The Impacts and Experiences of Migrant Children in UK Secondary Schools

Working Paper No 47

Grace Reynolds
University of Sussex
February 2008

Abstract

A good understanding of the impacts and experiences of migrant children in UK schools is critical because there are large numbers of them and because schools have an important role in forming community cohesion. This paper aims to illuminate this under-researched group by looking at their experiences of inclusion. By comparing two schools which exist in very different local communities and have very different school populations, it will suggest the effect these factors have on experiences of inclusion. It will challenge the popular rhetoric that migrant children are 'swamping' UK schools and, drawing on ideas of 'super-diversity', it will argue that migrant children should be recognised as a specific group in schools rather than being subsumed under other labels

Introduction

In 2005 the Office of National Statistics (ONS) stated that 32,000 children arrived from overseas to live in the UK (ONS, 2005).[1] Under Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989) and Article 2 of the first protocol of the European Convention on Human Rights (EU, 1998), both of which the UK is signatory to, all states must recognise the right of *every* child to an education. This means that UK schools must absorb these migrant children into their student populations. Classrooms, playgrounds and school corridors across the UK become a critical location for the playing out of relationships between migrant populations and the communities they live in. In the current UK political climate community cohesion is a central aim and schools have been identified as locations where cohesion can be fostered (CIC, 2007; Vertovec, 2007). In spite of the significance of migrant children in schools, this is a largely un-researched area (Ackers and Stalford, 2004; Anderson and O'Connell Davidson, 2005). This paper aims to help illuminate this important, but much-ignored, group.

Clark et al. (1999) propose that the education of migrant children in schools is troublesome because there exists an *'endemic'* dilemma between *'commonality'* and *'difference'*. Schools must negotiate *'how to offer learners who are palpably different from each other something ("an education") that is palpably the same for all'* (1999:171). Over the past five decades the British government has offered a raft of education policies aimed at addressing this dilemma. It moved from promoting assimilation and integration in the 1960s and 1970s, to a multicultural model and ideas of antiracism in the 1980s. At present (for the moment anyway) it has settled on ideas of an 'inclusive' education.

The concept of an inclusive education is ill defined. Its central feature is providing a high-quality education for *all* students within mainstream schools. Implicit in this are ideas of equal opportunities and non-discrimination. Furthermore, an inclusive school should provide a 'welcoming community' and the opportunity for each individual to retain and develop his or her own cultural identity (Blanco and Takemoto, 2006:57). The duty for schools to work towards community cohesion and the creation of strong positive relations between people from different backgrounds, which was stated in 2006, adds strength to the aims of inclusion (DfES, 2006a).

This paper will examine the experiences and impacts of migrant children in UK secondary schools from the perspective of 'inclusion'. It will, in particular, explore how the nature of the wider community and the nature of the school population affect a school's ability to achieve inclusion, by comparing two schools which differ

---

[1] This is a conservative estimate. It is based on the International Passenger Survey asking for occupation prior to migration from a sample of people entering the UK via airports, seaports and the Channel Tunnel. The figure excludes most asylum-seeker children and applies only to people under the age of 16. It also only covers the number of people who state they intend to live in the country for more than a year.

considerably in these respects. It will analyse three aspects of school life where inclusion can be seen: peer relations; teacher-migrant student relations; and the ability of migrant students to celebrate their identities, using a triangulation of focus groups, semi-structured interviews and ethnographic observation to assess the schools experiences.

This paper begins by setting the scene - defining migrant children, giving an idea of their numbers in UK schools and discussing them as an under-researched group. It will then explore the debate over migrant students as challenges or benefits to schools. Popular opinion focuses on them as problematic and 'swamping' schools, although research suggests that the benefits they bring to schools can be considerable (Anderson and Williamson, 2004).

The paper will give a brief history of educational policies in the UK relevant to migrant students, revealing, however, that migrant students have been mostly 'left out' of policy. Inclusion will then be examined in depth, specifically looking at theories suggesting how the nature of the school population and the nature of the wider community may shape the experience. Drawing on the concept of 'identity matching' outlined by Warikoo (2004), the paper will explore ideas proposed by Verma et al. (1994) that more ethnically diverse schools achieve better inclusion experiences. It will also examine Leeman's (1994) hypothesis that schools situated in areas of community unrest have a harder task in creating inclusion, looking at the extent to which schools reflect or affect tensions in the wider community.

The paper will then describe the two schools in this study and the research methodology adopted. It will give a thorough analysis of how the three aspects of inclusion - peer relations, teacher relations and ability to celebrate – are experienced at each school, and through the comparison it will suggest the roles the two variables - school population and wider community - play in shaping the inclusion experience.

The concluding section will draw together the theories and findings. This will offer a starting point for suggestions regarding policy and further research.

The paper will challenge the simplistic argument that schools are overwhelmed by large numbers of migrant students. Then, based on Vertovec's (2006, 2007) concept of 'super-diversity', which argues that the UK has reached a new stage of diversity identified by a particular *'level and kind of complexity'* of identities, the paper's primary recommendation will be that the identity of 'migrant' should be recognised in schools, as a group with specific educational and social needs.

Setting the Scene

This paper defines a migrant child as anyone under the age of 18 who was born outside the UK and is now residing in the UK.[2] This definition is intentionally broad, encompassing a wide range of reasons for migration - including refugees, asylum-seekers, reunified children, EU migrants and economic migrants - and circumstances of migration – whether an unaccompanied minor or migrating with a family, for example. The critical point is that all are united by the experience of being a minor in a new country. This paper must be wary of how easy it is to slip between this category and categories of ethnic minority, second-generation migrant or learners of English as an additional language (EAL).[3]

The numbers of 'migrant children' in the UK is not known (Crawley, 2006). ONS (2005) statistics based on the International Passenger Survey state that 32,000 migrants under the age of 16 arrived in the UK in 2005. This figure is, however, based on a sample survey and does not include most asylum-seeker children. It shows a

---

[2] Here I concur with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) definition of a child as anyone under the age of eighteen and with the United Nation's definition of migrant as a person residing outside their country of birth (2002).

[3] English as an Additional Language or EAL students are defined as those whose primary language is something other than English.

marked decrease from a peak of 50,000 in 2001 (ONS, 2005). However, Crawley (2006:10) argues that the acceleration of international mobility means that the number of migrant children in the UK is more likely to have risen in recent years.

The number of migrant children in schools is equally hard to judge as not all attend school. In addition, most schools do not record the migrant status of the child; they do not have to ask about it by law. They tend instead to record the children as EAL students, or as being from an ethnic minority. As many migrants will be EAL students their numbers give an indication of how many migrant children there are in UK schools.[4]

DfES statistics for 2007 state that there are 789,790 EAL students in UK primary and secondary schools. This is 12% of the entire UK school population (DfES, 2007). These numbers have grown significantly in recent years (Figure 1 as appended).

Ackers and Stalford (2004:1) state that migrant children exist in a 'research void'. Anderson and O'Connell Davidson (2005) argue that this is because migration research is preoccupied with migration as a political and economic issue. Migrant children, perceived as lacking political and economic importance, are, therefore, mostly 'invisible' from research. Arai (2005) conducted a survey of research into the use of services by migrant populations in the UK and found minimal research on migrants' use of education. This dearth is both surprising and short-sighted given: the numbers in question; the preoccupation with the impact of migrants on schools in politics and the media; and the recognition that schools are important locations in which to promote community cohesion.

Impacts and Experiences: Challenges and Benefits

A child's experience of migration is largely shaped by their experience of the education system, an experience that is palpably different to the experience of non-migrant children (Gillborn,1995:2). Between the ages of five and sixteen children spend approximately 15,000 hours at school; this is as much time as they will spend awake out of school (Rutter et. al, 1994). An awareness of migrant children's experiences of school is an awareness of their experiences of much of life.

Adams and Kirova argue that: 'Despite some positive trends in the overall societal acceptance of immigrants, educating children from diverse cultural, linguistic, ethnic and racial, or religious backgrounds are perceived as problematic' (2006:6). The identification of migrant children as 'problematic' in the UK is preoccupied with the view that they are overwhelming schools in their numbers. Recent newspaper headlines have included: *'Schools are stretched to breaking point by immigrant children'* (Daily Mail, 31/5/07), *'Scandal of Schools Swamped by Migrants'* (Express, 30/9/2006), and *'More Catholic Schools Needed to Cope with East European Influx'* (Independent, 22/6/2007). These sentiments are mirrored in political arenas. In 2002, for example, then Home Secretary, David Blunkett, voiced concerns about schools being 'swamped' by asylum seeker children (The Guardian, 25/4/2002) and in 2007 Margaret Hodge, then industry minister, raised controversial ideas for privileging access to services (in this case specifically housing) for British citizens over new migrants. She argued that: 'We should look at policies where the legitimate sense of entitlement felt by the indigenous family overrides the legitimate need demonstrated by the new migrants' (The Observer, 20/5/2007).

Migrant students are also seen as overwhelming because they come with additional needs and are perceived as placing burdens on teachers as well as

---

[4] The number of EAL learners is likely to be more than the number of migrants. It includes students who were born in the UK for whom English is not a primary language. However, there are also students who are migrants to the UK who have English as their primary language and so are not EAL students.

potentially lowering the academic achievements of the school. Being new in a school raises challenges for any child but the added element of being new in a country magnifies these challenges manifold. The need to learn English is a focus. Miedema (1997:54) argues that this is because language is the easiest and least controversial aspect to identify and tackle.

Studies find, however, that migrant children face many problems, including: finding new friends; dealing with loss and loneliness; adjusting to a new teacher and new school system (some children may never have been to school before); adjusting to a new cultural environment; trauma that may have occurred preceding, during and after migration; and racism or anti-immigration sentiments (e.g. Ackers and Stalford, 2004; Anderson and Williamson, 2004; Igoa, 1998). A migrant child who speaks English but may be dealing with several of these challenges would be given no official support in school (Anderson and Williamson, 2004).

Schools can be fraught places where community tensions are played out as diverse communities are forced together in 'cheek-by-jowl' relationships (Vertovec and Cohen, 2002). Schools are bound by the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 to: 'Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different groups' (DfES, 2000). These duties can be a challenge as Anderson and Williamson argue: 'Schools are operating in a social climate that is often hostile to asylum seekers, to Islam and to migrants' (2004). Tensions can be felt in many different directions: from a student born in the UK towards the migrant child; between migrant children; and from the migrant student towards the UK-born students (Gillborn, 1995).

Schools not only reflect wider society relations but can also affect them, acting as a focus for improving relations. The Commission on Integration and Cohesion, a government supported advisory body set up

in 2006 to look at processes of community cohesion, identified schools as one of four spheres where a focus on *'increased interaction would help build integration and cohesion'* (CIC, 2007: 110).

There are growing indications that the focus on migrant children in schools as problematic is misplaced. Anderson and Williamson's (2004) study of primary schools in Oxford, for example, finds that many schools recognise the enriching experience of having pupils from culturally diverse backgrounds in their schools. They talk of the value of the *'I know what this is like'* experience that migrant children can bring to a class discussion. The government's New Arrivals Excellence Programme (NAEP) has also found that migrant children can be academically beneficial to schools (DfES, 2007b). There are, in addition, indications that the rhetoric that schools are being numerically overwhelmed is too simplistic. In certain areas of the country, where school populations are dwindling, the arrival of migrant children can provide a much-needed boost (The Guardian 21/3/2007; Irish News 18/1/07).

Migrant Students 'Left Out'

Before looking at the history of migrant students in UK education policy, it is important to note that the status of a student as a 'migrant' is largely absent from education policies. It was only in 2006 when the government formed the New Arrivals Excellence Programme (NAEP), a service which pledged £400,000 to give guidance, advice and training to schools on how best to include both national and international new arrivals to their school (DfES, 2007). [5] Migrant students have otherwise been largely dealt with under the categories of being EAL learners or as ethnic minorities (Miedema, 1997; Anderson and O'Connell Davidson, 2005).

Vertovec (2006, 2007) proposes that the UK has reached a new stage of diversity

---

[5] For more information on the New Arrivals Excellence Programme see 'Pathways to Learning for New Arrivals' (QCA, 2006) and 'Aiming High: New Arrivals National Strategy' (DfES, 2005).

where groups are not only distinguished by their country of origin and ethnicity but by a complex *'interplay of variables'*, including immigration status. He believes that recognition of this 'super-diversity' of identities can help improve experiences of inclusion and cohesion. This paper will draw on this concept to argue that a recognition of migrant students as 'migrants' in educational policies could help improve inclusion experiences in schools.

