Aiming High: Supporting Effective Use of EMAG

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Enquiries to: Tristan Swain
Ethnic Minority Achievement Project, Area 2P, Department for
Education and Skills, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street,
LONDON SW1P 3BT.

Tel: 020 7925 5509

Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant: Standards Fund additional guidance

The guidance

This guidance aims to provide clear practical advice on how LEAs and schools can use The Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) most effectively to support minority ethnic pupils at risk of underachieving and bilingual pupils. It builds on the information in the Standards Fund Circular 2004-05 and the statutory responsibilities placed on LEAs and schools by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to promote race equality.

Introduction

In October 2003, following the *Aiming High* consultation, the DfES announced a package of measures to raise minority ethnic achievement and put the issue at the heart of the Government's school improvement agenda.

We recognised that too many pupils from particular communities have been underachieving for too long. *Aiming High* also set out the need for change and concerted action by schools, LEAs and central Government.

The need to encourage LEAs and schools to make better use of EMAG was a recurring theme in response to the *Aiming High* consultation. In particular, there was a feeling that it was disproportionately used to support bilingual pupils to the detriment of other pupils who require additional support.

Raising the achievement of minority ethnic pupils

Raising the achievement of minority ethnic pupils has historically been viewed as a marginal issue. To reverse this trend and make a sustainable difference, LEAs and schools need to embed this issue within their school-improvement systems. LEAs and the management teams of schools have an essential role to play through:

- setting out an unequivocal expectation that all pupils will be supported to reach their potential and that underachievement of any group will not be tolerated; and
- putting in place robust systems to ensure all pupils are supported to reach their potential.

Getting the most out of EMAG

The vast majority of funding to raise achievement comes through the Education

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[1] The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (RR(A)A) places a legal duty on schools and LEAs to promote race equality. To fulfil the duty, LEAs and schools must assess the impact that their policies have across ethnic groups. The collection and analysis of data is key to the impact assessment process. LEAs and schools should, therefore, collect and analyse achievement data and other data by ethnic group and put in place strategies to address underachievement – target setting and monitoring ought to be central to the strategy. EMAG should be used to support implementation of strategies that result from the analysis required by the RR(A)A.

Formula Spending Share (EFSS). LEAs and schools should be looking strategically at how all of their resources are used to support the needs of all of their pupils and how, over time, achievement gaps can be closed. This work will build on the duties placed on LEAs and schools by RR(A)A 2000[1] to ensure equality of outcomes. EMAG should be used to provide focused additional support where it is required and complement the use of mainstream resources.

The grant

The Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) is intended to narrow achievement gaps for pupils from those minority ethnic groups who are at risk of underachieving and to meet particular needs of bilingual pupils.

EMAG is ring-fenced and can only be spent on this purpose.

Purpose

The purpose of the grant is two-fold:

> i. To enable strategic managers in schools and LEAs to lead whole-school change to narrow achievement gaps and ensure equality of outcomes;
>
> ii. To meet the costs of some of the additional support to meet the specific needs of bilingual learners and under-achieving pupils.

Allocation of EMAG

From 2004-05 the allocation of EMAG will move towards a needs-based formula. The formula is based on the numbers of pupils with a mother tongue other than English and numbers of pupils from nationally underachieving minority ethnic groups. Pupils who are both bilingual and from an underachieving group are only counted once. This number of pupils is then multiplied by the proportion of all pupils receiving free school meals (FSMs) in the authority to calculate what proportion of the national grant an LEA should receive. Where an LEA's allocation under this formula is less than £35,000, it is lifted to that level.

Under this approach an LEA's allocation is dependant not just on that LEA's numbers of bilingual and minority ethnic pupils but also on that LEA's proportion of the national total of bilingual and minority ethnic pupils.

For 2004-05 the formula is being phased-in to ensure that:

> 1. every LEA gets at least an allocation of £35,000; and
>
> 2. no LEA gets lower cash allocation than in 2003-2004.
>
> 3. Where an LEA's allocation would increase under the new formula they receive either:

- an increased allocation based entirely on the formula for LEAs where a 4% increase on the 2003-2004 allocation would take them above their full formula-based allocation; or

- an increase of at least 4% on their 2003-2004 allocation (bringing these LEAs closer to their full formula-based allocation).

4. LEAs receiving a 4% increase will also receive a further increase based on how far away they now are from their full formula allocation. For example, an LEA that is 10% short of its formula increase would receive a larger increase than an LEA that is only 5% short.

