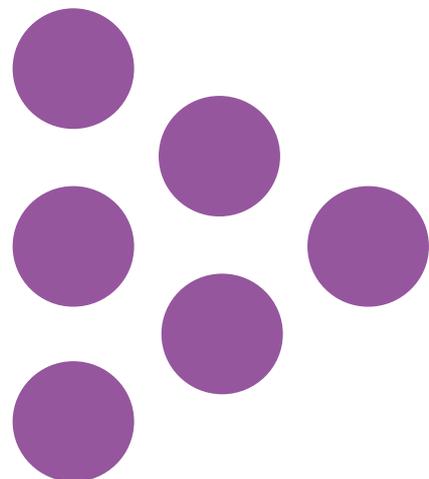

Research Report

Racial Equality in the Teacher Workforce

An Analysis of Representation and Progression
Opportunities from Initial Teacher Training to Headship

Full Report

National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER)



Racial Equality in the Teacher Workforce: An Analysis of Representation and Progression Opportunities from Initial Teacher Training to Headship

Full Report

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This work was produced using statistical data from ONS. The use of the ONS statistical data in this work does not imply the endorsement of the ONS in relation to the interpretation or analysis of the statistical data. This work uses research datasets which may not exactly reproduce National Statistics aggregates.



Contents

Glossary	i
Executive Summary	iii
1 Introduction	1
2 How representative is the teacher workforce?	11
3 Overview of progression and retention of teachers from different ethnic backgrounds in the teaching profession	30
4 Acceptance onto initial teacher training	41
5 Progression from initial teacher training to entering teaching	50
6 Retention in state-sector teaching	64
7 Promotion to middle leadership	74
8 Promotion to senior leadership	84
9 Promotion to headship	90
10 Conclusions and recommendations	95
References	100
Appendix A: Methodological details	105
Appendix B: Additional analysis tables	112



Glossary

Ethnic groups

This report follows government guidance on referring to ethnicity. We decided to use this official guidance for consistency and in recognition of its basis in research and user feedback. The guidance was updated in December 2021, including the decision not to capitalise ethnic groups, (such as ‘black¹’ or ‘white’) unless that group’s name includes a geographic place (for example, ‘Asian’, ‘Indian’ or ‘black Caribbean’).

The report refers to the following ethnic groups.

Asian: Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; Chinese; any other Asian background.

Black: Caribbean; African; any other black background.

Mixed ethnic background: white and black Caribbean; white and black African; white and Asian; any other mixed or multiple ethnic background.

White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British; Irish; Gypsy or Irish Traveller; Roma; any other white background.

Other ethnic background: Arab; any other ethnic group.

Ethnic minority: refers to all ethnic groups except the white British group. Ethnic minorities include white minorities, such as Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller groups.

Source: Writing about ethnicity - GOV.UK ([ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/writing-about-ethnicity))

Equality is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents. It is also the belief that no one should have poorer life chances because of the way they were born, where they come from, what they believe, or whether they have a disability.

Source: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/secondary-education-resources/useful-information/understanding-equality>

Ethnicity is a social construct that divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, values, behavioural patterns, language, political and economic interests, history, and ancestral geographical base.

Source: <https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary>

Disparity means a lack of equality or similarity, especially in a way that is not fair.

Source: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/disparity>

Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all-inclusive and recognises everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued.

Source: <https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary>

¹ Note that while we are following government guidance not to capitalise ethnic groups, we recognise that there is a diversity of opinion on the capitalisation of ‘Black’ and we acknowledge the sensitivities and multiple perspectives on this.

Progression as used in this report means that people at one stage of the teaching profession move to the next stage within the profession (e.g. an applicant to ITT is accepted onto a course, a newly-qualified teacher enters teaching, or a senior leader is promoted to headship).

Race: A racial group is a group of persons defined by reference to race; and a reference to a person's racial group is a reference to a racial group into which the person falls.

Source: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/9>

Racial equity is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. When we use the term, we are thinking about racial equity as one part of racial justice, and thus we also include work to address root causes of inequities, not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or that fail to eliminate them.

Source: <https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary>

Representation as used in this report means the percentage of people from a given ethnic group compared with the proportion the same group of a similar age-group in the population of England as a whole. Groups are over-represented if their percentage in the teacher workforce in 2019/2020 is significantly greater than in the wider population and under-represented if their percentage in the teacher workforce is significantly lower. See Section 1.4 and Appendix A for details on how this is calculated.

Executive Summary

Racial diversity within the school workforce is valuable in ‘fostering social cohesion and most importantly, in supporting pupils to grow and develop in an environment of visible, diverse role models’ (DfE, 2018c, p.2). Ensuring equal opportunities ‘helps realise everyone’s potential and that powers our economy, strengthens society and increases fairness’². Teachers from diverse ethnic backgrounds bring different types of cultural capital which, if properly recognised and utilised, have the potential to enrich pupils, schools and society as a whole (Wallace, 2018).

A diverse workforce is likely to promote greater cultural understanding and inclusion when educating pupils from diverse ethnic backgrounds, including white. A body of evidence from the United States also highlights the positive impact of same-race teachers on the educational outcomes of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, especially for pupils from black³ ethnic backgrounds (see Gershenson *et al.*, 2021).