A History of Migrants in UK Education Policy

Clarke et al. (1999:171) argue that schools and educational policies in ethnically and culturally diverse societies are faced with a central dilemma between 'commonality' and 'difference'; they have to resolve how to teach students with different needs and backgrounds within a common education system. Educationalists in the UK have been engaged with different resolutions since the 1960s; inclusion is the latest. The twists and turns in policy reflect changing attitudes to multiculturalism and integration.

1960s-1990s

Educational policies first addressed the teaching of migrant students in the 1960s. The focus was on assimilation, which education should promote through *'the suppression and depreciation of ethnic, linguistic and cultural differences'* (Troyna, 1993:24).

Dissent against this model arose towards the end of the 1970s. Studies showed that there was significant academic under-achievement and negative self-identity amongst ethnic minority groups (e.g. Milner, 1975) and there were protests against the racist impulses of schooling (Glenn and de Jong, 1996). By 1975 these disparate critics were given a clear and powerful voice through the Bullock Report *'A Language for Life'*, which stated that 'no child should be expected to cast off the language and culture of home' (DES, 1975). By the mid-1970s 'multicultural education had risen like a phoenix out of the ashes of monocultural education' (Troyna 1993:25).

Multiculturalism promotes the idea that celebrating difference is preferable to suppressing it. As an educational policy the argument was that by learning about their ethnic and cultural roots a child will improve their educational achievements and equality of opportunity, and that all students will reduce their prejudices and discriminations (Bullivant, 1981:236). Multicultural education was crystallised in the Swann report, published in 1985. It stated that schools should strive for a balance between,

> 'maintenance and active support of the essential elements of the cultures and lifestyles of all ethnic groups' and 'the acceptance of all groups of a set of shared values distinctive of the society as a whole' (Runnymede Trust, 1985:1).

Resonating with the inclusion sentiments of today it added that: 'The problem facing the education system is not how to educate children of ethnic minorities, but how to educate all children' (1985:10).

Multicultural education quickly met with criticism too, predominantly from an antiracist perspective (Troyna, 1993:26). Antiracists were critical of its blindness to the institutional contexts of racism and of the class and economic factors involved (Modood, 2005:30). They saw multiculturalism as a *'saris, samosas and steel band'* approach to education which patronised ethnic minorities and reinforced white assumptions of minority groups as exotic and primitive (Troyna, 1993:5). The antiracist were criticised back for relying on concepts of race that were too essentialist and colour-focussed ignoring factors such as religion and excluding other groups that face discrimination (Modood, 1990; Gillroy, 2004:59).

In 1988 the birth of the National Curriculum, added a further dimension to the debates. By stating what all maintained schools should teach it meant that schools could no longer respond to the individual needs of their population. Gillborn (1995:31) argues that its curriculum choices focussed on a homogeneous, White-British view of society.

The 1990s and 2000s has seen a retreat from multiculturalism. Following race riots, terrorist attacks and growing inequalities, multicultural policies were blamed for leading to segregation and dissent (Philipps, 2005). Educational policy makers responded to these criticisms by shifting to ideas of inclusion (Clarke et al., 1999).

The 1997 Educational Green Paper *'Excellence for All Children'* was the first official step towards an inclusive model for education. It stated that mainstream schools should have the capacity to 'provide for children with a wide range of needs' (DfEE, 1997:44). In 1999 the National Curriculum added a statutory inclusion statement, which required teachers to overcome all forms of discrimination in their schools (DfEE/QCA, 1999). [6] Since then inclusion has been central to several UK educational policies.

Inclusion is an illusive concept, meaning different things to different people and varying in its execution from place to place (Ainscow et. al, 2006; Ainscow, 1999). Its key feature is that it applies to *all* students, but *'with special emphasis on those who are at greater risk of being excluded or marginalised'* (Blanco and Takemoto, 2006:56). In addition, it argues that all students should be taught in mainstream schools, and, as far as possible, in mainstream lessons.

UK Educational Policies Based on Inclusion

DfEE (2000a) Race Relations Amendment Act

DfEE (2000b) Bullying: Don't Suffer in Silence

Ofsted (2000) Evaluating Educational Inclusion

DfES (2001) Inclusive Schooling: Children with SEN

Ofsted (2002a) Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils: Three successful primary schools

Ofsted (2002b) Achievement of Black Caribbean

Pupils: Good practice in secondary schools

DfES (2004) Every Child Matters: Change for Children in Schools

Ofsted (2004) Achievement of Bangladeshi Heritage Students

Sure Start (2004) Inclusion for Everyone

DfES (2005) Aiming High: New Arrivals National Strategy

DfES (2006a) Guidance on the Duty to Promote Cohesion

DfES (2006c) Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Achievement

DfES (2007) New Arrivals Achievement Programme

The 'contact hypothesis' is central to the philosophy behind inclusion. First proposed by Allport (1954) it is, in essence, the idea that good relations can be fostered through increased interaction between diverse groups.

To create an inclusive education a school must strive for equal opportunities and the right to participation for all; it should also tackle exclusion, inequalities and discrimination (Ainscow et. al, 2006). Inclusion shares with multiculturalism a celebration of diversity and individual identity. As Blanco and Takemoto's explain:

> 'The goal…is to enable each individual to retain and develop his or her cultural identity…schools [should] create welcoming communities and build an inclusive society where education for all can be achieved' (2006:58).

However, this aim suffers confusion as inclusion policies also insinuate a need to foster a common British identity (Richardson and Wood, 2000). An inclusive school should have a curriculum that takes account of all the needs and identities of its students (Richardson and Wood, 2000). It should also be 'characterised by mutual listening and respect – among staff, between staff and pupils and among pupils' (Richardson and Wood, 2000:51).

The creation of social cohesion is central to an inclusive education. The Centre for

---

[6] The National Curriculum's Inclusion Statement sets out three principles that are essential to developing an inclusive curriculum: setting suitable learning challenges; responding to pupils' diverse learning needs; overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils (DfEE/QCA, 1999).

Economic and Social Inclusion (CESI) [7] states that:

> 'An inclusive society is...characterised by a striving for reduced inequality, a balance between individuals' rights and duties and increased social cohesion' (2002).

In 2006 the Education and Inspections Act introduced a duty on schools to promote community cohesion, defined as:

> 'A common vision and sense of belonging for all communities; a society in which the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued; those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods' (LGA, 2002).

Strategies of inclusion are not unproblematic. They suffer from having to be translated from policy to reality and thus losing their coherence (Clarke et al., 1999:167). Some critics argue that by placing all students together under the banner of inclusion neglects the subtlety of needs of specific groups and that inclusion therefore becomes assimilation in a different guise (e.g. CESI, 2002). Ainscow (1999), however, believes this is not the case. To him *'assimilation'* is about students adapting to fit in with the school, while *'inclusion'* is about the school adapting to fit a diverse group of students.

Inclusion as a Benchmark

Retaining an awareness of the problems and inconsistencies within the term, I nevertheless aim to use inclusion as a benchmark to see how the two schools in my study compare with regard to the impacts and experiences of migrant children. It is beyond the scope of this paper and perhaps even impossible to give a complete assessment of the inclusion experience. I will, therefore, be seeking to consider how far the schools achieve inclusion according to the following two factors, which are central to the definition of the term: Strong positive relations are created between students and between students and staff. Students have the potential to develop and celebrate their own identities.

I will therefore examine: peer relations; teacher-migrant student relations; and the ability students have to celebrate their identities, in each school. A preferable inclusion and cohesion experience along these three factors will be one where peers relate well to one another, not only lacking tensions but also being well-mixed between migrant and non-migrant populations (Verma et. al, 1994); where teachers and migrant students relate well to one another, without tension and without teachers feeling that they are being overburdened (Warikoo, 2004); and one where migrant students feel able to celebrate their background and identity within a welcoming school environment (Closs et. al, 2001).

Shaping Inclusion

By choosing two schools to compare that are similar in most respects but differ according to: 1) the nature of the school population they embody and 2) the nature of the wider community they are located in this paper will assess the impacts of these two factors of inclusion. The paper will now explore the possible impacts of these factors

Nature of the School Population

This paper defines the 'school population' as including students and teachers, migrants and non-migrants. This population can vary in many ways according to: the number of migrants in the school; the ethnicity of the teachers and migrant and non-migrant students; and how the migrants arrive in the school, in particular whether they filter in gradually in small numbers or many arrive together at a particular point in the year.

Verma et al.'s (1994) study of UK secondary schools finds that schools that are multi-ethnic, made up of a number and variety of ethnic groups, achieve more harmony and less hostility than schools that have fewer ethnic groups. They argue that this is because identity boundaries become blurred in multi-ethnic schools while in less diverse or 'bi-ethnic' schools differences between groups can be felt strongly and lead to animosity. Vertovec (2007) agrees with Verma et. al (1994) that multi-ethnic or 'super-diverse' schools where students can achieve better inclusion. In such situations students have more opportunity to relate to one another because there are many identities on offer which can act as bases for positive. He states that: 'much success in building positive relations can arise with the recognition that individuals each belong to multiple group identities' (2007:31).

Warikoo's (2004) concept of 'identity matching' supports these ideas. She suggests that individuals will form friendships if they are able to share some form of identity. A shared ethnicity can act as a particularly strong 'identity matcher' but other factors of identity from shared interests, to similar experiences can also act as bonds. She suggests that non-migrant students with similar ethnic backgrounds to migrants or with other shared identities will relate well to migrant students.

Ackers and Stalford (2004), argue that many migrant students befriend other migrants creating what they call a 'migrant bubble'. Goldstein (2003) finds a more complex picture than Ackers and Stalford's 'bubble', in her study of migrant students in Canada. Drawing on ideas of social and cultural capital, she finds that migrant students will maximise their social capital by befriending people who speak their first language but they will also befriend people who speak the language of the country they are in, in order to maximise their 'academic' and 'cultural capital'; to do well at school and fit in.

Teachers should relate well to and understand the background and needs of their students in order to deliver an inclusive education. Interconnection between students and teachers can be improved if they are able to 'match' identities as described above (Warikoo, 2004). Verma et. al (1994:38) believe that teacher ethnicity is of critical importance and that it should, as far as possible 'match' student ethnicity across the school, so that teachers can exemplify as well as provide an inclusive education.

Foster (1990) raises the idea of teachers creating a self-fulfilling prophecy. Teachers' assumptions of students formed at the first encounter, often according to the student's ethnicity or class are projected onto the student and they perform to their teachers' expectations. Teachers can express out and out racist or discriminatory views although most studies find this to be very rare (Verma et al., 1994). More common tensions arise from teachers feeling overwhelmed by having to teach rising numbers of students without English. There have been reports that some teachers have called for a limit on the number of EAL students they have in a class (The Scotsman, 11/6/07).

Nature of the Wider Community

Schools are a microcosm of society, representing and often magnifying social relations that exist in the wider community (Ackers and Stalford, 2004; Vertovec and Cohen, 2002; Johnson, 1997). Gundara (2000:73) warns that communities do not have a *'coherent, consistent character'*; they are changing, borderless and made up of a variety of individuals. Nevertheless, he continues, they can be identified at a general level as portraying certain characteristics as a whole. The idea of 'social space' is useful. It proposes that certain geographical areas can be populated by a group with common socio-economic, demographic, attitudinal and behaviour patterns (Johnston, 2000:763). This paper, therefore, defines the 'wider community' as the social characteristics tied to the physical space local to the school. The exact nature of the relationship between schools reflecting or affecting

relations between themselves and the communities they serve is unclear and will be explored in this paper.

The ethnic and racial make-up of the wider community; the history of migration to the area; the level of tension between migrants and non-migrants, can all affect experiences of inclusion in schools. Schools in the UK at present are operating in a social environment that is often hostile to migrants (Anderson and Williamson, 2004). Such hostilities vary from place to place and time to time; racisms are always contextual (Back, 1992). The CIC (2007) finds that relations in public spaces such as schools are a particular problem in certain areas of the country. 'White flight', where usually White-British students desert schools which have a high level of ethnic minority students, can occur (Alba and Silberman, 2006).

Leeman (1997) compares schools in ethnically heterogeneous big cities with those in less diverse smaller towns in the UK. She finds that relations between students are better and levels of discrimination reduced in the urban, heterogeneous area where students from different backgrounds have more contact with each other outside school and grow up together. Since urban areas are generally more familiar with migrants, levels of support from the local government and local NGOs are often better than in areas where migrants are newer, further aiding inclusion (Ackers and Stalford, 2004).