Devolution Requirements

LEAs may retain up to 15% of their allocation or £150,000, whichever is the greater, to deliver central services and direct pupil support.

The remaining 85% should be devolved to schools using a locally determined, needs-based, fair and transparent distribution mechanism. The local formula should reflect bilingual learners and groups of minority ethnic pupils who are underachieving in the LEA. In determining the local formula, LEAs should not require schools to provide additional performance data for minority ethnic pupils that duplicates other national measures, for example fluency scales for bilingual pupils.

We recommend that schools consider the relative proportions of their devolved grant as well as achievement levels when choosing how to spend their allocation.

While our primary aim is to ensure stability of funding for schools, we would, of course, expect the guidance to be applied sensibly and we accept that there may be situations where small fluctuations are unavoidable, or indeed, desirable. These include:

- *where application of an existing formula results in fluctuations at school level*. In circumstances where the formula causes major fluctuations, we would expect the LEA to consider cushioning the loss to affected schools.

- *where LEAs are moving toward a new system of allocation based on the approach advocated in the Standards Fund guidance*. We would again expect the LEA to consider phasing in changes where application of the new formula results in significant changes to school level allocations.

Schools should be actively engaged in any discussions on the development of a new system of allocation.

In the absence of an agreement on any new arrangement, schools have an entitlement, in 2004-05, to at least their 2003-04 level of funding.

Using EMAG to support nursery age pupils

The EMAG formula does not take account of nursery age pupils. LEAs and schools can, however, use their allocation to support nursery provision if they feel it would contribute to improving standards. Funding should be focused on the maintained sector. However, it may be used to support provision in the voluntary or independent sectors where it forms part of a wider strategy to improve the quality of provision.

Supporting Bilingual Learners

Introduction

This guidance sets out to establish a framework for a common national approach to support for bilingual pupils. The main focus is on pupils within the maintained education sector and relates to pupils aged 5-16.

'Bilingual' here is taken to mean all pupils who use or have access to more than one language at home or at school – it does not necessarily imply full fluency in both or all languages.

PLASC guidance defines first language as "the language to which the child was initially exposed during early development." If a child was exposed to more than one language and these include English then English should be taken to be their first language. If a child acquires English subsequent to early development then, English is not their first language, no matter how proficient in it they become.

English as an additional language (EAL) may be considered as a discipline in which to develop professional competence.

Background

In England, 658,670 (9.7%) of all pupils in schools are recorded as having English as an additional language (EAL). This is an increase on previous years and reflects a growing bilingual population. Throughout England, over 200 languages are used by pupils with varying degrees of competence.

Many bilingual pupils achieve very highly in comparison with other groups. A proportion of bilingual pupils will require targeted intervention in order to facilitate the process of learning English. The development of proficiency in a second language is a long term process. Many bilingual pupils continue to require support with academic writing even when they have achieved oral fluency.

Ways of working

The varying nature and size of the bilingual population between and within LEAs leads to many different ways of meeting the needs of bilingual learners. Schools who are able to employ EAL specialist teachers and/or teaching assistants will have access to on-site advice and specialist provision and will be able to shape this to their individual context and circumstances.

However, many schools with bilingual learners are not able to employ EAL specialists

directly nor do they have access to regular additional EAL teaching support provided by the LEA. In these cases, it is particularly important that mainstream staff are aware of the issues for bilingual learners. Where there are bilingual learners, all school staff should have access to a basic level of EAL training. All schools with bilingual pupils should have a named person in the school responsible for EAL who should ensure that class or subject teachers and teaching assistants have access to the training and support they require. In most cases, schools should be able to approach their LEA for advice and training.

Staff who wish to develop a particular specialism in EAL will require access to further EAL continuing professional development.

In some local authorities, schools can elect to buy EAL teaching and other relevant support from their LEA who are able to provide a range of services which individual schools would not otherwise be able to access.

Key roles

LEAs

LEA inspectors should support schools in the process of managing support for minority ethnic pupils including the analysis of data on the progress of bilingual pupils, action-planning and target-setting for improvement.

LEA advisory staff provide positive challenges, support and advice including appropriate training to schools on strategies to meet the needs of bilingual pupils. This role, similar to that carried out by consultants for the Primary National Strategy and the Key Stage 3 Strategy, should directly impact on school improvement and contribute to raising standards. LEAs will want to ensure a consistency in the approach of all advisory staff engaged in school improvement interventions.