Ensuring there are equal opportunities for people to enter the teaching profession, and progress within it, is a necessary condition for ensuring the profession is representative of society. This requires a shared commitment from many individuals and organisations across the system and a willingness to listen to voices from diverse communities as well as using evidence to bring about improvements in racial equality and ultimately racial equity. There is a substantial and growing base of qualitative evidence exploring the lived experience of teachers and leaders from ethnic minority backgrounds. However, the quantitative evidence base on the extent to which there are equal opportunities within teacher career paths is limited.

This NFER research, in partnership with Ambition Institute and Teach First, aims to establish the extent of ethnic disparities and where they occur in the teacher career pathway. We use teacher census data to explore the representation and career progression opportunities in the teaching profession among people from different ethnic minority backgrounds, from applications to initial teacher training through to headship. We also analyse differences across regions, training courses and schools.

Focusing on the numbers of teachers from different ethnic backgrounds is a necessary, but by no means sufficient, first step towards establishing racial equity. However, understanding more about where ethnic disparities⁴ occur within the teacher career pathway and which groups are most affected will support the education system to focus on the areas where action to address them can have the greatest impact.

² Taken from <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/about/equality-and-diversity>.

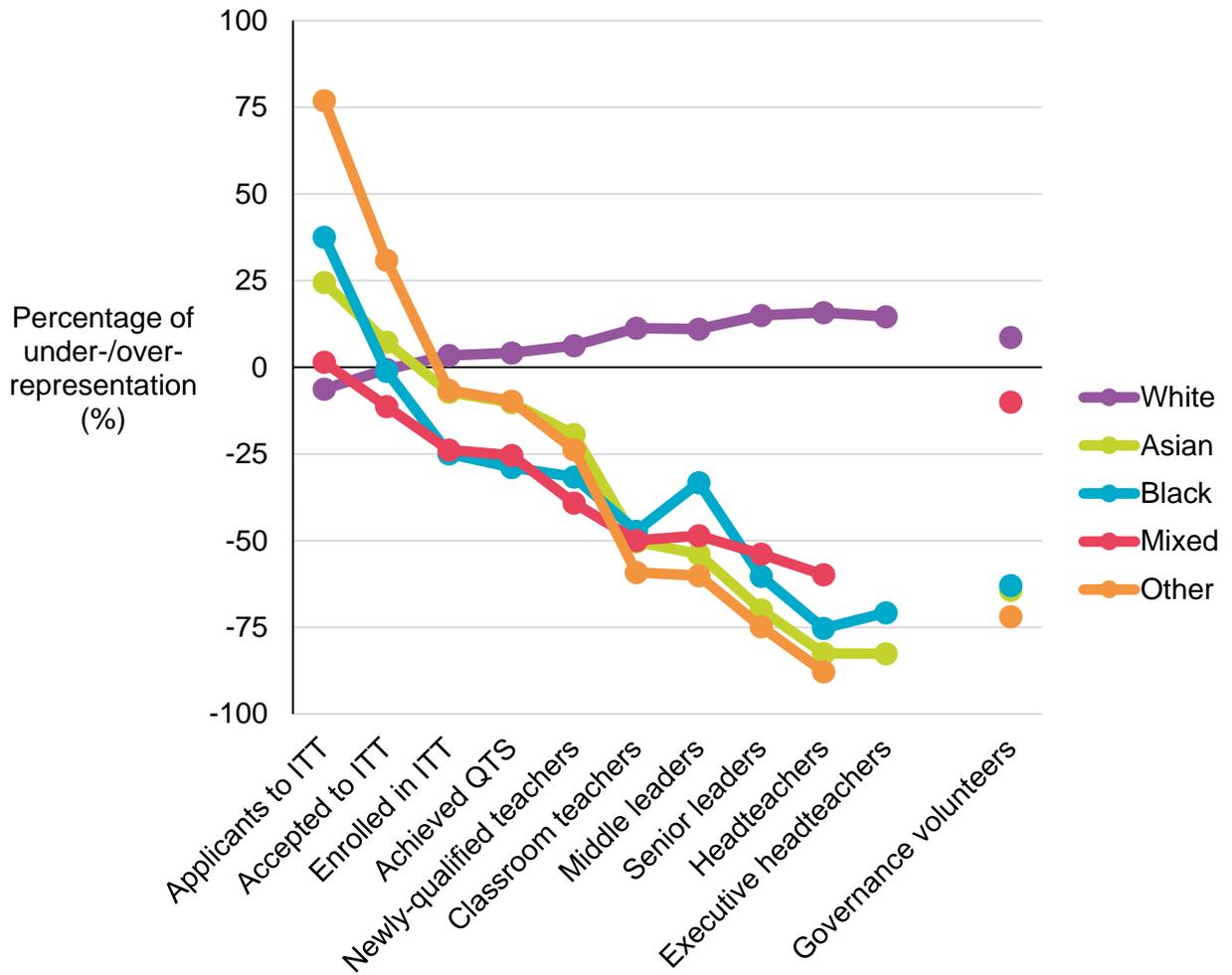
³ Note that while we are following government guidance not to capitalise ethnic groups, we recognise that there is a diversity of opinion on the capitalisation of ‘Black’ and we acknowledge the sensitivities and multiple perspectives on this.