Levels of economic deprivation in a community can also affect the reception of migrants into an area. In deprived areas tensions can be accentuated based on a stronger sense of competing for resources with new arrivals (Arai, 2005).

The Schools

I chose the two schools for my study, Bridgehurst Academy and Charrington Academy[8], for both their similarities and their differences. In order to have a

workable comparison the schools had to be similar in as many ways as possible and significantly different in terms of the nature of the wider community they are situated in and the nature of their school population. Figure 2 summarises the main features of each school.

Similarities

Both schools are large secondary schools, taking girls and boys from the ages of eleven to eighteen. Bridgehurst's student population is 673, Charrington's is 969. Both are academy schools created as part of the Labour government's scheme to improve education in deprived areas and have opened in the past five years. The most important distinctions of academy schools are: being funded, in part, by private sponsors; having freedom over the curriculum and structure of the school day; and pledging to share their resources with their local communities (see Figure 2 appended for more information).

Both Bridgehurst and Charrington are strong supporters of inclusion; their school literature includes strong statements on the policy.

The schools' local boroughs are both in the bottom 20% on the UK deprivation index (ONS, 2004). [9] 37% of students at Bridgehurst and 35% at Charrington are on free school meals. This is significantly above the national average of 14% (DfES, 2006c), giving a broad indication that that the schools serve the most deprived parts of their communities.

Differences: Nature of School Population

Charrington Academy can be described as a 'super-diverse' school (Vertovec, 2007:2). Approximately 450 students, 46% of the student population were born outside the UK. 60% of the school are EAL learners and fifty-two languages are spoken by students in the school. The teacher to student ratio for EAL students to staff is 145:1.

---

[8] The names of the schools have been changed to protect their confidentiality. All statistics are, unless otherwise stated, obtained from school sources.

[9] The indices of deprivation combines a number of indicators, chosen to cover a range of economic, social and housing issues into a single deprivation score for each small area in England.

93% of Charrington's students are identified as part of an ethnic minority. The ethnic and national origins of these students are very mixed. There are forty-five ethnic groups represented overall, the largest being Black-Caribbean (17%) and Black-Somalian (10%). White-British students are the third largest ethnic group (7.5%). The school also has significant religious diversity with particularly high numbers of Muslim students. Approximately a third of the teachers in Charrington are from an ethnic minority. The school is highly mobile; only 74% of students in Y9 started the school in Y7. New pupils filter in regularly across the seven-year groups and at any time across the school year.

Bridgehurst is less diverse. There are 71 migrant students making up 11% of the school population. This is exactly conterminous with the number of EAL students in the school. The migrant student population is dominated by the forty-eight Czech and Slovak students of Roma ethnicity. [10] This is 69% of the migrant students and 7.5% of the whole school. The country of origin breakdown of the rest of the migrant population is made up of: four students born in Poland, three in Albania, four in India, three in Afghanistan, six in Turkey and one in Estonia. The majority of the students are held back to start all at once in September. The ethnic make-up of the non-migrant students at Bridgehurst is predominantly White-British (85%), there is a small (1%) group of non-EAL, non-migrant ethnic minority students. Eight teachers at

---

Bridgehurst are from an ethnic minority which is 12% of the teacher population. Bridgehurst fits Verma et. al's (1994) bi-ethnic model with the majority of the school being White-British and the ethnic minorities in the school being dominated by one identity: the Czech and Slovak Roma.

Roma Students

It is very dangerous to generalise about common behaviour for a group of people; groups are, after all, made up of distinct individuals. However, a number of studies reveal that many Roma children and families portray certain common reactions to schools. Liégeois (1998:175) asserts that school, for Roma people, is invariably *'an alien institution'*. Students of Roma ethnicity can struggle to adapt to mainstream schools, having historically been educated in the home or coerced into 'special' schools (Liegeois, 1998; Kyuchukov et. al, 1999). Gomes (1999:168), in her study of the experiences of Roma children in education across Europe, finds that Roma students often have poor attendance, achievement and behavioural records. She argues that this is, in a large part, because of the importance of the family structure to Roma people. The separation from family caused by going to school can be distressing. Kyuchukov et. al (1999) argue that students of Roma ethnicity can be wary of strangers and so not respond well to teachers and peers.

Differences: Wider Community

Charrington Academy is located in a suburban area of a large UK city. It is one of the most diverse boroughs in the UK, with one of the highest international in-migrations. 46% of the borough were not born in the UK and only 29% of the borough are of White-British ethnicity and (Census, 2001). The borough has experienced significant levels of in-migration for the past four decades and racist and anti-immigration tensions in the wider area are rare (personal communication from head teacher and review of local newspapers). There is an active support network for EAL students from the LEA. For example, the council tests all new arrivals to the borough for their level of English so that schools do not have to do this.

Bridgehurst is located in a small-town in a semi-rural area of the UK. The population in

---

[10] 'Roma' refers to a group of traditionally semi-nomadic people many of who can trace their roots to northern India over 1000 years ago (Tanner, 2005). The word 'Roma' can have negative connotations and can be considered too generalising of a whole group (Clarke and Greenfields, 2006; Tanner, 2005). Many see them as the most persecuted ethnic minority group in Europe (Tanner, 2005). In UK educational policies the Roma are grouped together with 'Travellers and Gypsies' as all are perceived as united by nomadism, despite the fact that most Roma migrants to the UK settle in permanent accommodation and do not share linguistic or cultural backgrounds (apart from a possible descent that goes back to the 16th Century) with 'Travellers' or 'Gypsies' (Clarke and Greenfields, 2006). Readers should be aware of the controversies associated with the word. However, since this group is identified as Roma at Bridgehurst by the Roma students themselves term will be used throughout the paper to refer to these students.

the local borough is predominantly White-British (94%) and 95% of the population was born in the UK (Census, 2001). International in-migration to the borough is fairly new with the past decade seeing a visible refugee/asylum seeker population and more recently EU migrants. Chain migration has created a concentrated pocket of Czech and Slovak Roma in a part of town near the school.

Racist and anti-immigration tensions in this area are high and predominantly aimed at the Roma (personal communication head teacher and review of local newspapers). The area was singled out as one of the worst problem-areas for inter-ethnic harmony in the CIC's 2007 report. Bridgehurst is the predominant school to accept all the migrants in the area - institutional racism is common among other local schools - and is suffering 'white flight' as a result (personal communication from Bridgehurst head teacher and LEA officer). The LEA staff complained of being significantly under-funded and under-staffed.

Methodology

The research for this paper was conducted in the second half of the summer term. In order to find schools to take part I approached council staff in boroughs across the UK who recommended schools that might be suitable for this study. I approached thirty schools through these recommendations, twelve of whom expressed an interest in taking part. I chose Bridgehurst and Charrington as they were similar in most respects apart from in the variables that I wanted to study. This selection process and the focus on two schools means that this is not a representative sample, which would have been impossible to achieve with the time and resources available.

I choose to triangulate my methods using a mixture of in-depth interviews, focus groups and ethnographic observation. I also looked at school literature - including Ofsted reports, prospectuses and websites; surveyed local papers; and made observations in the wider community.

Triangulating with this multi-method approach strengthens the validity of the observations as they can be cross-referenced with each other.

The ethnographic approach was critical to my research. When trying to investigate an everyday setting, such as a school, I felt that interviews and focus groups alone would not gain a sufficient understanding of reality. Ethnographic observations allow the observer the best chance of experiencing the school as an insider (Gillborn, 1995; Gardner, 1997). I spent seven days at each school, observing lessons, break-times, staff rooms, events and overall just 'hanging out' - all the while taking extensive field notes. This is a method used by many researchers of school life (e.g. Goldstein, 2003; Verma et. al, 1994; Warikoo, 2007).

It is important when carrying out ethnographic research to be aware of your own positionality as a researcher. How could I as a white, female, middle-classed, British-born, non-migrant researcher engage with and represent a range of migrant students? There is no satisfactory resolution to this issue but taking an ethnographic approach and being aware of the effect of my own positionality can help to mitigate against the effects (England, 1994; Gardner, 1997).

I strongly agree with the view that in order to understand children's lives it is essential to talk to children themselves (Hood et al. 1996; Brannen and O'Brien 1996). Researching with children, in particular migrant children, involves a whole set of problems as they are a vulnerable research group. [11] Researchers must adapt to the increased power differentials between them and their research subject. The majority of the students I spoke to saw me as a teacher - nearly all of them called me 'Miss'. James (1993) questions whether an adult, particularly one viewed as an authority figure, is able to adequately evaluate a child's education. However, I deemed this

---

[11] There is not space here to explore these issues, the author has written a separate paper on this entitled 'Researching with Migrant Children: Ethical Issues and Methodological Solutions' which is available on request.

limitation less of a problem than the benefit gained from talking to the children.

I chose to use focus groups for the students as I thought that this might empower the students and encourage them to speak more freely. I carried out five focus groups at each school with between three and six students in each. I spoke to a total of seventeen students at Charrington and twenty-two at Bridgehurst. The students cover a range of different countries of origin, age groups and migrant backgrounds. They had all been in the country between one month and two years.

At both schools the EAL teachers chose students who they thought would be appropriate for me to talk to. This means that the sample of students is not representative, but is an unavoidable limitation. At Charrington I was able to sit on my own with the students, but at Bridgehurst the teachers insisted on being present. The focus groups each lasted for about an hour. I came prepared with a range of discussion topics but also encouraged the students to take the conversation in directions they wanted.

In addition to focus groups I held semi-structured interviews with teachers. I spoke to three EAL staff, the head teacher, three mainstream teachers and an LEA representative at each school. I also interviewed the head of the Special Educational Needs department at Bridgehurst. The interviews lasted between thirty minutes and an hour and took place in various locations around the school.

I recorded and transcribed all the interviews and focus groups, obtaining permission to do so. The English language levels of some migrant students were a limitation to the study. I was sometimes able to ask other students in the group to translate.

I had planned to interview parents and non-migrant students. However, I later decided that this was too much work for both the schools and given the short time frame I had available to carry out the study. Also at Bridgehurst I was warned that some of the parents were wary of strangers. I also contemplated giving out questionnaires, but

this was deemed too onerous by the schools. I chose therefore to focus on gaining more in-depth insights, agreeing with Troyna (1991) that such techniques are far preferable for gaining an understanding of the complex issues in question. With more time and resources the study would have benefited greatly from the more rounded view that these additional elements would have added.

The Impacts and Experiences of Migrant Students at Bridgehurst and Charrington

Peer Relations

Verma et. al define a positive inclusion experience as one where there is not only a lack of *'hostility'* between groups from different backgrounds but there is also a *'considerable degree of positive interaction'* (1994:vii). This section will now assess how far the peer relations in each school fit this definition, identifying the schools similarities and differences and suggesting what effect the nature of the wider community and the nature of the student population have on them.

Blurred Boundaries at Charrington

At Charrington there is significant evidence of friendship groups forming according to a complex variety of 'identity matchers' (Warikoo, 2004). Half of the migrant students interviewed said that they were mostly friends with people from similar ethnic backgrounds or the same country of origin. Six of the seventeen students I spoke to thought that it was the most important factor in deciding whom you were friends with. A comment from Sarah, a migrant student in Y9, is revealing: 'It's really divided, all by nationalities, this is Charrington!'

There were some ethnic groups that formed particularly unified groups. All of the teachers and students told me that children of Somali origin and those from the Philippines tended to be friends with others from the same country of origin.

However, friendship groups at Charrington were far from being based only on ethnicity

or country of origin. There were a variety of factors according to which students were able to 'identity match' and so form friends (Warikoo, 2004). The school actively worked to create positive relations between diverse groups, the head teacher told me:

'We do things, like in class produce seating plans or encourage after school sports and clubs, to make sure that children are continually talking and communicating across boundaries. I think we do that reasonably well'.

One of the main 'identity matchers' was language. It is after all easier to form friends with people you can communicate with. There are fifty-two languages spoken at Charrington so students can often find others who they can speak to in their first language. This comment from Abia, a student born in Iraq, reveals feelings that many of the students shared:

'It is because it is a different group. They are speaking Portuguese. We are speaking Arabic. It is like that...we can find ourselves with these people because, like, when I am with Portuguese people and they are just talking Portuguese I wouldn't find myself in there. I would feel uncomfortable, so it is better to be with Arabic speakers'.

