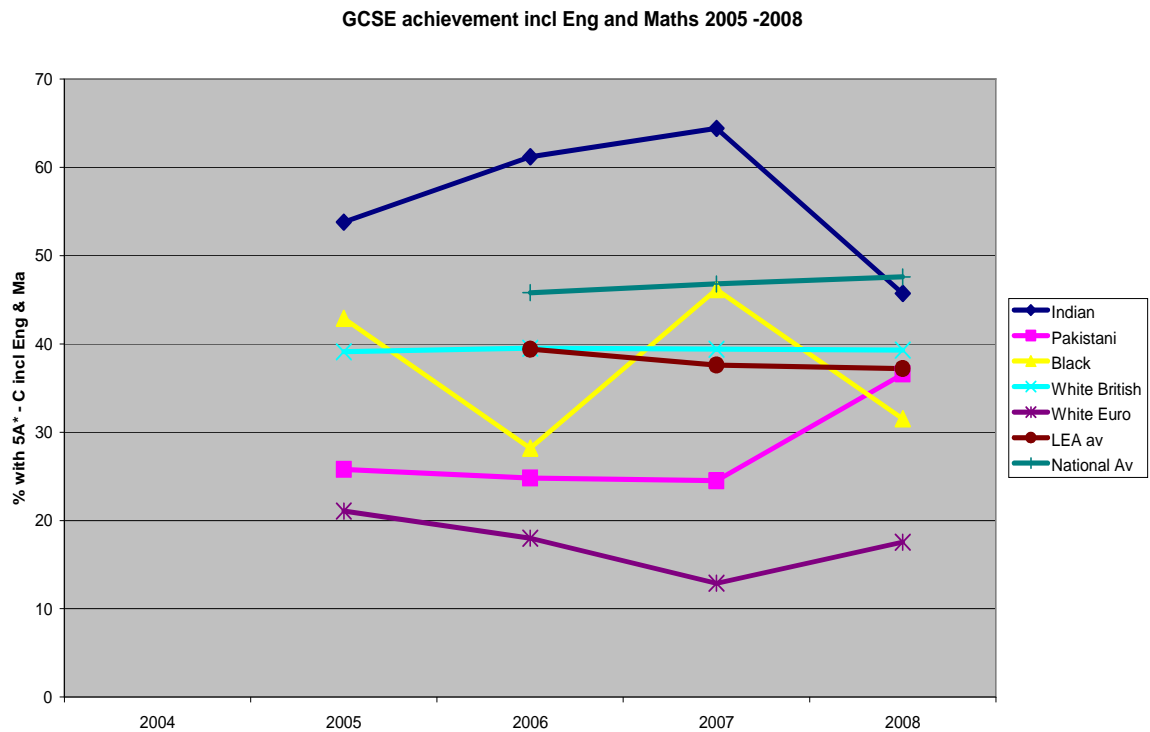


GCSE improvement 1999 - 2008



GCSE 5 A* - C (including Maths and English)

- In 2008 all groups below national average
- All groups apart from Indians, significantly below
- Since 2007 Pakistanis have made significant improvement, Indians and combined Blacks have declined significantly
- White British achievement rate has remained constant whilst the national average has improved (by 2%) so the difference has increased
- Analysis of English and Maths results separately reveals the same pattern
- In 2008, the difference between the LEA average and the national average (10%) for GCSE achievement including English and Maths is greater than the difference for achievement of any 5A* - C grades (6.5%)
- These results are not altered significantly if the MENA cohort is excluded (although this may not be the case for individual schools with a large MENA cohort taking GCSEs)