⁴ We use the term ‘ethnic disparities’ rather than ‘racial disparities’ because the databases underpinning this research identify ethnicity, rather than race. This research is not able to identify the extent to which such disparities are caused by inequalities in the system.

All ethnic groups except white are under-represented at all career stages of the teaching profession, except for initial teacher training (ITT)

Our analysis shows that there is significant under-representation of people from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic minority backgrounds⁵ within the teaching profession, except for in ITT. Conversely, there is significant over-representation of people from white backgrounds at all stages of the teacher career pipeline, except for in ITT⁶.

Figure 1: Representation of ethnic groups in the teacher profession in 2020/21



Source: NFER analysis of data from⁷: UCAS; TF; ITT-PP; SWC; and NGA. Population estimates are based on 2011 National Census data for England, projected forwards to 2021.

⁵ We analyse representation for the smaller ‘minor’ ethnic groups in Section 2.

⁶ People from white ethnic backgrounds are under-represented in postgraduate ITT applications but over-represented from ITT enrolment onwards.

⁷ Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS); Teach First (TF); Initial Teacher Training Performance Profile (ITT-PP); School Workforce Census (SWC); and National Governance Association (NGA).

Figure 1 summarises the over- or under-representation of different ethnic groups at the various stages of the teacher career pipeline⁸. It provides a snapshot at a particular moment in time, rather than tracking the same individuals through their careers. For example, in 2021, 12 per cent of ITT applicants were from Asian ethnic backgrounds, compared to ten per cent in the population as a whole (meaning ITT applicants from Asian backgrounds are just over 20 per cent over-represented). Similarly, 76 per cent of ITT applicants were from white backgrounds, compared to 81 per cent in the population as a whole, and so ITT applicants from white backgrounds are about five per cent under-represented.

People from Asian, black and other ethnic backgrounds are over-represented among applicants to postgraduate ITT, which suggests that there is no shortage of interest in joining the profession among these groups. However, among those who are accepted onto an ITT course, people from Asian, black and other ethnic groups are generally not over-represented, which indicates acceptance rates for applicants from these ethnic backgrounds are generally lower than for applicants from white ethnic backgrounds (as we discuss further in our analysis of progression rates).

By the time applicants have enrolled, completed their training and achieved qualified teacher status (QTS), Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic minority groups are under-represented compared to the wider population. Teachers from all ethnic groups other than white are also under-represented at each subsequent stage of the profession from newly-qualified teacher through to headteacher, compared to their representation in the population in 2021.

The under-representation of people from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds is most pronounced at senior leadership and headship levels. For example, 96 per cent of headteachers are from white ethnic backgrounds, compared to 83 per cent of people in the wider population (an over-representation of 15 per cent). In contrast, ethnic minority groups other than white are under-represented among headteachers by 60 per cent (mixed ethnic group), 75 per cent (black ethnic group), 83 per cent (Asian ethnic group) and 88 per cent (other ethnic group), compared to their proportions in the wider population.

These trends contribute to schools having senior leadership teams that are predominantly white: 86 per cent of publicly-funded schools in England have all-white senior leadership teams. We also find that 60 per cent of schools in England have an all-white teaching staff. Although secondary schools have a more diverse teaching staff than primary schools⁹, children entering school today have a high probability of rarely or never being taught by a teacher from an Asian, black, mixed or other ethnic minority group.

Governance volunteers from white backgrounds are slightly over-represented, whereas people from other ethnic backgrounds (particularly Asian, black and other ethnic groups) are under-represented among governance volunteers compared to their proportions in the wider population.

⁸ Points above zero indicate that the proportion of teachers from that ethnic group is higher than the proportion of people of the same age in the same ethnic group in the general population in England. Points below zero show under-representation of the particular ethnic group compared to the general population.

⁹ In 2021, 69 per cent of primary schools and 18 per cent of secondary schools in England had an all-white teaching staff.

Diversity in governing bodies is important for racial equality, given the key influence that governance volunteers have on senior appointments and strategic decision-making in schools.

Overall, we find that people from ethnic minority groups other than white are under-represented at all levels once they enter the profession. The under-representation among senior leaders, headteachers and governance volunteers is a particular concern, given their influence on strategy, decision-making and the cultural values of schools.

There are significant disparities in progression rates from one stage of the teacher career pipeline to the next between trainees and teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic minority backgrounds and their counterparts from white backgrounds

An analysis of representation at a single point in time only reveals part of the picture. Representation at senior levels reflects the diversity of the workforce from decades before, and the current cohorts of senior leaders are likely to have faced different barriers and contexts to younger cohorts. Assessing ethnic disparities in progression¹⁰ from one stage of the teacher career to the next using the latest data provides a more complete picture of the current state of racial equality within the teaching profession.