Students did not only form friendships according to speaking the *same* language; six of the students at Charrington reported making a conscious effort to befriend people with whom they could speak English in order to do better at school. Goldstein (2003) argues that migrant students befriend people who speak their first language as a form of creating social capital within the school but will also befriend people who speak the language of the country they are in order to do well at school. It appears that both these strategies are in operation at Charrington.

Strong ties at Charrington were also created around Muslim identity - particularly for girls. Several studies find that the Muslim identity acts as a strong binding factor (e.g. Dwyer, 1999; Shain, 2003). Three of the girls in my focus groups were of Muslim origin and

they all reported being part of large, strong friendship groups. Aziza told me:

'When I saw them I was really happy. They were really just like me, same conversations. I hear them speaking Arabic and, dressed like me, they were like me. Some were from Afghanistan, others from Egypt. You know you have something in common. That's why it is like easier'.

Fitting with Ackers and Stalford's (2004) idea of a 'migrant bubble', the head of EAL told me that friendships often form in the EAL department, because new migrants to the school spend the first, most nervous, time at the school, here:

'Even if they don't speak the same language, those that were in the EAL department together tend to be friends until they leave school. They get to know each other better than anyone else and stick together'.

However, friendships between migrants and non-migrants were common. In addition to the factors mentioned above students relayed a diverse range of bases for such friendships, including, sport, music, fashion and an interest in reading. The fact that the non-migrant population at Charrington is hugely diverse and is likely to have a history of migration in their family makes them more likely to 'identity match' with the migrant students. The wider community Charrington is located in is equally diverse meaning that the non-migrant students grow up around migrants, further aiding their ability to 'identity match'. A comment from the RE teacher at Charrington supports this:

'if you look at the students I think they tend to look after them [the migrant students] at first, they understand that they have left their home society and they understand that the lessons are difficult'

Vertovec (2007) argues that in super-diverse social situations people can befriend people from a range of backgrounds because there are multiple identities across which to form links. This

process seems to be taking place at Charrington as students are able to access a variety of friendship groups, through a variety of interests and identities. The super-diverse nature of the school means that boundaries between groups are blurred (Verma et. al, 1994). As this teacher describes:

> 'It's fantastic. It's just the respect between them is so unbelievable and makes the school so interesting and so confident, so cultural, so melodic in a sense'.

I must be wary of being too complimentary of the experience at Charrington. They have tensions as well. The head teacher told me of a serious racial issue that warranted police interaction and two expulsions: a group of boys born in Sri Lanka had started calling themselves the 'Tamil Tigers' and were involved in violent fights. However, this was the only serious incident based around race or ethnicity that the head teacher was aware of in the history of the school. The school's Ofsted report supported this finding that: 'Bullying and racism... incidents are infrequent and dealt with decisively'.

Comments from the students question the head teachers' positivity. In four out of five of the Charrington focus groups there was acknowledgement that being a new migrant could make you susceptible to bullying. Most of the bullying at seemed to be left at name-calling, rather than becoming violent. The main source of the bullying was identified by all as the 'Black' student population, as these interchanges from one of the focus groups reveals:

> Aziza: 'Yeah everyone that comes new to this school they call names.'
>
> Achen: 'It is worse if you are not English.'
>
> All: 'Yeah'
>
> Dalmar: 'You do some wrongs and they just don't help you out. They just laugh at you.'

> Researcher: 'So the people who are rude to you - are they people that were born in Britain?'
>
> Dalmar: 'Most of them but not all.'
>
> Aziza: 'They are Black people.'
>
> Achen: 'YEAH!'
>
> Aziza: 'Most of them are Black, the Black people are rude.'

It is interesting to note that Aziza, Dalmar and Achen are Black Africans and thus 'Black' in this sense seems to be referring to another group of Black students. According to Warikoo's (2004) idea of 'identity matching' it might be expected that the shared ethnicity would aid positive interactions but this does not seem to be the case.

Divisions at Bridgehurst

Contrastingly, at Bridgehurst the students' friendship groups were distinctly divided along lines of ethnicity and country of origin. All of the migrant students stated that their closest friends were from those same ethnic groups. Friendships and meaningful encounters between migrant and non-migrant groups and between migrant groups of different ethnicity were limited. At break time the different ethnic groups always sat a different tables clearly separated from the UK-born majority student population. The Czech and Slovak Roma students formed a particularly cohesive group, their ethnic identity binding them above their country of origin identity.[12] Whether at break-time, in lessons or walking down the corridor they were invariably together.

All of the migrant students I spoke to thought that racism in the school were a significant problem. These tensions were predominantly focussed towards the students of Roma ethnicity. When I asked Bohdan, a Slovakian Roma boy in Y10, what his first day was like he immediately

---

[12] The definition of ethnicity is much debated. Here it is used to refer to a group based on real or perceived shared origins and cultural identities. It differs from country of origin by not being bound to a particular nation (Hiebert, 2000).

said *'racist'*. He continued: 'Because I come from Slovakia, they come from England; they say "What are you doing in my country?".'

The teachers reported that racist incidents between the Roma and the British-born students were common. It is not uncommon for incidents to break into violence; during my seven days at the school I heard of three significant fights taking place, one in the school and two between students at the school but outside. I witnessed some incidents myself, hearing taunts from the non-migrant students such as:

'Get it right eh Roma! Do you want to fucking fight about it?' and 'Get out of my fucking way Roma'. The word 'Roma' is a dirty word at Bridgehurst.

Another taunt that one Roma boy told me was regularly thrown at him was 'Paki'. It may be a reference to the Roma's historical migration from North-Western India but, whatever its basis, it ties the tensions at Bridgehurst to a long history of racial abuse of immigrants to the UK.

The fact that the non-migrant population at Bridgehurst is overwhelmingly White-British means they lack the ability to 'identity match' with the migrant students that was apparent at Charrington. The non-migrant students seemed to hold to generalisations and discriminatory views. Zara, a Roma student in Y10, told me:

'I haven't managed to make good relationships with English people. Sometimes I am being judged because they have met one or two of us and have bad experiences and think we are all the same'.

These students are part of a community with high level of racist and anti-immigration tension; tensions that are transported into the school. The head teacher told me that the school had a tough job in creating good relations between students as they exist in a *'very racist area of society'*. 'White flight' of students is a problem for the school and the economic disadvantages of the area intensifies tensions in the community. The citizenship

teacher told me that the Roma were a particular target in and outside school:

'We have some very racist English students here. They can really pick on the Roma in particular. It can come up in class and it's hard to deal with. It's a really insipid problem in the community that comes into the school'.

This process can work in reverse, with clashes at school spilling out into relations in the wider community and exacerbating tensions and segregation there. None of the Roma students take the school-provided bus to or from school, as they fear that fights will breakout, instead they take the public bus, which takes thirty minutes longer, thereby dividing the groups further.

One of the EAL staff put the level of tension with the Roma, in particular, down to their high-visibility as a group:

'The Roma are noisy, in your face, and they are immediately identifiable. They hang around in big groups and they are darker than the rest of the school population'.

Since the school is predominantly made up of two groups White-British and Czech and Slovak Roma students, the divisions are noticeable. Verma et al. (1994) state this as an important reason why it is difficult to achieve a good inclusion experience in a bi-ethnic school.

One of the EAL teachers believes that many of the tensions at Bridgehurst escalate because the Roma students are quick to react to incidents as racist. She said:

'They seem to be on the offensive straight away that it is racism towards them, it might be just can you move your chair, but they are immediately 'Don't have a pop at me''.

Alena, a Roma student in Y12, believed that the problems were, in part, mutual: 'It is divided and I think it is both people's fault, I should make more of an effort and so should they.

Only 40% of migrant students at Bridgehurst expressed a wish to have any British friends, suggesting that there may

be some level of racism in this direction. Gillborn (1995) warns against a simplistic take on racism which sees the 'White' group as always having supremacy and the 'Black' group as the victim.

The non-Roma migrant students at Bridgehurst experienced less tension. Three of the migrant students of other ethnicities did say that UK-born students at the school were 'racist' towards them but that it was not serious; the other four said they did not experience problems. One of the Roma students commented on the Polish students: 'The Polish and the British they are like this [linked his little fingers together], the Polish don't get any problems from the British'. Significantly one Polish girl at Bridgehurst told me that the Roma boys were racist to her.

The picture is not wholly bleak. I did find evidence of inter-ethnic friendship groups at Bridgehurst, although to a significantly reduced degree than at Charrington. 27% of the migrant students at Bridgehurst said they had British friends. Two of these students, Radek and Klaudia, were Slovakian Roma who had been in the school for two years, arriving when there were only eighteen migrant students in the school. One of the EAL teachers explained why she believed that this meant they had formed relationships with English students:

> 'Radek and Klaudia arrived two years ago in a small intake of about fifteen new migrant students to the school. They were both put in classes with mainly English students and they fitted in well. Their English came along quickly and they formed friendships, it was very different to this year when a large number of Roma students arrived and formed a strong separate group within the school'.

Good relations, such as these stretch to the space outside the school and so can aid cohesion in the wider community.

Radek – A Model of Inclusion for Bridgehurst?

Radek, a Y10 student born in the Czech Republic, was a rarity at Bridgehurst. He had significant friends in both his own ethnic group – the Roma – and among the majority UK-born population. His girlfriend is of Indian ethnicity, born in the UK. Radek told me:

'Yeah I've got friends in both groups, I can get along with anyone, sometimes I hang out with the Czech and Slovak boys other times with the English'.

Radek fits the definition of a positive inclusion experience better than any other student I encountered at Bridgehurst. Why this might be can provide clues as to how Bridgehurst can foster better relations between diverse groups.

Radek arrived in the school two years ago when there was an intake of twelve new migrant students and eight Roma students already in the school. He fitted in quickly, learning English, progressing well with his studies and making friends with a variety of students from different backgrounds. One of the EAL staff told me:

'Radek did really well. He fitted in quietly and got down to work, making lots of friends. He came in a small group; no one paid much attention to him being from the Czech Republic'.

She went on to tell me about his experience in the past year:

'When the big group of [migrant] students arrived this year Radek went backwards massively. He's getting in fights, he hangs out with Roma most of the time and even his English has deteriorated. He's really suffered behaviourally and academically from the arrival of all the Roma students.'

Radek's individual characteristics will, of course, have affected his experience of inclusion at Bridgehurst. However, it seems that Radek's arrival in the school as part of only a small group of migrant students was beneficial to his inclusion experience, something that this has deteriorated as the number of migrant students has risen.

Among the other migrant students meaningful encounters with students from other ethnic backgrounds seemed limited to lessons when teachers would place students to work in pairs. When this happened I saw good levels of communication and understanding between the students. Although several migrant students suggested that the school should do more to promote interactions between groups from different backgrounds.

All the teachers commented that tensions had got better over the past year, as did two of the students. The headteacher told me

that it is very much a 'guinea pig' year for the school, which is not used to having migrant students and has in the past year received fifty-three. He was confident peer relations would improve over time. But the maths teacher tempered the head teacher's optimism, warning me that it had to be a gradual process:

'You can't push things too much here or talk too openly about the problems [between the migrants and non-migrants] it's too incendiary an issue and will just backfire on you'.

Isolated Migrant Students

Asher (1990) argues that there are two kinds of negative peer relations *'active rejection'* and *'passive neglection'*. So far we have mostly seen evidence of active rejection in the tensions described at both schools. Passive neglection, describing students who are left-out and isolated, is, however, apparent at both schools. Migrant students are particularly prone to becoming isolated as they lack the social networks and language skills that can help you form relations at school (Igoa, 1998).

Of the sixteen students I spoke to at Charrington five told me that they were yet to find any significant friends, even though all had been there for over a month and most more than three months. At Bridgehurst I came across three students who described a similar position. The number is possibly fewer at Bridgehurst because the Roma group is so inclusive for new Roma students.

One of the students at Charrington, Fetu, who had arrived at the school six months ago from the Philippines, told the focus group:

'If you are going to talk of friends, then it is very different - friends to talk together and share things, OK. I have no real friends here...It is like you are in one group and you are separated from the group. Mostly at lunch I go to the library but it is closed at the moment.' Abia, in the same focus group, identified with Fetu's feelings:

'I feel the same. I feel like I am not worth as much. I feel like I should not be here, because it's not my environment. It's not the people I communicate with. It's like, yeah, like Fetu said, you are separated from the others and if they are talking to me I am just staring at them like, what?'