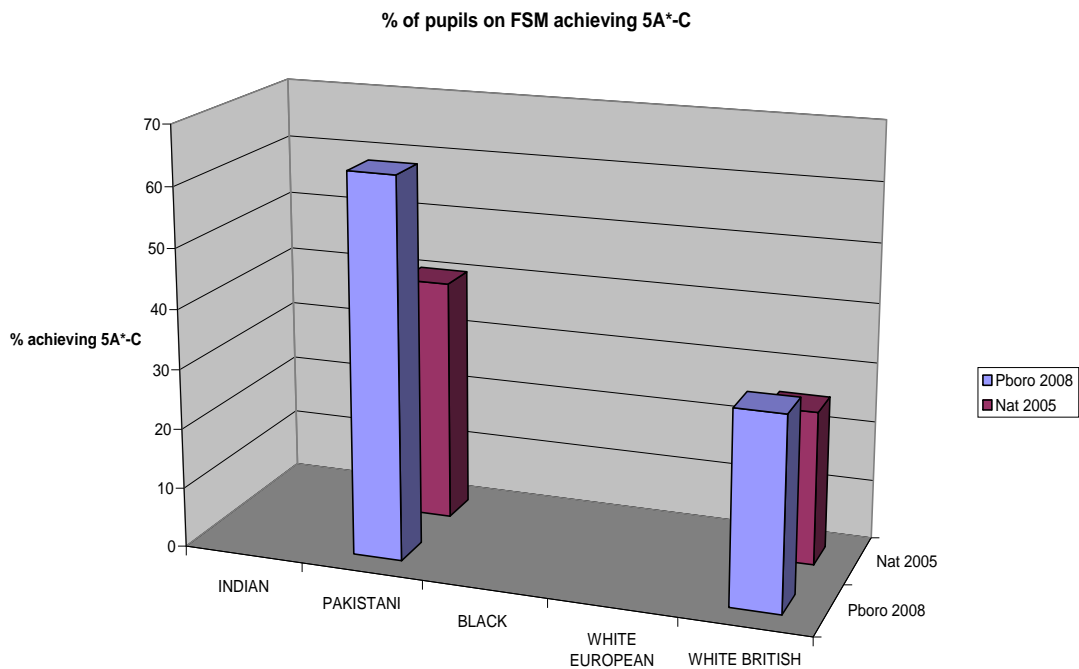


Analysis in terms of socio-economic data

(using free school meals status as an indicator of deprivation)

As suggested in River of Hope I, and subsequently shown by national research, the most significant indicator of educational achievement is socio-economic status.

The River of Hope III data, tested by Chi-squared tests, shows that the factor of FSM is strongly associated with GCSE achievement. Also, children in the GCSE cohort from the Pakistani population are significantly more likely to be receiving FSM than their White British peers. However, the factor of deprivation (indicated by receipt of FSM) has a much stronger effect on GCSE success than does ethnicity. For White British children on FSM, 32% gained 5 A*-C grades compared to 63% of Pakistani pupils on FSM. (NB. These are the only statistically significant cohorts for this analysis.) All results tested at 95% confidence level or better.



There is well-documented research (for example, Gillborn and Mirza (2000), DES (2006)) that educational achievement is related to social class when a more detailed breakdown of socio-economic data is available. Such analysis would be useful in the context of Peterborough as it could well explain the difference between the 'white British' cohort and the national average, given the socio-economic profile of Peterborough provided in the 2001 census data (see River of Hope I and II)

There is little research nationally to offer an explanation for the markedly better performance by the Pakistani cohort in receipt of free school meals when compared with the white British cohort. The work of Abbas (2003) suggests that factors related to family cohesion and cultural values attached to education may contribute to this.

Conclusions and Cautions

Pakistani cohort

The Racial Equality Council, the LEA, and the Pakistani community can be rightly pleased that, since 1999, the Pakistani pupils have significantly narrowed the achievement gap with their White peers at KS2 and overtaken them at GCSE – in spite of a higher level of socio-economic deprivation.

Discussions with the PREC Executive and community contacts indicate that there may be a number of interventions that have contributed to the success of this group. First, the opening of five pre-school education groups in the Gladstone area in 1997 and developed through the 'Surestart' initiative. Secondly, the Local Authority provision of bilingual support assistants at Primary level and local school initiatives at Gladstone School, as recorded in River of Hope (2001). Thirdly, the homework clubs held for secondary school children in the Gladstone area through the YMCA between 2006 and 2008, and the Youth Inclusion programme to support and mentor under-achieving young people in this area. These developments would all have benefited the cohort taking GCSE in 2008.

However, Gillborn (2008) and other researchers in this field warn against interpreting this achievement as meaning we no longer need to investigate and challenge racism – at an individual and institutional level against such children.

Indian cohort

The significant decline observed (tested at 95% confidence level) in the normally high achievement of the Indian cohort since 2006 is difficult to explain. PREC is currently consulting representatives of the Indian community regarding this.

Black cohort

The significant fluctuations in achievement of this cohort over recent years may simply reflect the overall decline in size of the school aged population from these communities, and the changes in composition from largely African Caribbean to a majority Black African population.

White European

A new under-achieving minority is emerging in the 'White European' group, in many ways filling the place occupied by the Pakistani cohort in 1999. It is hoped that some of the interventions adopted within the Pakistani community since 1997 may be successful in supporting these pupils.

White British

Whilst forming the ethnic 'majority', the white 'underclass' (not just those claiming free school meals) appears to be significantly and persistently under-achieving in comparison with the national average. The almost 10% difference from the national average achievement of 5 GCSEs including English and Maths is of particular concern for the City as a whole. Further research is needed into the efficacy of interventions targeted on this group, both in national projects and in individual local schools.

References

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