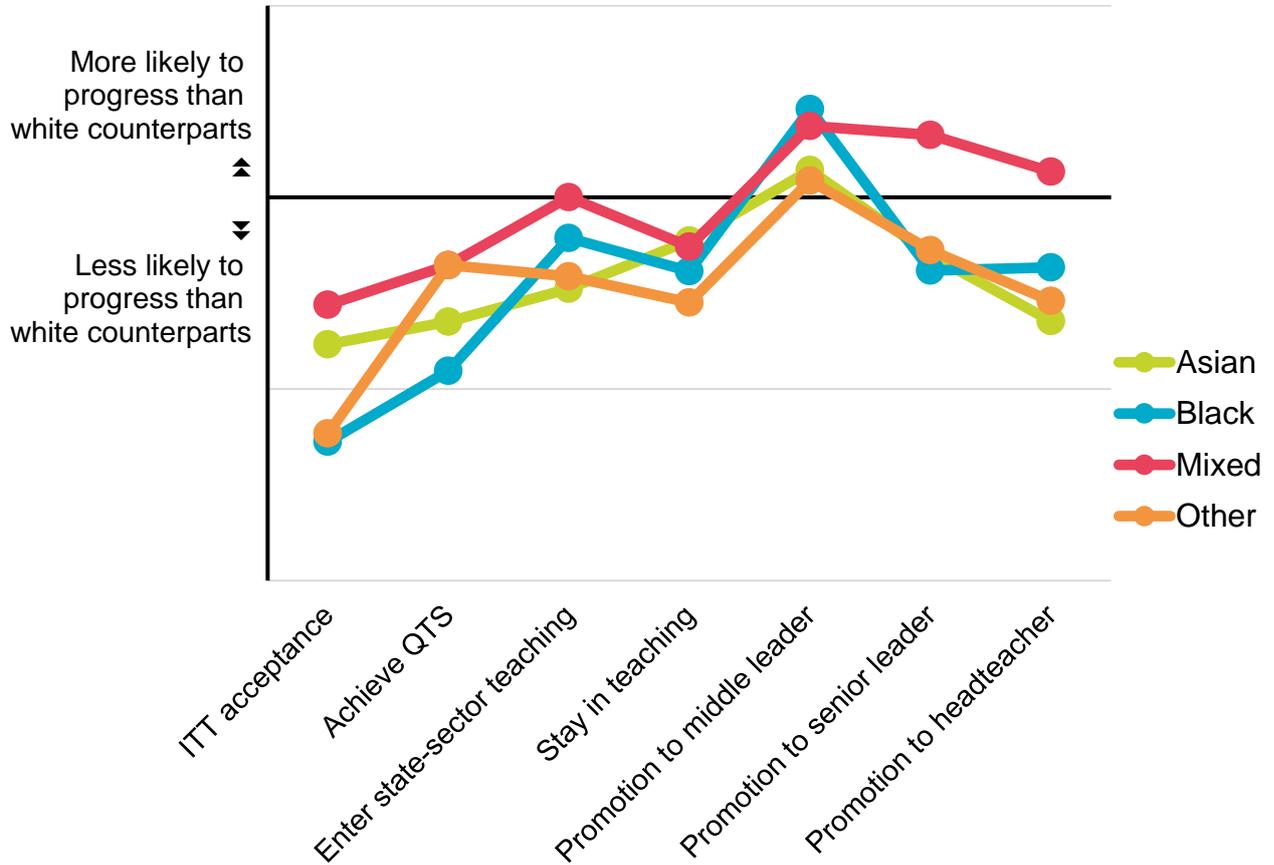
Our progression analysis shows that people from most ethnic minority groups and at most stages of the teacher career pipeline are less likely to progress to the next stage compared to their white counterparts. Despite recent progress in improving diversity at the first point of entry into teaching, significant disparities in progression rates from one stage of the teacher career pipeline to the next remain.

Figure 2 shows the relative likelihood of people from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic groups moving from one stage of the teaching profession to the next, compared with people from white ethnic backgrounds¹¹.

¹⁰ Progression means the percentage of people at a given stage of the profession who move on to the next stage within a specific period of time. It includes only teachers who stay in the profession, except for 'retention' in teaching. See Section 1.4 for detailed definitions.

¹¹ This chart uses 'odds ratios' to make comparisons between ethnic groups across different stages of the teacher profession. Points above the bold horizontal line indicate a greater likelihood of moving to the next stage than their white counterparts, whereas points below the line indicate a lower likelihood of moving to the next stage than their white counterparts.

Figure 2: People from most ethnic minority groups and at most stages of the teacher career pipeline are less likely to progress to the next stage than their white counterparts



Source: NFER analysis of data from UCAS; Teach First; ITT-PP and SWC.

Here we see that ethnic disparities are present across most stages of the profession, but the most significant disparities in progression occur in ITT. For example, acceptance rates onto postgraduate ITT courses are nine percentage points lower for applicants from mixed ethnic backgrounds, 13 percentage points lower for applicants from Asian ethnic backgrounds and 21 percentage points lower for applicants from black and other ethnic backgrounds compared with acceptance rates for white applicants. There are further disparities in the rates of achieving QTS and entering state-sector teaching.

Teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds are less likely than their white counterparts to stay in teaching, but looking at the data underneath this, these differences are largely driven by differences in region, age and experience. This is because teachers from white backgrounds are relatively older, more experienced and less concentrated in London; all of which are associated with higher retention rates. Once these differences are taken into account, only teachers from Asian backgrounds are significantly less likely to stay in teaching than their white counterparts.