Charrington has a significant number of students (the EAL teachers estimated it to be twenty) who are migrants from overseas but who speak English as their first language (there are no such students at Bridgehurst). I asked the teachers at Charrington about their experiences and the support they receive. The head of EAL told me:

'I worry about them because we are not officially supposed to support them, but they have needs as being new to the country and to the school. It can be really tough. Of course we do offer them help and I always try and find out if there are any such students joining the school, but they could slip past'.

In this case the identification students as EAL rather than as migrants means that migrant students who speak English are in danger of becoming isolated due to lack of any specific support for them.

At Bridgehurst the most isolated students are the non-Roma migrants. They seemed to be overshadowed by the tensions surrounding the Roma and almost a forgotten group. One of the EAL teachers stated: 'Take the Polish kids, because of what is going on with the Roma and because there aren't so many of them they get forgotten. They probably have their English classes disrupted all the time with troubles. It's a problem'.

The four Polish students at Bridgehurst were always together when I saw them, uniting at break time at the same table and never seeming to mix beyond their small group. This 'passive neglection' is as much a barrier to inclusion as tensions and fights are, but too little attention seems to be given to it at both schools.

Summary

Charrington achieves fairly good levels of interaction between groups of different backgrounds and lacks serious tensions. At Bridgehurst there are low levels of such interaction and there are serious tensions, focussed around the students of Roma ethnicity. The differences between the two experiences seem to be in a large part because of different tensions from the wider community being reflected in the school and the associated ability the non-migrant population has to 'identity match' with the migrant population. The situation seems to be exacerbated at Bridgehurst by the fact that migrants are fairly new to the school, with many arriving at once at the start of this academic year. There is also a suggestion at Bridgehurst that the Roma students aggravate tensions. Bridgehurst could do more to foster unity between diverse groups. A focus on non-divisive shared identities such as an interest in football or reading, which helps 'identity matching' at Charrington, could help improve relations.

Boundaries between groups at Bridgehurst are very clear, it is a largely bi-ethnic school and, as Verma et. al (1994) argue, this makes inclusion difficult to achieve. The super-diverse nature of Charrington makes their inclusion experience easier as boundaries between groups are blurred and there are many and diverse opportunities for 'identity matching'. The students and teachers at Charrington were aware of this. The head teacher told me:

> 'In a way it is easier here because we are SO mixed, easier than in a school where you've got one group and a small number of others, that is in many ways much more challenging'.

Although, according to Warikoo's concept of 'identity matching', the non-migrant population might be expected to match better with the migrant students, than they do, with tensions within the school reportedly coming from the school's 'Black' population.

In both schools there are some severely isolated migrant students. This is as detrimental to the inclusion experience as hostility can be. Migrant students who already speak English can be forgotten as they are not perceived to need support.

The numbers of migrant students has an interesting and complex effect. According to the popular idea of schools as 'swamped' by migrant students Charrington might be expected to have a worse experience. However, the large numbers at Charrington seems to help to cultivate good relationships as the school is used to new students arriving from overseas. At Bridgehurst relations were better when there were very few migrant students, when they were pretty much invisible and did not alter the school noticeably. But, when numbers rose, tensions mounted, as Radek's story shows. It seems therefore that schools achieve a better inclusion experience when there are either very few or very many migrant students.

Teacher Relations

An 'inclusive' relationship between teachers and migrant student is one where students and teachers have a harmonious relationship free of discrimination and tensions, particularly those based around race or anti-immigration sentiments (Warikoo, 2004). Teachers promote inclusion where they are well-disposed to provide equal opportunities in terms of academic and social support and where students are welcomed and fully-included in lessons.

Friendships and burdens

Igoa (1998) in her study of US schools found that migrant students often looked to teachers as their closest friends, in particular EAL teachers. I also found this to be the case in both schools. All the students at both schools listed at least one of the EAL staff as among their favourite teachers. Alex and Tylda, Y10 migrant students at Bridgehurst, told me:

> Alex: 'Lessons with [EAL teachers] are nice, better than the other lessons, because in normal lessons you can't learn and everyone is just doing what

they want and we just sit there doing nothing.'

Tylda: 'Yes, I am comfortable [in the EAL department]. They speak nicely to me; other classes aren't as nice.'

The teachers seem to get deeply involved too. I witnessed an incident at Bridgehurst where a migrant student was complaining of a headache. The teaching assistant took a particular interest in her, carefully asking her why she had a headache. It transpired that the student hadn't eaten all day. The teaching assistant gave her her own lunch.

At Charrington the EAL staff seem to have a similar level of affection for the EAL students. This EAL teacher told me:

'It is emotional, very emotional, we are involved with them from the beginning to the end, to the very end, and then they tell you that are going to become doctor's and you're like wow...we have to look after them, we have to fight for them'.

These intense relationships were visibly overburdening the EAL staff with work at both schools. Their title *'English as an Additional Language'* teachers implies that their job is to teach English. However, in reality, their job comes to be about providing the support that their students need as new to the school and new to the UK.

The EAL teachers at Bridgehurst seemed to be particularly overworked. One EAL teacher told me: *'now the floodgates are open we have a hell of a job to do'.* The tensions experienced in the school and their lack of support from the under-staffed LEA, compared to that at Charrington accentuate this onus. Illona, the Czech and Slovak speaking EAL teacher at Bridgehurst, was stretched across a variety of pastoral issues and administrative issues as well as her teaching role, because of her language skills. I witnessed her regularly called on to deal with a student, or call parents, for all kinds of reasons, from behavioural problems to needing parental permission for a child to take an aspirin. Mainstream teachers regularly came to the EAL staff at Bridgehurst over any issue with an EAL student, considering them their responsibility. The EAL teachers break-time never seemed to be a 'break', since, at the request of the headmaster, they were engaged in ensuring the EAL students behaved themselves.

The teachers at Charrington also take on roles beyond their official duties. Fasil, a Y9 student, told me: 'The EAL teachers told me where to be for all my subjects and kept coming to see where I was and that I was OK.' The head teacher described that these are 'burdens' they do not complain about taking on:

'Of course we're happy! Well it might be a burden, perceived as a burden but it's got...Look! You've got to address the needs of the whole student and, while it's not our responsibility to sort out people's immigration status or their housing or anything else, we've got to work with the other services to try and get them the help that they need'.

The teaching assistant at Bridgehurst expressed a similar opinion, but argued that the department needed more staff to cope with pastoral responsibilities:

'We don't ever go "no not our problem" if a child comes to us, but if the department is growing there's a role that needs to be filled - someone that doesn't necessarily teach but deals with pastoral issues.'

This year was seen as being particularly overwhelming at Bridgehurst because migrant students were largely a new experience for the school and a large number had arrived at once. At Charrington, the head of EAL told me how they had had much higher numbers of EAL students before, making the present situation easy in comparison:

'There was a time in the old school, when we had four hundred kids from one group and all came from overseas and they spoke all kinds of different languages, so we have seen the worst scenario and what we have here is much easier' They also have students start the

school throughout the year, rather than having a large group arriving at one time.

Know your students

Verma at al. (1994:35) argue that teachers must *'know'* their pupils *as the first pre-requisite for providing an appropriate and inclusive education'*. 'Knowing' a migrant student means being aware of their background and needs and not generalising about them according to their 'race', ethnic, religious or migrant identity (Miedema, 1997).

At Bridgehurst I encountered teachers generalising and even behaving in what could be seen as a racist manner. Many teachers seemed to have set ideas of certain characteristics applying to certain ethnicities: Polish students were 'quiet and studious', Turkish students were 'friendly', and Roma students were 'troublesome'. Such generalisations are damaging. Foster (1990) describes how teachers, by holding onto stereotypical views, can create a self-fulfilling prophecy; the teacher's expectations of a student according to their 'race', ethnicity or class can become how the student behaves. Teachers are part of wider society and so, just like the students, they transport views from the wider community into the school. The head teacher told me that the school was located in a *'racist part of society'* and reported that they've had some problems with teachers.

I witnessed one incident during break-time whilst I was sitting with the EAL teachers:

> EAL Teacher: 'They haven't got a very nice look, have they?'
>
> [looking towards a group of Roma students]
>
> Researcher: 'What do you mean?'
>
> Teacher: 'Well their visages I mean, they're just not very nice'

Teachers at Bridgehurst regularly referred to the Roma students' appearances, describing them as 'dark', 'standing out' and 'looking different', generalising about the students and marking them as different.

I also found that there was a fear of drawing attention to migrant students, among the teachers at Bridgehurst. The citizenship teacher told me: 'It's better not to fanfare the issues; it just causes more problems; it's too sensitive it comes up in class, but I try to move the focus away from it.' However, these attitudes seem to be changing as teachers get more used to having migrant students in the school. The head teacher told me that even during the course of this year teacher attitudes towards the migrant students had become more understanding.

Martin-Jones and Saxena (2001) found in their study that mainstream teachers, in particularly, lack an understanding of EAL students. The mainstream teachers at both did not seem to have a great awareness of the background of their students. The maths teacher at Bridgehurst gave an example: 'Some teachers here aren't very understanding. They hear an EAL student saying a phrase like "fuck off" and think they can speak English and are just pretending not to in class to get out of lessons.'

At Charrington I was in the staff room one day with the Geography teacher and RE teacher. They were telling me about a Y7 student who had just arrived at the school. He was one of their favourite students, very polite, attentive and bright. They both seemed to know him quite well; they had even met his father on several occasions. When I asked them if they knew where the boy was from they replied:

> Geography teacher: 'I'd like to say um...Iraq?'
>
> RE teacher: 'Hmm I couldn't say for sure but yes probably Iraq or maybe Somalia'

The EAL teachers at Charrington expressed concern over the lack of understanding the mainstream teachers had of the migrant students. They reported several incidents to me, including this encounter between a boy who had migrated from Cameroon and his maths teacher: 'This maths teacher came to me and said that the student would not look him in the eye. He said to me, "he is

impolite". I said to him, "you know what? He respects you more than you think in Cameroon it is a sign of respect not to look at someone".'

Some students at Charrington were happy with teachers not knowing too much about them. Saida told me: 'I think the teachers should just teach. They don't have to know where you are from. They don't need to know anything personal. Like, when I came they asked all these questions and I was like ARGH! There were all these questions and I wish they wouldn't.' As Closs et. al (2001) argue, there is a balance to be met between understanding and supporting students and drawing unwanted attention to them.

Teacher Ethnicity

Verma et al. (1994:38) argue that 'matching' teacher's ethnicity to the ethnicity of the student population is critical, so that teachers exemplify as well as deliver an inclusive education. Warikoo (2004) argues that this 'identity matching' does not have to be based on ethnicity alone. She finds that white teachers in the USA are able to relate to West-Indian migrant students due to a shared history of migration and African-American teachers can relate to them because of a shared experience of 'race issues'.

At Charrington the level of teacher ethnicity (33%) was significantly less than the level of student ethnicity (93%). In terms of absolute numbers, however, there were several teachers who could 'identity match' with students along a number of characteristics. The fact that the EAL staff were all migrants to the UK themselves was seen as particularly important in helping them relate to the migrant students. One of the EAL staff said: 'It helps that I came to the country when I was 16. I can say to them "I did it you can do it too." I think it makes them feel better'.

At Bridgehurst about 10% of the staff were from an ethnic minority, which almost exactly matches the 12% student ethnic minority. However, in absolute numbers this is eight teachers, most of whose identities did not mirror the ethnic or migrant status of the students. Crucially at Bridgehurst there was no Roma staff. Illona, one of the EAL teachers who was born in Slovakia, had been hired in response to the large Czech and Slovak population at the school. However, her position as a Slovakian non-Roma brought problems as well as benefits. Illona reported to me that many of the parents, and sometimes the students, accused her of being racist. The problematic relations between non-Roma and Roma in Slovakia and the Czech Republic were being transported into the school and adding to their tensions.