Schools

The particular needs of bilingual learners are best met through a coordinated, whole-school approach. A range of professionals within schools and LEAs contribute to additional support for bilingual learners.

A named designated manager, often part of the senior management team, should be responsible for considering the needs of the full range of their bilingual pupils alongside that of other groups of pupils and allocate support as appropriate to their educational context. Managers should ensure that mainstream and specialist staff have appropriate skills, knowledge and experience to fulfil their specified role.

Qualified, experienced teachers of EAL play a key operational role in organising and delivering support to pupils. They should be able to offer advice to colleagues on strategies to meet the linguistic needs of bilingual pupils, including the development of appropriate resources, and to engage in direct teaching of targeted pupils in partnership with mainstream teachers. They should advise on the implication of general assessment measures for bilingual learners and provide more detailed diagnostic linguistic analysis where required.

Teachers of EAL should focus primarily on teaching and learning and monitoring the progress of bilingual learners, working in partnership with mainstream colleagues. Administrative tasks and basic pastoral care should usually be provided by other professional staff in the school. Bilingual staff with home/school liaison responsibilities will have valuable cultural knowledge that will influence policy and practice.

Where specialist EAL teachers are particularly expert in guiding and developing the linguistic knowledge and awareness of colleagues with a resulting positive impact on their teaching, the EAL teacher could be considered for assessment for Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) status subject to local arrangements for the recruitment of ASTs.

Specialist EAL teachers may also plan support to be delivered by teaching assistants and monitor its impact.

Specialist EAL Teaching Assistants provide direct teaching support to bilingual pupils. Bilingual teaching assistants may also be able to support mother tongue assessments and help schools to liaise with bilingual families. Where specialist EAL Teaching Assistants are particularly expert and experienced, they could be considered for training or assessment for Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) status.

Some schools with large numbers of new arrivals may also consider development of the pastoral role for pupils new to English. Some of the administrative tasks associated with this role, for example handling new admissions, organising interpreters for parent interviews and liaising with other agencies, may be performed by a professional within the school such as an induction mentor.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Summative assessment for bilingual pupils, as for all pupils, should be based on national curriculum measures where applicable, using the QCA EAL steps as an extension of the national curriculum English scale. Other school assessment data, where it exists, can be useful in identifying language support needs.

Bilingual pupils that have been identified for additional support will require a detailed diagnostic assessment. This should focus on the language demands of the curriculum. Such an approach to assessment can be useful for the mainstream or specialist teacher to plan their teaching or as a basis for joint planning in partnership. It should enhance and add to the day-to-day assessment for learning which mainstream teachers undertake for all their pupils.

Bilingual pupils, in general, make very good progress as they move through the educational system. This is not, however, the case for all bilingual pupils and some language communities are particularly vulnerable to underachievement.

Where first language data is collected consistently it can bring a valuable additional level of insight into the performance and educational experiences of minority ethnic pupils. This is especially useful where ethnic background categories might be too general to distinguish the performance of groups of pupils of broadly similar ethnic

background but quite different language, culture and histories e.g. for pupils in the White European category. Schools will need this information in order to track the progress of their bilingual pupils properly. LEAs may be able to support the process of tracking progress of bilingual pupils by collecting and analysing borough-wide first language data in order to establish local trends.

Best practice case study – supporting bilingual learners

A West Midlands secondary school where 65% of pupils speak English as an additional language receives £83,000 in EMAG funding. This funds a full-time language support coordinator at the same salary level as the other key curriculum leaders in the school, a part-time language support teacher and 25 hours teaching assistant time divided between two bilingual teaching assistants, who between them speak the three most common languages in the school – Urdu, Punjabi and Hindi.

Most years the school admits approximately 30 pupils directly from overseas. The Language Support Department divides its time between catering for the needs of new arrivals and targeting 25% of bilingual pupils in the school (about 70 pupils) many of whom were born in the UK but still require support with written academic English.

Teachers from the Language Support Department are present at the initial interview for pupils and parents. They assess needs and recommend sets and tutor groups based on compatibility of languages, previous educational experience and other factors derived from the initial assessment process.