Teachers from Asian, black and mixed ethnic backgrounds are more likely to be promoted to middle leadership positions than their white counterparts, but looking at the underlying data, this is largely driven by the fact that teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds are more concentrated in

London and in secondary schools than their white counterparts, where rates of promotion into middle leadership are higher for teachers from all ethnic groups. After taking account of differences in their characteristics (especially region and phase), teachers from Asian, black and other ethnic backgrounds are significantly less likely to be promoted to middle leadership than their white counterparts.

Even though they are less pronounced than at early career stages, there are also some significant disparities in rates of promotion¹² to senior leadership and headship roles. In particular, middle leaders from Asian and black ethnic backgrounds are less likely to be promoted to senior leadership, and senior leaders from Asian backgrounds are less likely to be promoted to headship than their white counterparts working in similar regions and schools.

Although disparities in progression largely affect all ethnic minority groups, teachers from mixed ethnic backgrounds are equally as likely to remain in the profession, and achieve promotion to middle leadership, senior leadership and headship as their white counterparts working in similar regions and schools.

Disparities in progression rates between ethnic groups differ between regions and training routes, and depend on the ethnic diversity of the senior leadership team

Differences across regions are a crucial factor for understanding the patterns of ethnic disparities in progression through the teacher career pipeline in greater depth. In particular, the gaps in ITT acceptance rates between applicants from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds and their white counterparts are significantly smaller in London than they are nationally.

However, the gaps between the rates of promotion to senior leadership of middle leaders from black ethnic backgrounds and their white counterparts are significantly wider in London than they are nationally. This suggests there is a somewhat mixed picture in London across different stages of the teacher career pipeline and is particularly important because ITT applicants and teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds are concentrated in London: for example, 62 per cent of teachers from black ethnic backgrounds work in London, compared with 11 per cent of teachers from white backgrounds (further information on regional distribution is provided in Section 2).

There are some areas of the education system where disparities in progression between ethnic groups are smaller. These are potential areas of good practice that could help to inform action to improve racial equality across the sector. They include Teach First, where the gaps between the acceptance rates of applicants from black, mixed and other ethnic minority backgrounds and their white counterparts are significantly smaller than they are in other ITT routes.

Ethnic disparities in teacher retention rates are also smaller in schools with diverse senior leadership teams (SLTs) and larger in schools with all-white senior leadership teams. Schools with SLT members from more than one ethnic minority group have significantly higher retention rates among teachers from Asian, black and mixed ethnic backgrounds than among white teachers.

¹² Promotion to senior leadership means the percentage of middle leaders in 2015/16 who are promoted to senior leadership by 2020/21 and do not leave teaching in that time period. See Section 1.4 for detailed definitions.

The actions of leaders and decision-makers are central to understanding why ethnic disparities exist within the system. Decision-makers, including governors and trustees, are also crucial to promoting the action that is required to make progress towards achieving racial equality in the teaching profession.

Conclusions and recommendations

Progress in achieving racial equality in teaching requires individuals and organisations across the education sector, particularly in ITT, to recognise racial equality as a priority and take action to address the disparities that are evident in the system. This piece of research alone cannot, and does not claim to provide the solutions, but it does provide a basis for focusing attention on the areas (for example, of the pipeline and of the country) where disparities are greatest and further action should be targeted. Identifying and implementing actions to effectively address ethnic disparities within the teacher workforce will require individuals and organisations to engage with a range of diverse voices and perspectives to understand the action that is needed.

Our recommendations centre on two broad areas of focus which our analysis, the previous research literature, and our discussions with a diverse range of individuals and organisations in the education sector suggest are most likely to be beneficial for bringing about change: supporting leaders to make equitable workforce decisions and monitoring progress towards equalising opportunities.

1. Support for leaders and decision-makers in ITT providers, schools and trusts to equip them to make equitable workforce decisions

The significant disparities in progression rates between ethnic groups identified in our analysis typically arise during specific processes within organisations, such as recruitment, selection and promotion. More generally, decision-making by leaders can potentially influence ethnic disparities in, for example, rates of retention within ITT and teaching. A critical measure for addressing ethnic disparities is therefore to support leaders to make equitable workforce decisions and create an environment where teachers from diverse backgrounds are equally able to thrive.

One way to achieve this would be for decision-makers to draw on best practice within education systems, and also from industries beyond education, to ensure they implement policies and processes that are equitable.

We encourage ITT providers to review their application and selection processes to pinpoint the extent, nature and causes of the lower acceptance rates experienced by applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds and to act to address any inequalities at this crucial first stage of entry into the profession.

More broadly, we encourage leaders of ITT providers, multi-academy trusts and other large educational organisations (such as colleges, recruitment and supply agencies and professional development providers) to commit to publishing institutional data on diversity and acting to address disparities. This is particularly relevant for larger organisations, where there are sufficient numbers to make the data meaningful. Doing so would help to identify and understand gaps in progression, monitor progress and share good practice, benefitting both organisations and the system as a whole.