Summary

Support and understanding from teachers is crucial to creating a good inclusion experience. The EAL staff provide the majority of this support, often working far beyond their remit as *'English as additional language'* teachers. This overburdening is detrimental to inclusion as it can result in students lacking support. The EAL teachers at Bridgehurst seemed more overwhelmed by the demands of the migrant students than those at Charrington even though Charrington has more students and a much higher EAL student to staff ratio. As with the peer relations, it seems that the issue is more complex than one of straightforward numbers. Migrant students are a newer feature for teachers at Bridgehurst than at Charrington and this novelty seemed to add to feelings of being overwhelmed. The lack of support from the overworked and understaffed LEA department further adds to the experience of being overwhelmed, a support that is more significant at Charrington. The higher level of tensions at Bridgehurst mean there is more for the EAL teachers to do, particularly since the EAL students are seen as their responsibility alone. Charrington has a long history of migrant students and therefore seem more able to adapt to the specific needs.

Some of the mainstream teachers at both schools lacked understanding of the needs and backgrounds of the migrant students. At Bridgehurst this lack of understanding was highly visible and particularly damaging

in the use of generalisations, stereotypes and racist views. Just like the students, teachers were transporting sentiments from the wider community into the school. However, there are strong indications of progress towards improving relations and this could have positive repercussions for wider community cohesion.

There are more opportunities for students to 'identity match' with teachers at Charrington who have ethnic identities similar to the students and who have been migrants themselves and this helps to create an inclusive environment. Both schools would benefit from improving the understanding of mainstream teachers towards migrant students as much of the onus currently falls on the EAL department. If both schools had a member of staff or a team specifically placed to help migrant students the problems of teacher overburdening could be significantly relieved. At Bridgehurst it might be of particular benefit to have a Roma member of staff.

Ability to Celebrate

Blanco and Takemoto (2006:57) write that an inclusive school should aim *'to enable each individual to retain and develop his or her cultural identity'*. Both Bridgehurst and Charrington aim to be inclusive schools where diverse groups are able to express their identities in a welcoming environment. This is a contentious aim. Such 'celebration' was central to multiculturalism, which was heavily criticised for leading to segregation. Closs et al. (2001) argue, on a more individual level, that there is a balance to be met between allowing a child to celebrate their identity and drawing too much unwanted attention to them.

Celebration at Charrington

Charrington uses many methods to turn the philosophy of celebration into reality, including wall displays, assemblies, events, and elements of the curriculum. The head teacher told me:

'I think the way to achieve a balance between celebrating diversity and not creating divisions is really to acknowledge it and celebrate it and to make it cool to have an identity which is your own and which you share with other people and something to be proud of, not something to feel defensive about.'

As you enter the school the first thing you see is a huge mural showing abstracted faces of the students. It encapsulates the diversity of the school and suggests a commitment to this as an image the school is keen to promote. During my time at Charrington there were several displays on the corridors with titles like *'Learning Languages; Our Bridge between Cultures'*, and *'World Food Day: A Celebration of Diversity'*. At the end of summer term every year Charrington has a 'Culture Show', a whole school event where students are given the opportunity to represent their own ethnicity through dance, poetry; speeches and music.

Culture Show: A Closer Look

The annual culture show at Charrington Academy is a big deal. It is the biggest event in the school's calendar. Preparations start months in advance and students get very excited about what they can perform. It lasts three hours to give as many students as possible a chance to participate but there are many more students wanting to take part than the show can accommodate.

On the day students could barely contain their excitement about the show. A teacher told me that a good performance at culture show could guarantee you a place as a popular person in the school. A new migrant student to the school couldn't keep still as he told me:

'I think it will be very beautiful all the different cultures together'.

The hall where the show took place was draped in flags and filled with noisy chatter as students, dressed in a riot of various 'national dress' and international football shirts, milled about. There were two large projector screens hanging above the stage which slide-showed through a series stock images from all the national backgrounds represented in the school population. images. They pronounced statements like *'Different Cultures: One school'*, *'You Are Unique'* and *'Charrington's Melting Pot of Cultures'*. One stated:

'Although we are people with different racial

23

characteristics it is important to recognise and celebrate all identities and cultures. Everyone has something to offer, no matter what they believe in or who they are. There should be mutual understanding of the different cultures in our society and school'.

The show started with a world flag parade. Students streamed across the stage holding up flags whilst the teachers told the audience *'I hope you can see your flag there, we tried to represent everyone in the school'*. The show continued with a variety of poems, dances, speeches and songs, either representative of a particular culture or nation or on the idea of *'One World United'*. One teacher told me:

'You think they'll be embarrassed and won't want to come out, but they do, they do, they dance, they perform, folk law from all over the world, they are not embarrassed they are proud of who they are, they show it, they do'.

The Culture Show was the stuff of multiculturalists' dreams but what did it say in terms of the criticisms of multiculturalism as leading to segregation? Troyna (1993:5) is critical of the *'saris, samosas and steel bands'* approach to diversity in education and de Block (2006) is critical of such events as being too essentialising, focussing on differences rather than integration. What did it reveal about Closs et al.'s (2001) argument that too much attention on individual ethnic identity can be unwanted and make students feel isolated or essentialised?

The Culture Show at Charrington certainly drew on stereotypical images of ethnic and national identity, as well as referring to dated and criticised terms such as *'melting pot'*. However, the atmosphere was very positive; everyone was enjoying themselves and showing an interest in the entertainment. The children chose what to perform themselves and those who took part seemed to gain popularity with diverse groups rather than becoming segregated.

These efforts seemed to be working well in producing a school atmosphere that is aware of its diversity and celebratory of it. 90% of migrant students said that diversity was a good thing and 82% felt able to express their identity as they wished. Sida and Malea told me:

Sida: 'I think [the diversity of the school] is good because you know you get to know other cultures, other people. There wouldn't be any racism because no one has any reason to be a racist.'

Malea: 'Yeah it's good. It feels like you are welcome and not like, go away, go back go away'.

Many of the students said that other students showed an interest in them and their country of origin. Imran, a Y10 boy, told me:

'Once a student was asking me about where I came from and what is special about that country where you come from, and try to understand more about it...It is nice that they were interested in my home'. Another student told me that she didn't like the attention; she felt that people didn't need to know about her background.

Coulby (1997) explains how a school's curriculum reflects the value system of the school and society they are a part of. He argues that many manifest xenophobic sentiments. The curriculum at Charrington was focussed on representing the ethnic and cultural mix of the school with, for example, lessons on literature from around the world and much Black history being taught. Anderson and Williamson (2004) discuss the benefits of *'I know what that is like'* experiences migrant students bring to lessons and this seems well appreciated at Charrington. The RE teacher, for example, told me how often in lessons she could just let the students take over as they would discuss their own religions with each other.

Most of the teachers at Charrington reported that migrant students were amongst their most able students, with four teachers telling me that the students from Afghanistan in particular mostly came from families where education was considered highly important and that they had a strong drive and determination to succeed. This could be viewed as a positive self-fulfilling prophecy in line with Foster's (1990) ideas discussed earlier. It might also make it easier for teachers at Charrington to see the benefits migrant students can bring to the school.

Celebration at Bridgehurst

The headmaster at Bridgehurst told me he wanted the school to *'feel like a dynamic*

and diverse London school', but the atmosphere at Bridgehurst in terms of celebrating diversity was very different to that at Charrington. The EAL teaching assistant told me: '[Diversity] is celebrated, but it's hard and we should work to celebrate it more'. I was told that there had been some display work on the diversity of the school; when I was there there was one display on *'World Refugee Week'*. They had had a culture show last year in the school. It had been predominantly based around food from around the world. The migrant students I spoke to were underwhelmed by it, Klaudia told me: 'It was OK, no one was very interested, I brought a chicken meal but not many people ate it'. The teachers told me that they did not have the time to organise a culture show for this year.

The migrant students at Bridgehurst seemed wary of drawing attention to themselves and only 30% thought that the school's diversity was a good thing. Karol, a Roma student from Slovakia, told me: 'I will not tell people about my culture. They are not interested; they will laugh and joke at me'. Although Klaudia, a Roma student from the Czech Republic, who has been at the school for two years and has some significant English friends, told me she enjoyed teaching Czech to her classmates and teachers.

The head teacher expressed that the school aimed to reflect their diverse make-up in their curriculum. The history teacher made an effort to teach about the persecution of Roma people in the Second World War and an EAL teacher told me that celebrating diversity was a focus in dance and art. Beyond this most teachers seemed wary of drawing attention to the school's diversity. This quote from the citizenship teachers suggests why this might be: 'It's best not to fanfare things here, it causes more problems...I used to work in a London school where we'd celebrate Eid and all things like that but it wouldn't work here, if you focus too much on things it leads to tensions'. The tensions around immigration in the wider community and in the school seem to make it difficult to celebrate diversity and see the benefits that it can bring to the classroom.

Roma Identity at Bridgehurst

One area where Bridgehurst does stand out is in having the Roma students identify themselves as Roma. The connotations surrounding the term and the associated discrimination and persecution mean that people of Roma ethnicity can often be unwilling to identify themselves as Roma (Bancroft; 2001). The local LEA officer at Bridgehurst told me that most of the schools in the area which have Roma student populations do not officially 'have' any, since the students will not self-identify and the schools tend not to ask. At Bridgehurst all Roma students have identified themselves. Illona, the EAL teacher from Slovakia, told me: 'I try hard to get them to self-identify, I tell them they should be proud of who they are that it is not a shameful matter. Mostly, after a time, they will say I can say they are Roma'.

The school has an additional purpose in wanting the students to identify as Roma: there is a grant of £140 for each Roma student in the school since they are identified as an at risk group needing extra support (DfES, 2006c). It is an interesting contrast that the students are encouraged to identify as Roma at this point but at other points, for example in lessons, their identity is overlooked.

Summary

Charrington succeeds in offering a more welcoming and celebratory atmosphere and structure towards diversity than Bridgehurst. Students at Charrington also seem happier to express their ethnic identity. Bridgehurst seems less dedicated to 'celebration', with fewer displays and events. Bridgehurst has a much harder job in trying to celebrate diversity. The wider community and school population is predominantly White-British and predisposed to discriminatory, racist and anti-immigrant sentiments which means drawing attention to the schools diversity can be problematic. The schools experiences fit with Verma et al.'s (1994) appraisal that being bi-ethnic is harder than

being multi-ethnic. In a multiethnic school there is so much diversity that boundaries between students from different backgrounds are blurred. The school is an example to itself that diversity can work. In a bi-ethnic school the differences between groups are much more apparent.

The Culture Show at Charrington was revealing. The show is a success at Charrington because the school has the level of diversity to display; by displaying your own ethnic, cultural or religious background at Charrington you are fitting in with the school as a part of its diverse identity. Bridgehurst's culture show served to accentuate the fact that there are mainly two communities in the school who do not get along very well with each other. The success of Charrington's culture show suggests that critics such as de Block (2006) and Troyna (1993) may be misplaced in their criticism of *'sari, samosa and steelband'* multiculturalism. If well handled and in the right environment it appears that such events can aid inclusion rather than leading to division. However, the identities celebrated in the show were predominantly ethnic or 'national'. There was very little focus on appreciating the complexity of identities students have, nor on the students as migrants.

It is interesting that the one way in which Bridgehurst is succeeding in having students assert their identity is in official identification. The primary impetus behind this, however, seemed to be money. Perhaps some of this energy and sensitivity could be transferred to other parts of the school to increase the positive inclusion experience elsewhere.

Conclusions

The primary aim of this paper is to compare the inclusion experience in two schools, which differ dramatically according to the nature of the wider community they are situated in and the nature of their school population. Both schools aim for inclusion but experience different results. There are a myriad of factors – from the personalities of individual students and teachers to the complex histories of the areas - that can

affect inclusion and that were beyond my control and ability to assess. However, the clear differences between the schools' experiences suggest that the nature of the wider community and the nature of the school population are important factors in shaping inclusion experiences for migrant students in UK schools.

Overall Charrington achieved inclusion for its migrant students more fully. There are significant mixed friendship groups along a complexity of identities, and hostility between migrant students and their peers is minimal. The EAL teachers related well to the students and their needs. Their position as migrants and members of ethnic minorities undoubtedly helped this. The mainstream teachers were conscious of the benefits migrant children could bring to the classroom although they could have shown more awareness and understanding of these students particular needs. The ability of children to celebrate their ethnic, cultural, religious or migrant identity in a welcoming environment was considerable.

Charrington's 'super-diversity' helps them to achieve inclusion. There are more opportunities for migrant students to 'identity match' with fellow students and teachers and boundaries between groups become blurred. There was some animosity towards migrant students from some black British students, questioning the applicability of Warikoo's idea of 'identity matching' to all situations. Charrington's location in a diverse community with a history of in-migration and low levels of racist/anti-immigration sentiments further helps their ability to be an inclusive school.