Some pupils receive small group-focussed teaching for two periods per week for a limited period of time; others are placed straight into mainstream classes with the support of a language support teacher or teaching assistant. The Language Support Department takes into consideration timetabling issues and pupils' wishes before allocating a place in this group. Three groups operate based on pupils' level of fluency. Pupils do not usually spend more than one term attending the focus groups. Lunchtime homework clubs are provided three times per week and these are well-attended, mostly by pupils who arrived in the UK in the previous two-to-three years.

The remainder of support is provided in-class in partnership with subject teachers. The Language Support Department (LSD) provides staff training on EAL issues and leads on whole-school initiatives such as a Citizenship event involving the local mosque. The LSD is respected for its professional expertise by staff and pupils who regularly drop into their small base room to ask for advice or borrow resources such as bilingual dictionaries.

Supporting minority ethnic pupils at risk of underachieving

The LEA role

LEAs should have a clear strategy for enhancing the achievement of minority ethnic pupils, which forms part of their Educational Development Plan (EDP) or Single Education Plan (SEP). The strategy should, as outlined above, be premised on creating an expectation that all pupils fulfil their potential and put in place mechanisms to advise, challenge and monitor schools.

There are many ways in which EMAG could be used to support the needs of minority ethnic pupils and local circumstances will dictate which approaches are most effective. However, an analysis of good practice reveals that LEAs that are successful in raising the achievement of minority ethnic pupils:

- have robust mechanisms in place for monitoring data by ethnicity including: achievement, attendance, behaviour, exclusions and SEN;

- use the data to set targets to narrow achievement gaps and progress toward equality of outcomes;

- use data to manage and deploy resources, including EMAG, effectively;

- use data to monitor, support and challenge schools; and

- monitor specific initiatives to analyse their impact across ethnic groups.

They also:

- provide training to ensure LEA and school staff have up-to-date skills, knowledge and experience that enable them to plan for and meet the needs of minority ethnic pupils;

- provide informed advice to schools on systems, processes and classroom practice which will support schools to narrow achievement gaps; and

- disseminate good practice on raising the achievement of minority ethnic pupils.

The school role

The approach adopted by a school will be heavily dependent on local circumstances. The key principles of an effective approach are outlined below. It is important to appreciate that the practical support that a school is able to provide to its pupils is more likely to succeed if it is undertaken in a context where issues of equality and diversity are central to the school's basic systems and processes.

- *Strong Leadership* – A leadership team that is willing to 'think and act outside the box', to create a vision which enables the development of a school culture that is positive and encouraging of diversity, to work as a team and to lead by example always. The Headteacher and senior management team lead an effective strategy based on the analysis of data and which is applied across the whole school. All staff are considered to have a role to play in raising minority ethnic achievement and EMAG-funded staff feel central to the life of the school.

Best practice example – leadership and a whole school approach

The example school is situated in an area of significant socio-economic deprivation. Over 50% of the pupils have FSM and almost one third of pupils are bilingual. Arabic is the language of the majority of bilingual pupils, many of the families are from Libya and Saudi Arabia. There are also a wide range of other languages spoken. Mobility is above the national average.

The school runs a series of initiatives on the theme of promoting cultural diversity involving every class. First languages are enthusiastically celebrated and parents are regularly invited to events in school.

Special arrangements are put in place by the school to support religious practices. Every opportunity is taken to make relevant links to include and celebrate other cultures. Class teachers consistently reflect other cultures in planning schemes of work and lessons. Pupils are actively involved in various aspects of school life including decision-making.

All actions to raise minority ethnic achievement including support for bilingual pupils are set out in specific improvement plans for minority ethnic achievement and race equality. These plans are monitored and evaluated regularly.

As a result of this whole-school approach, pupils of all backgrounds make very good progress. The leadership team's view is that it is the high profile activities involving the whole school and parents which make the most difference. However all these are underpinned by rigorous and high quality planning, teaching and assessment.

- *Ethos* – the leadership team encourages an ethos in which:

    diversity is welcome and differences are positively acknowledged and respected;

    equality of opportunity underpins all decisions and practices;

    there is respect for young people, their parents and communities and this respect is modelled by staff at all times; and

    there are high expectations of all pupils and a willingness to understand and challenge stereotypes.

- *Effective use of data* – the Leadership team will ensure that data is used to:

  question and/or reinforce school practices;

  inform a wide range of practices which enhance both academic success as well as instilling a sense of belonging; and

  address issues of inclusion and involvement of parents from minority ethnic groups.

Best Practice example – using data

One school was concerned about the achievement of their African-Caribbean pupils at GCSE. When they analysed their results by ethnicity they discovered that only a few of their African-Caribbean students achieved 5 A* - C at GCSE.