2. Monitor progress across the system towards equalising the opportunities for progression in teaching for people from all ethnic groups

It will be important to monitor whether progress is being made towards reducing and eliminating ethnic disparities in progression within the teacher career pipeline in England as a whole. This report demonstrates that it is possible to make quantitative assessments of the state of ethnic equality in the teaching profession using census data that is already collected by the Department for Education. We recommend that regular monitoring is conducted to assess where progress in reducing disparities is being made.

Our analysis highlights two particular features that effective on-going data monitoring will need to feature to provide an accurate picture of racial equality. First, the analysis needs to be based on progression from one stage of the teacher career pipeline to the next rather than on representation. While representation is a useful way of looking at the bigger picture, progression analysis is more useful for identifying where action is needed because it can identify changes in ethnic disparities far more quickly. Second, the analysis needs to take account of differences in the way ethnic groups are concentrated across regions to provide an accurate picture.

On-going monitoring could be led by government, which has good access to the required data as well as an overarching policy standpoint on the teaching profession. However, the shared responsibility for reducing ethnic disparities across the whole education system means that many individuals and organisations have an interest in assessing system-level progress.

Suggestions for further research

Our research finds that differences in progression rates throughout the early stages of the teaching profession explain a significant part of the lack of diversity in the workforce, but is limited by the information contained in the existing datasets. Further quantitative research should be used to investigate other possible drivers of progression rate gaps across the profession.

This is particularly true for ITT, where our research finds that gaps in progression rates are among the largest, but the data sources are the most limited. Further research using richer datasets, including taking account of the qualifications of those applying, is important to deepen our understanding of challenges specific to the sector and the policy options to promote diversity which are available to ITT providers and decision-makers.

We also recognise the need for further research into regional disparities in the representation and progression of teachers from different ethnic backgrounds. This is particularly relevant in the context of government policy and funding decisions designed to reduce geographic inequalities and increase ‘levelling up’.

Some of the potential drivers of gaps in progression rates may be difficult to research using large-scale census datasets. Therefore, qualitative and mixed methods research will have an important role to play in further understanding how to achieve greater diversity in teaching. Indeed, research designs combining existing data with survey, interview, or other secondary data, could also be used to assess the effectiveness of specific policy proposals (such as improved access to continuing professional development (CPD), national professional qualifications (NPQs) or mentoring) aimed at increasing diversity in the sector. However, additional research should not seek to supplant or simply replicate the extensive body of research in this field. We recommend

that future research should build upon the existing literature, with a particular focus on the stages of the workforce with the largest gaps in progression. Further research should help to drive forward work on equality and equity in the teacher workforce. Leaders and decision-makers in the sector should continue leveraging existing research to make progress on equality and refine best practices as new research becomes available.

1 Introduction

Racial diversity within the school workforce is valuable in 'fostering social cohesion and most importantly, in supporting pupils to grow and develop in an environment of visible, diverse role models' (DfE, 2018c, p.2). Ensuring equal opportunities 'helps realise everyone's potential and that powers our economy, strengthens society and increases fairness'¹³. Teachers from diverse ethnic backgrounds possess different types of cultural capital, including multicultural, ethnic, transnational and linguistic capital (Wallace, 2018). These are highly valued assets which, if properly recognised and utilised, have the potential to enrich pupils, schools and society as a whole.

Ensuring equal opportunities for people from all ethnic backgrounds to enter the profession, and progress within it, is a necessary condition for representation at every level of the teacher workforce. A diverse workforce is important in promoting cultural understanding and inclusion, and a growing body of evidence suggests that being taught by someone from the same ethnic group can have a positive impact on pupils' social-emotional, attitudinal, academic and behavioural outcomes, especially for pupils from black ethnic backgrounds (Dee, 2001; Villegas and Lucas, 2005; Goldhaber and Hansen, 2009; Egalite *et al.*, 2015; Egalite and Kisida, 2018; Joshi *et al.*, 2018; Blazar, 2021; Gershenson *et al.*, 2021).

The diversity of the current teacher workforce is influenced by the process of recruitment, retention and progression from application to initial teacher training (ITT) to the promotion of teachers into leadership roles. Therefore, disparities in the makeup of the workforce at a particular level could be reflective of barriers at lower levels. While the teacher workforce has become more diverse in recent years, there is an under-representation of all major ethnic minority groups, particularly among senior leaders and school governance volunteers (DfE, 2018b and c; DfE 2021).

However, despite a number of important and illuminating qualitative and survey-based studies focusing on the experiences of teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other diverse backgrounds, the evidence base is currently limited. A key gap is a diagnostic quantitative understanding of whether and where racial equality issues are currently present within the teacher progression pipeline in England.

1.1 Policy context

Recent years have seen some considerable challenges in recruiting and retaining the teachers that schools need. The government's strategy for teacher recruitment and retention (DfE, 2019) recognises the importance of recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers. It highlights four key challenges and sets out strategies to address them (namely by: reducing excessive workload; providing early career support; extending career pathways; and simplifying the application process for ITT). This strategy document does not address diversity, but a separate statement of intent (DfE, 2018c), highlights the lack of ethnic diversity within the teacher workforce at senior levels, and provides a call to action to address equality issues in the teacher workforce.