Bridgehurst achieved a noticeably poorer level of inclusion with low levels of mixed friendships, significant tensions surrounding the migrant students and some indications of poor relations between migrant students and teachers, who tended to see the migrant students as more of a challenge than a benefit. Bridgehurst is situated in a community where anti-immigration and racist sentiments are prevalent and these were transported into the schools through students and teachers.

The teachers and non-migrant student population do not have much opportunity to 'identity match' with the migrant students and divisions between the main ethnic groups in the schools were clear.

Some teachers at Bridgehurst suggested that the Roma students were a particularly problematic group to include in the school and there were indications that they aggravated tensions. An opinion that is somewhat supported in the literature about the Roma and their ability to fit into mainstream schools (Gomes, 1999; Kychchov et al, 1999). However, it is dangerous to generalise and hard to separate out the extent to which the students are reacting to behaviour towards them or acting up to a self-fulfilling prophecy (Foster, 1990).

Overall it seems that the two schools fit Verma et. al's (1994) model that better inclusive relations can be achieved in multi-ethnic rather than bi-ethnic schools.

The idea that schools are swamped by high numbers of migrant students has been questioned by the comparison of the two schools. Charrington seems to be coping better with their migrant students but has significantly more (450 compared to 71 at Bridgehurst), with the same number of EAL teachers. Migrants are newer at Bridgehurst; it is their 'guinea pig' year when fifty-three arrived almost all at once in September. The problem seems to be more about a perception of being overwhelmed, the manner in which students arrive (many at once or gradually filtered in) and about being used to the experience.

There are barriers to inclusion shared by both schools. Most notably, the overburdening of the EAL teachers and the significant isolation of some migrant students. On the basis of these two factors in particular, this study recommends that the schools should have, at least, one member of staff dedicated to support migrant students. Migrants students have needs beyond learning English and some migrant students speak English and so are not given any official support despite needing help to be included in the school. It

appears, with the implementation of the New Arrivals Excellence Programme (NAEP), that the DCSF has started to recognise this. But they need to go much further offering in school support to international migrants in particular, rather than just central guidance.

Vertovec (2006, 2007), through his concept of 'super-diversity' argues that there is more to identity than just ethnicity, race or language status. He suggests that if UK policy makers recognise the presence of 'super-diversity', and the multiple identities it entails, inclusion and cohesion could be improved, as more positive relations can be built between people of different backgrounds but who shared identities at one or more of its many levels. This idea can be applied to migrant students in UK secondary schools. A focus on the diversity of identities of students, whether as migrants or as football players, or as people interested in reading, could relieve the attention on more divisive identity categories such as ethnicity or country of origin, creating positive relations between diverse groups. A recognition of students as 'migrants', in particular, and the provision of support on this basis could significantly improve inclusion, with important resonances for wider community cohesion. Charrington is an example of this already in practice. They achieve more inter-ethnic friendships in part because of the opportunities students have to 'identity' match along various factors.

Bridgehurst is faced with a much tougher job when tying to achieve inclusion. They cannot really change the wider community they are located in or the predominantly bi-ethnic nature of school population. However, as identified by the CIC, it is in locations and schools like Bridgehurst where it is critical that improvements are made. Bridgehurst could take some leads from Charrington, despite their inherent differences, offering more constructed opportunities for students from diverse groups to mix and drawing attention to commonalities such as a like for football or similar music tastes and perhaps allowing students to filter into the school more gradually across the year. However, the

teachers at Bridgehurst are probably right that it needs to be a gentle approach. The culture show works in London but at Bridgehurst such a display is divisive since the diversity is not there to celebrate.

The place for umbrella policies like inclusion, therefore, comes under scrutiny. They can have a role as an aimed for best practice but each approach must be context based and specific to each school.

My research cannot offer conclusive answers. My study is bound to two schools and only to a relatively short amount of research time at those schools. I hope, however, that the indications offered here raise potential for further investigation and suggest helpful adaptations to policies. A wider exploration of inclusion experiences across more schools as well as research among non-migrant students and parents would be invaluable. It would also be both fascinating and useful to do a more in-depth study of migrant students, perhaps following them for several years, right from their arrival as migrants to the UK.

Bibliography

Ackers, H.L. and Stalford, H. (2004) *A Community for Children?* Ashgate, Hamps.

Adams, L.D. and Kirova, A. (2006) *Global Migration and Education: Schools, Children and Families.* New Jersey and London, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Ainscow, M. (1999) *Understanding the Development of Inclusive Schools*. London, Falmer Press.

Ainscow, M. Booth, T. and Dyson, A. (2006) *Improving Schools, Developing Inclusion.* Oxford and New York, Routledge.

Alba, R. and Silberman,R. (2006) 'The Children of immigrants encounter host-society educational systems: Mexicans in the US and North Africans in France'. Working Paper in series *The Children of Immigrants in School*, The University of Albany, SUNY. Available online at: <http://mumford.albany.edu/schools/img/pdf/Alba_Silberman_SSRC_v91.pdf>

(Accessed 31/8/2007).

Allan, J. (1999) *Actively Seeking Inclusion.* London, Falmer Press.

Allport, G.W. (1954) *The Nature of Prejudice.* Cambridge, Massachusetts, Addison-Wesley Publishing Co.

Anderson, B. and O'Connell Davidson, J. (2005) *Border Troubles and Invisibility: Child Rights and migration in Europe*. Paper presented to Save the Children Sweden Seminar on 'Rightless Migration'.

Anderson, B. and Williamson, R. (2004) *Diversity in the Classroom: Discussion Paper.* Compas, Oxford University. Available Online at: <www.compas.ox.ac.uk/publications/releases/Diversity%20in%20classroom.   pdf> (Accessed 31/8/2007).

Arai, L. (2005) *Migrants and Public Services in the UK: A review of the recent literature.* Compas, Oxford University. Available Online at: <http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/publications/Research_Resources.shtml> (Accessed 31/8/2007).

Asher, S.D. (1990) 'Recent advances in the study of peer rejection' in Asher, S.R. and Coie, J.D. (Eds) *Peer Rejection in Childhood.* Cambrdidge, Cambridge University Press.

Back, L. (1992) 'Social Context and Racist Name Calling: An ethnographic perspective on racist talk within a South London adolescent community', *European Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 1(3):19-38.

Bancroft, A. (2001) 'Closed Spaces, Restricted Places: Marginalisation of Roma in Europe', *Space and Polity*, 5(2):145-157.

Blanco, R. and Takemoto, C.Y. (2006) 'Inclusion in Schools in Latin America and the Caribbean: The Case of the Chidlren of Haitian Descent in the Dominican Republic' in Adams, L.D. and Kirova, A. (Eds) *Global Migration and Education: Schools, Children and Families.* London and New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Brannen and O'Brien (1996) *Children in Families: Research and Policy.* London, Falmer Press.

Bullivant, B.M. (1981) *The Pluralist Dilemma in Education*. Sydney, Allen and Unwin.

Census (2001) Available online at: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census/default.asp>

Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion (CESI) (2002) *Social Inclusion*. Available online at: <www.cesi.org.uk/kbdocs/socinc.do> (Accessed 31/8/2007).

Clark, C. and Greenfields, M. (2006) *Here to Stay: The Gypsies and Travellers of Britain.* Hertfordshire, University of Hertfordhire Press.

Clarke,C. Dyson,A. Millward,A. and Robson ,S.(1999) 'Theories of Inclusion, Theories of Schools: deconstructing and reconstructing the inclusive school', in *British Educational Research Journal* 25(2):157-177.

Closs, A. Stead, J. Arshad, R. and Norris, C. (2001) 'School Peer relationships of 'minority' children in Scotland', in *Child Care Health and Development* 27(2) 133-148.

Commission for Racial Equlity (cre) (2002) *Preparing a Race Equality Policy for Schools.* London, CRE.

Commission on Integration and Cohesion (CIC) (2007) *Our Shared Future.* Available online at: <http://www.integrationandcohesion.org.uk/upload/assets/www.integrationandcohesion.org.uk/our_shared_future.pdf> (Accessed 30/8/2007).

Corbett, J. (1999) 'Inclusivity and School Culture: the Case of Special Education' in Prosser, J. (Ed) *School Culture*. London, Paul Chapman Publishing.

Coulby,D. (1997) 'European Curricula, Xenophobia and Warfare', *Comparative Education* 33(1):29-41.

Crawley, H. (2006) *Child first, Migrant second: Ensuring that Every Child Matters.* ILPA Policy Paper, Available Online at: <www.ilpa.org.uk/publications/ilpa_child_first.pdf> (Accessed on 31/8/2007).

De Block, L. (2006) Talking Television across Cultures: Negotiating Inclusion and Exclusion, in Adams, L.D. and Kirova, A. (Eds) *Global Migration and Educaiton: Schools, Children and Families.* London and New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Department of education and science (DES) (1975) *A Language for Life*. London, HMSO.

Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) (1997) *Excellence for All Children: meeting special educational*. London, HMSO.

Department for Education and Skills (Dfes) (2000a) *Race Relations Amendment Act 2000*. Available Online at: <http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ethnicminorities/raising_achievement/763611/> (Accessed 31/8/2007).

Department for Education and employment (DfEE) (2000b) *Bullying: don't suffer in silence.* London, HMSO.

Department for Education and employment (DfEE)/Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) (1999) *Inclusion Statement: The National Curriculum Handbook for Primary Teachers.* London, HMSO.

Department for Education and Skills (Dfes) (2001) *Inclusive schooling: children with special educational needs*. London, HMSO.

Department for Education and Skills (Dfes) (2004) *Every Child Matters: Change for Children in Schools.* London, HMSO.

Department for Education and Skills (Dfes) (2005) Aiming High: new arrivals national strategy. Available online at: <www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/publications/inclusion/newarrivals/pns_inc/138105newarrivals.pdf> (Accessed 31/8/2007).

Department for Education and Skills (Dfes) (2006a) *Guidance on the Duty to Promote Cohesion.* Available online at: <www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/conDocument.cfm?consultationId=1471> (Accessed 31/8/2007).

Department for Education and Skills (Dfes) (2006b) *Academy Programme Reaches*

Halfway Mark Towards 200 New Schools. Available Online at:

<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/academies/news/?version=1> (Accessed on 31/8/2007).

Department for Education and Skills (Dfes) (2006c) *Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Achievement.* Available Online at: <www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ethnicminorities/raising_achievement/gypsy_travellerachievement/> (Accessed on 31/8/2007).

Department for Education and Skills (Dfes) (2007) *New Arrivals Excellence Programme.* Available Online at: <http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/primary/features/inclusion/naep/> (Accessed 31/8/2007).

Dwyer, C. (1999) 'Veiled Meanings: young British Muslim Women and the negotiation of differences.' *Gender, Place and Culture*, 6(1):5-26.

England, K. (1994) 'Getting Personal: Reflexivity, Positionality, and Feminist Research', *Professional Geographer* 46(1): 80-89.

European Union (EU) (1998) *European Convention on Human Rights.* Available online at: <www.opsi.gov.uk/Acts/acts1998/80042-e.htm> (Accessed 28/8/2007).

Foster, P. (1990) *Policy and Practice in Multicultural and Antiracist Education.* London and New York, Routledge.

Gardner K. (1997) *Songs at the River's Edge.* London, Pluto.

Gillborn, D. (1995) *Racism and Anti-Racism in Real Schools: Theory, Policy and Practice.* Bucks, Oxford University Press.

Gilroy,P. (2004) *After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture?* Oxford, Routledge.

Glenn C.L. and de Jong E.J. (1996) *Educating Immigrant Children.* New York and London, Garland.

Goldstein, T. (2003) 'Contemporary Bilingaul Life at a Canadian High School: Choices, Risks, Tensions and Dilemmas'. *Sociology of Education*, 76(3):247-264.

Gomes, A.M. (1999) 'Gypsy Children and the Italian School System: a closer look'. *European Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 10(2):163-172.

Gundara, J.S. (2000) *Interculturalism, Education and Inclusion*. London, Paul Chapman.

Hiebert, D. (2000) 'Ethnicity', in Johnston, R.J., Gregory, D., Pratt, G. and Watts, M. (Eds) *The Dictionary of Human Geography*. Oxford, Blackwells.

Hoods,S., Kelley, P. and Mayall, B. (1996) 'Children as Research Subjects: a Risky Enterprise', *Children and Society* 10(2):117-129.

