

Ethnic disparity between teachers, pupils in England: Study

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Our Evidence Centre for Education (DECE) has analyzed the ethnic disproportion between students and teachers in English schools.

In their paper "The disproportionality of ethnic minority [teachers](#) in England: trends, patterns and problems," DECE director Professor Stephen Gorard and his team examined national data on the ethnicity of students and teachers.

Putting data in a geographical context, they showed how the ethnicity of [teaching](#) staff matched up to pupils' ethnicity across England's regions and local authorities.

Ethnicity mismatch between pupils and teachers

Our researchers found that ethnic minority pupils in the North East of England may never be taught by someone of the same heritage.

This is despite the North East having the most proportionate teaching workforce.

Children of Black-African origin make up 1.3 percent of the [student](#) population in the North East, while just 0.1 percent of the region's teaching workforce identified as Black-African, for example.

As these numbers are so low, it makes it unlikely that the small number of Black-African students in the North East will ever encounter a teacher with the same [ethnic background](#) as them.

The researchers found that the area with the least proportional teaching workforce was London, despite it having the most diverse workforce.

This is due to the capital's exceptionally high ethnic minority pupil numbers.

Role models and aspirations

Our researchers also discovered that ethnic minority applicants to [teacher training](#) are less likely to be accepted and less likely to obtain qualified teacher status or an eventual teaching post. The researchers say this needs resolving.

The study concludes that the lack of ethnic diversity in some schools and areas, regardless of proportions, may impoverish the diversity of the whole school system.

Prof Gorard says a lack of diversity among teaching staff can be an issue when it comes to [role models](#), aspirations and general enjoyment of school for ethnic minority students.

More information: Stephen Gorard et al, The disproportionality of ethnic minority teachers in England: trends, patterns, and problems, *Routledge Open Research* (2023). [DOI: 10.12688/routledgeopenres.17798.2](#)

Provided by Durham University

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