They decided to focus on tier entry and analyse the number of non-entries by ethnicity. Their analysis revealed that:

- **48% of all non-entries at GCSE were from the African-Caribbean group**

- **Out of the 17 non-entries in one subject area, 16 were from the African-Caribbean group**

- **28% of all foundation entries were made up of African-Caribbean students**

Line managers met with individual Heads of Department to discuss the reasons for the high rate of non-entries and the disproportionate number of African-Caribbean students entered for the foundation tier.

As a result they were able to identify the reasons why students were not fulfilling their potential and introduced a series of support strategies, including, a Saturday School, coursework catch-up clubs and a target-setting day for parents and students. They also introduced a termly monitoring system to track pupil progress so that action could be taken before students slipped through the net.

That year the school halved its number of non-entries at GCSE and dramatically reduced the number of African-Caribbean pupils entered for foundation tier, which resulted in their achievement rising.

- *The Curriculum*
  The curriculum is flexible and reflects the cultures and experiences of the different communities in the school and country.

  All strategies are inclusive and do not unintentionally discriminate against any pupil group. In particular, pastoral strategies are kept under review to ensure that they benefit all pupils in the school population. Robust mechanisms are also in place to monitor and address incidents of racist bullying/harassment and all staff are confident in using relevant procedures.

- *Parental and Community engagement*
  We know from our most effective schools that actively developing relationships with parents, local community development/regeneration initiatives and voluntary and community projects - such as supplementary schools – can bring real additional benefits to schools and their pupils. In particular, sharing of experience and knowledge between mainstream and supplementary schools can bring significant and mutual benefits to both, e.g. through better cultural awareness, curriculum enrichment and coordinated support in and out of school that focuses on the needs of the child.

Best Practice example – analysing rewards

When one school analysed their rewards by ethnicity and gender they discovered that most of the rewards were for academic achievement and were dominated by one particular ethnic group.

They decided that all achievement should be recognised and introduced a system that recognised:

- academic excellence

- improved performance (including improvement in behaviour)

- contribution to the school community

- consistent effort

At the end of each term all teachers were asked to nominate three students in different categories. A senior manager collated the nominations and students who received a number of nominations were invited to afternoon tea with the Head where they were told who had nominated them and what for.

Students were often surprised at who had nominated them. One student said, "I thought he didn't like me."

This inexpensive system of rewards allowed a range of achievements to be acknowledged and certainly improved teacher-pupil relationships as students realised that teachers were aware of their achievements and were willing to reward their efforts.

The school continued to monitor their rewards by ethnicity and gender to ensure that a range of students and achievements were represented.

At classroom level

Teaching staff who work best with their pupils will be those that are able to build mutually respectful relationships where each child's needs and aspirations are premised on an assessment of the child as an individual and not on stereotyping or unconscious assumptions. The best teachers will consistently reflect and evaluate how they interact with their pupils and address issues which arise. They will also think through the most effective learning styles for different pupil groups and develop/use schemes of work and plan lessons that reflect the languages, cultures, histories and religions of all their pupils.

Best practice case study – improving teacher-pupil relationships

One school put improving teacher-pupil relationships at the heart of its school-development plan. They focussed on the way in which teachers interacted with pupils.

The head felt that the change needed to start with teachers reflecting on their own practice, and the school agreeing some level of consistency to the way pupils were treated.

They introduced a weekly behaviour focus that outlined certain behaviours for teachers that were thought to be conducive to effective learning. The behaviour focus included:

- Welcome your class into the classroom with a smile

- No shouting unless a child is in danger

- Be positive and encouraging to all of your pupils

- Explain why you're doing what you're doing. Pupils will be far more willing to do as you ask if they understand why they're being asked to do something

Once the head felt that a degree of consistency had been achieved he introduced a weekly behaviour focus for pupils. This included things like:

- Line up quietly outside the classroom before lessons

- Think twice before you speak once. Be kind to each other

- Bring all your equipment to school

- Walk quietly in the corridors

- Be polite to non-teaching staff

Senior managers would stop children in the corridors and ask pupils what the behaviour focus was for the week. Pupils who knew the answer were rewarded with a chocolate bar. This was an added incentive.

There was a dramatic improvement in behaviour around the school. Key to the success of the initiative was the head's focus on teachers leading by example and being effective role models for their pupils.

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