IGOA (1998) 'Immigrant Children: Art as a Second Language', in Books, S. (Ed), *Invisible Children in the Society and its Schools*. New Jersey and London, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Irish News (18/1/2007) '*Foreign pupils keep schools open and enrich education'.*

James, A. (1993) *Childhood Identities: Self and Social Relationships in the Experience of the Child.* London, Palgrave.

Johnson, T. (1997) 'Classroom Relationships in Three Cultures', in Woodrow, D, Verma, G. Rocho-Trindade, M. Campani, G. and Bagley, C. (eds). *Intercultural Education: Theories, Policies and Practice.* Aldershot, Ashgate.

Johnston, R.J. (2000) 'Community' pp.101-102 and 'Social Space' pp 762-763 *Dictionary of Human Geography*. Oxford, Blackwells.

Kyuchukov, H. Van Driel, B. and Batelaan, P. (1999) 'Editorial', *European Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 10(2):133-135.

Leeman, Y. (1997) 'Young Together: youth ethnicity and education'. *European Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 8(1):37-51.

Local Government Association (LGA) (2002) *Guidance on Community Cohesion.* Available Online at: <http://www.lga.gov.uk/Documents/Publication/communitycohesion.pdf> (Accessed 28/8/2006).

Liegeois, J.P. (1998) *School provision for ethnic minorities: the Gypsy paradigm.* Gypsy research centre, Hertfordshire, University of Hertfordshire Press.

Martin-Jones, M. and Saxena, M (2001) 'Turn-taking and the positioning of bilingual participants in classroom discourse: insights from primary schools' in Heller, M. and Martin-Jones, M. (Eds) *Voices of Authority: Education and Linguistic Difference*. Westport, Ablex.

Miedema, W. (1997) 'Linguistic Diversity and Education for Democracy in a Multicultural Society', *European Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 8(1):53-62.

Milner,D. (1975) *Children and Race*. Harmondsworth, Penguin.

Modood, T. (1990) 'British Asian Muslims and the Rushdie Affair', Political *Quarterly*, 61(2):43-160.

Modood, T. (2005) *Multicultural Politics: Racism, Ethnicity and Muslims in Britain.* Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press.

NALDIC (2006) *Key Documents*, Available online at:

<http://www.naldic.org.uk/docs/resources/KeyDocs.cfm#S> (Accessed 30/8/2006).

OFSTED (2000) *Evaluating educational inclusion*, London, OFSTED.

_____ (2002a) *Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils: Three successful primary schools.* London, OFSTED

_____ (2002b) *Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils: Good practice in Secondary Schools.* London, Ofsted

_____ (2004) *Achievement of Bangladeshi Heritage Students*. London, Ofsted.

Office of national statistics (ONS) (2004) *Indices of Deprivation*. Available online at:

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=9421&Pos=1&ColRank=2&Rank=272> (Accesed 31/8/2007).

_____ (2005) *International Migration: Migrants entering or leaving the United Kingdom and England and Wales*, Series MN no.32. Available online at:

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/CCI/nugget.asp?ID=766&Pos=1&ColRank=1&Rank=374> (Accessed 31/8/2007).

Philipps, T. (2005) *After 7/7: Sleepwalking to Segregation.* CRE (22/9/2005).

Qualifications and Curriculum authority (QCA) (2006) *Pathways to Learning for New Arrivals.* Available Online at: <www.qca.org.uk/qca_7526.aspx> (Accessed 31/8/2007).

Ray, L. and Read, K. (2005) 'Community, Mobility and Racism in a Semi-Rural Area: Comparing Minority Experience in East Kent'. *Ethnic and Racial studies*, 28(2):212-234.

Richardson, R. and Wood, A. (1999) *Inclusive school, Inclusive society: Race and identity on the agenda.* Race on Agenda/Association of Government/Save the Children. Staffordshire, Trentham Books.

Runnymede Trust (1985) *Education for All: A Summary of the Swann Report.* Runnymede Research Report. The Runnymede Trust.

Rutter, M. Maughan, B. Mortimore, P. Ouston, J. and Smith, A. (1994) *Fifteenthousand Hours*. London, Paul Chapman.

Shain, F. (1999) *The Schooling and Identity of Asian Girls*. London, Trenth)am Books.

Shavarini, M.K. (2004) *Educating Immigrants: Experiences of Second Generation Iranians.* New York, Lfb Scholarly Publishing.

Tanner, A. (2005) *The Roma of Eastern Europe: Still Searching for Inclusion*. Migration Policy Institute. Available online at:

<http>//www.migrationinformation.org/feature/print.cfm?ID=308> (Accessed 31/6/2007).

The Daily Mail (30/9/2006) *'Migration Flood puts huge strain on schools'*.

The Daily Mail (31/5/2007) *'Schools are stretched to breaking point by immigrant children'*.

The Express (30/9/2006) *'Scandal of Schools Swamped by Migrants'*.

The Guardian (29/7/2002) *'Immigration debate: Flood, Inundation and Other Unspeakable Words'*.

The Guardian (21/3/2007) *'Immigration Drives an Economic Revival'*

The Guardian (15/4/2007) *'Multiracial Britain Confuses Poles'*.

The Guardian (25/4/2007) *'Immigration debate: Flood, inundation and other unspeakable words'*.

The Independent (26/6/2004) *'More Catholic schools needed to cope with East European influx'*.

The Observer (20/5/2007) *'A Message to my Fellow Immigrants'* Margaret Hodge.

The Scotsman (11/7/2007) 'Teachers want to cap numbers of migrant pupils in class who speak little english'.

SURE START (2004) *Inclusion for Everyone*. Available online at: <www.surestart.gov.uk/ensuringquality/inclusion/ >(Accessed 31/8/2007).

Troyna, B. (1991) 'Children, Race and Racism', *British Journal of Educational Studies* in Verma et al 1994:24

Troyna, B. (1993) *Racism and Education*. Buckingham, Open University Press.

UNITED NATIONS (1989) *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Available online at: <http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/pdf/crc.pdf> (Accessed 19/06/2007).

UNITED NATIONS (2002) *International Migration Report 2002,* Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations. Available online at: <http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/ittmig2002/2002ITTMIGTEXT22-11.pdf> (Accessed 19/06/2007).

Verma, G.K. (1997) 'Inequality and intercultural education' in Woodrow, D., Verma, G.K., Rocha-Trindale, M.B., Campani, G. and Bagley, C. (Eds) *Intercultural Education: Theories, Policies and Practice*. Hants and Vermont, Ashgate.

Verma, G.K., ZEc, P., Skinner, G. (1994) *Harmony and hostility in multi-ethnic schools*. London, Falmer Press.

Vertovec, S. (2006) 'The emergence of super-diversity in Britain', COMPAS Working Paper No.25, University of Oxford, Available online at: <http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/publications/Working%20papers/Steven%20Vertovec%20WP0625.pdf> (Accessed 30/8/2007).

_____ (2007) 'New complexities of cohesion in Britain: Super-Diversity, transnationalism and civil-integration', A Thinkpiece for the Commission on Integration and Cohesion, Department for Communities and Local government, Available online at: <http://www.integrationandcohesion.org.uk/upload/assets/www.integrationandcohesion.rg.uk/new_complexities_of_cohesion_in_britain.pdf> (Accessed 30/8/2007).

Vertovec, S. and Cohen, R. (2002) 'Introduction', in Vertovec, S. and Cohen, R. (eds) *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: Theory, context and practice*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Warikoo, N. (2004) 'Race and the teacher-student relationship: interpersonal connections between West Indian students and their teachers in a New York City high school', *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 7(2), 135-147.

Warikoo, N.K. (2007) 'The Ethnic and Racial Boundaries of Teenagers in Multiethnic New York and London', A paper given to the COMPAS Conference Summer 2007. Available on line at <http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/events/AnnConf07-papers/Paper-Warikoo-DND-NoHC.pdf> (Accessed 30/8/2007).

<u>Figure 1</u> Number of EAL students in UK Primary and Secondary Schools (NALDIC, 2006).
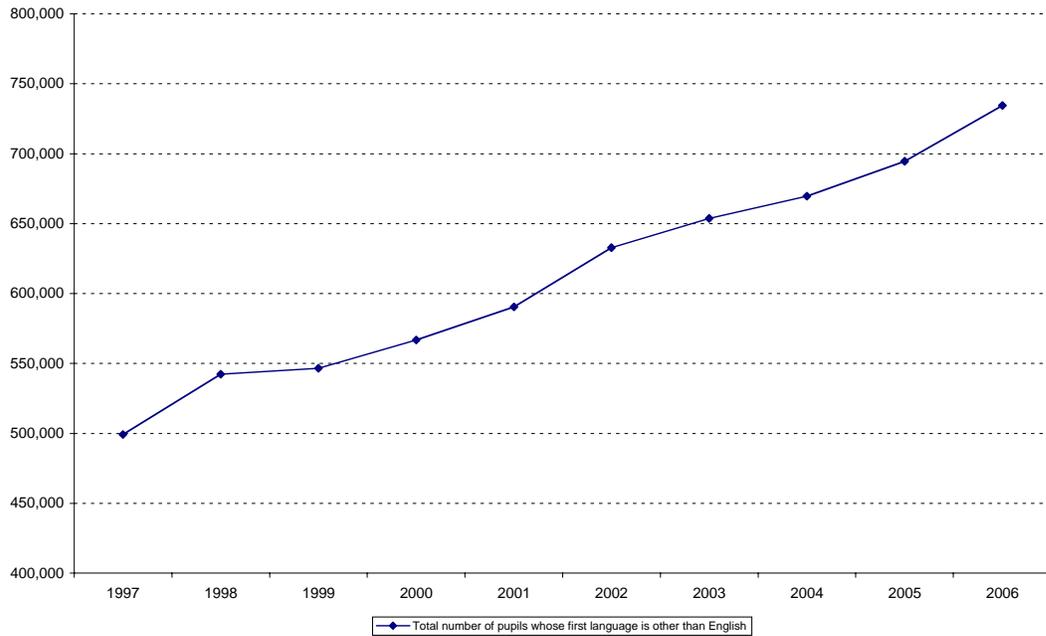
<u>Figure 2</u>. A Summary of the School's Main Features

School Characteristics	Bridgehurst	Charrington
School Population	673 (full at 1100)	969 (528 students applied for 196 places for 2007/2008 year)
Number of Migrant Students	71 students, 11% of school population	450 students, 46% of school population*
Country of Origin of Migrant Students	22 Czech, 28 Slovak, 4 Polish, 3 Albanian, 3 Bengali, 3 Afghani, 6 Turkish, 1 Estonian, 1 Indian (48 Czech and Slovak Roma).	No data available, the largest groups are Somalis, Afghanis, Iraqis and Brazilians.
Number of Migrant Students in 2005/2006	18	500*
Number of Ethnic Minority Students Across the School (includes migrants)	12%* (apart no data available on ethnic breakdown)	896, 92.5% (Black Caribbean 17%, Black Somalian 10%, White British 7.5%, other Black 7%, Other Black African 5%, Indian 5%, other Asian 4%, Portuguese 3.5% (45 ethnic groups represented in total)
Number of EAL Students 2006/2007	71, 11%	582, 60%
Number of EAL Staff, Ratio EAL Students: EAL Staff	4, 20:1	4, 145:1

Number of Ethnic Minority Teachers	8, 12% of teachers *	30, 33% of teachers*
Number of Refugee/Asylum-Seeker Students	9	141
Migration History of Area	Refugee and asylum seekers early 1990s onwards, in past 5 years a rising number of EU migrants	Forty years of in-migration to area, the borough has one of highest rates of international in-migration in the UK (pers comm. Head teacher)
Ethnic Make-up of Local Borough	5% not born in the UK, 92% White-British (2001 Census)	Over 45% not born in the UK, 29.19% White-British ethnicity (2001 Census)
Deprivation of Local Borough	Rated in bottom 20% of UK according to the Deprivation Index (ONS, 2004)	Rated in bottom 20% of UK according to the Deprivation Index. (ONS, 2004)
Number of Students on Free School Meals	37%	35%
Rural/Urban	Semi-rural/ small town	Urban
LEA Support	Poor	Good
CIC's (2007) assessment of Cohesion in Local Borough	Less than 70% of local residents agreed or strongly agreed that people of different backgrounds got on well in their area (one of the worst scoring places in the country)	80-85% of local residents agreed or strongly agreed that people of different backgrounds got on well in their local area

* Estimates given by the school as statistics were not available.