¹³ Taken from <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/about/equality-and-diversity>

From 2014 to 2020, the DfE administered the Leadership Equality and Diversity Fund¹⁴. Schools were able to apply for funding to support under-represented groups with protected characteristics, as defined by the Equality Act 2010. DfE funded a total of 212 projects between 2014 and 2019, between a quarter and a third of which focused on supporting teachers from ethnic minority groups to seek promotion.

Concerns about a lack of diversity are not unique to teaching. A report from the professional body of human resource personnel (CPID, 2017, p3) drew attention to the 'significant lack of racial diversity at the top of UK organisations' and the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities (CRED, 2021) put forward 24 recommendations to improve trust, fairness, agency and inclusivity across the UK. Recent reports have also reinforced the need to focus on differential outcomes associated with different combinations of background characteristics, including ethnic group, gender, social class and region (CRED, 2021; House of Commons Education Committee, 2021).

In 2021, the National Governance Association identified that people from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds were significantly under-represented in school governance (Henson *et al.*, 2021), called on school boards and executive leaders to take action to widen participation in school and trust governance (Ebbs and Tate, 2021) and set out an action plan¹⁵ for further development in this area.

There is a clear recognition that action is required to address racial inequalities currently present in the teacher profession. This research is designed to provide an overview of the teacher career pathway in order to identify where inequalities lie.

1.2 Previous research and theory

Previous research has investigated the influence of ethnicity at particular points in the teaching pipeline. For example a survey of undergraduates by Gorard *et al.* (2020) found that males and Asian students are more likely to report intending to be teachers than students from black and mixed ethnicity backgrounds, or those whose parents have a degree. A study of teacher turnover in disadvantaged schools by Allen *et al.* (2018) found that deprived schools tend to hire younger and more ethnically diverse teachers, both of whom have a higher turnover rate.

DfE (2018b, 2022b) investigated the under-representation of ethnic minority groups among school leaders, with conflicting findings. DfE (2018b) concluded there was no significant evidence of a disparity in progression to leadership roles by ethnicity. DfE (2022b), however, found that teachers from ethnic minority groups were significantly less likely than teachers from white British backgrounds to progress to senior leadership¹⁶.

Previous research has identified a number of barriers to progression in the teaching profession for people from black, Asian and other ethnic groups. For example, Miller (2019) identified key barriers arising from government policy, racism/race discrimination, institutional practices, affiliation/group

¹⁴ See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-and-diversity-funding-for-school-led-projects>

¹⁵ See: <https://www.nga.org.uk/News/Blog/September-2021/Race-diversity-on-boards-our-commitments-to-action.aspx>

¹⁶ DfE (2022b) states that these differing conclusions are due to differences in the analysis used in the two reports.

membership and religion. A recent study by researchers at the University of London (Tereshchenko *et al.*, 2020) explored the reasons behind low rates of retention among teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds. It found that teachers from black, Asian and other ethnic backgrounds experienced some of the same issues as teachers from white ethnic backgrounds, but racism and associated inequalities were at the forefront of their concerns. Research has highlighted the negative influence of racial stereotypes in education. These serve to undermine an understanding of the diversity within ethnic groups. In particular, racial stereotypes tend to present people from ethnic minority backgrounds in largely negative terms (for example as underprivileged and under-achieving), which are inaccurate, limiting and ultimately damaging to individuals and society as a whole (see Reay, 2004; Gilborn *et al.*, 2016; Lander and Zaheerali, 2016; Haque, 2017; Tereshchenko *et al.*, 2020).

Based on an emergent body of research, Miller (2019) identified three key factors responsible for advancing the career progression of teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds other than white: personal agency, endorsement (e.g. support from a senior leader or mentor), and institutional habitus (i.e. a positive institutional culture for racial equality).

Several studies have drawn attention to the importance of investigating ‘intersectional’ factors (Cole, 2009) in addition to ethnicity, rather than treating people from the same ethnic background as a homogenous group. For example, those interviewed by Tereshchenko *et al.* (2020) draw attention to the influence of gender, social class, skin colour and immigrant background on their experiences of teaching. Haque and Elliot (2016) identify age, length of experience in teaching and geographical location as important factors influencing the experiences and perceptions of teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds other than white. We have been able to include some of these characteristics in our analyses, and have drawn on the available evidence-base to provide insights into the possible explanations for the trends we identify.

1.3 About this study

This research was commissioned by the working party to advance racial equality in the school workforce, founded by Ambition Institute, The Chartered College of Teaching (CCT), The Confederation of School Trusts (CST) and Teach First. The working party held an evidence session which identified: ‘The need to understand in an evidence-based way where the key issues in the teaching progression pipeline are as the basis for future thinking about what steps could be taken to advance racial equality in the school workforce.’ This study is designed to identify these issues.

Previous research has highlighted a range of progression barriers to teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds: in training, retention and progression into leadership. However, there are a number of key evidence gaps in our understanding of:

- the extent of ethnic disparities **currently present** within the teacher career pipeline
- **where** in the pipeline these issues are most prevalent
- **areas of the system** where there has been progress and where the need for improvement is greatest.

This research, funded by NFER, Ambition Institute and Teach First, is designed to address gaps in the evidence-base. It aims to provide a national picture of the relative representation of different ethnic groups at different stages of the teacher career pathway, with a particular focus on key transition points, including access to and completion of initial teacher training (ITT), entry into employment in state-funded schools, retention and progression. It uses a quantitative approach, informed by findings and insights from previous research.

The research questions that this study seeks to answer are:

1. To what extent are different ethnic groups under- or over-represented within different levels of the teaching profession?
 - How does this compare to representation in the general population (after adjusting for different ethnic composition by age)?
2. To what extent are people from different ethnic groups more or less likely to progress to the next stage in the teacher career path?
 - Do other differences between individuals in different ethnic groups, such as their experience levels or geographical region, potentially explain differential progression?

1.4 Data and methodology

1.4.1 Data sources

Our analysis aims to outline how people from different ethnic backgrounds are represented in teaching, and how likely they are to progress in the teaching profession. We compare the representation and progression of people from different ethnic backgrounds across and between ten key points in the teaching profession (e.g. comparing the representation of people from Asian backgrounds among ITT trainees with their representation among classroom teachers, middle leaders and senior leaders).

The ten key points in the profession over which we conduct our analysis are:

1. Application to postgraduate ITT
2. Accepted on a postgraduate ITT course
3. Enrolment in an ITT course
4. Achievement of qualified teacher status (QTS)
5. Entry into teaching as a newly qualified teacher (NQT)¹⁷
6. Classroom teacher
7. Middle leader¹⁸
8. Senior leader (assistant and deputy headteachers)
9. Headteacher

¹⁷ NQT status was replaced by the two-year Early Career Teacher (ECT) status in 2021.

¹⁸ Middle leaders are defined as those teachers who are in a leading practitioner, excellent teacher, advanced skills teacher, or advisory teacher role. We also include as middle leader those who receive Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR) payments of £100 or more in a given year.

10. Executive headteacher¹⁹.

As this is not a full cohort study (i.e. we do not follow the same individuals from application to ITT all the way to executive headteacher), we use multiple data sources to analyse the representation and progression of people across each of these key stages of the teaching profession separately. However, the data sources do enable our analysis of progression from each stage of the teacher career path to the next (see Section 1.4.3 below).

We use data on applications to postgraduate ITT from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and Teach First (TF) to analyse applications and acceptances onto postgraduate ITT courses. We use the Initial Teacher Training Performance Profile (ITT-PP) dataset to analyse enrolment in an ITT course and achievement of QTS.

To analyse entry into teaching, we use the ITT-PP data linked to the School Workforce Census (SWC), to identify qualified trainees who enter state-sector teaching. For classroom teachers, middle/senior leaders, headteachers and executive headteachers, we use the SWC data.

In addition to these administrative data sources, we use data from the 2021 National Governance Association (NGA) survey of governance volunteers to identify the numbers of people from different ethnic backgrounds among school governance volunteers. While governance is not part of the teacher career, governors and trustees have an influence over school culture and the appointment of headteachers. Therefore, differences in the ethnic makeup of school governance volunteers are relevant to understanding differences in progression to senior leadership for people from different ethnic backgrounds.

1.4.2 Methodology – definition of representation

We analyse the extent to which people from different ethnic backgrounds are represented across the workforce by estimating the proportion of the workforce at each career stage that is comprised of people from each ethnic group.

Our analysis uses the ONS classification of ethnicity²⁰ that is commonly used to categorise ethnicities. This is partly out of necessity since the datasets we use are coded using this classification, but also because it is a well-established, tested and recognised system. We use the group of five large ‘major’ ethnic groups for the majority of our analysis: white, Asian, black, mixed and other. This is because they provide sample sizes that are sufficient for analysis across most of the career stages. However, in recognition of the different experiences of individuals from different ethnic backgrounds within these groups, we also analyse smaller, so-called ‘minor’ ethnic groups where sample sizes allow.

We use data from the 2011 UK census to determine what proportion of the overall population of England is composed of people from each ethnic group. This serves as our comparator, to

¹⁹ As the SWC only observes staff working in schools, we are only able to observe executive headteachers within schools. A detailed discussion of the limitations inherent in identifying executive headteachers using the SWC can be found in: <https://www.nfer.ac.uk/executive-headteachers-whats-in-a-name/>

²⁰

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/measuringequality/ethnicgroupnationalidentityandreligion>

determine whether a particular ethnic group is under- or over-represented in each career stage compared to the general population. We also adjust the comparator to match the age profile of people in each career stage (see Appendix A for details on how this is done). Additionally, given that the 2011 census was conducted ten years ago, we adjust the age categories in the census data forwards by ten years to approximate the current ethnic breakdowns in England (for example, we consider people in the 20-25 age category in the 2011 census to be in the 30-35 age category in 2020).

To determine whether people from a particular ethnic group are over- or under-represented in each career stage, we compare the proportion of the workforce from that ethnic group (for example, ten per cent of classroom teachers are from Asian ethnic backgrounds) to the age-adjusted proportion of the overall population made up of people from the same ethnic group. People from a particular ethnic group are over-represented in a teacher career stage when they make up a larger proportion of the teacher workforce at that stage than they do of the overall age-adjusted population, and vice versa.

An alternative view of representation would be to consider whether teachers from different ethnic backgrounds are under- or over-represented compared to the ethnic backgrounds of the pupils they teach (see Demie, 2019; Demie and See, 2021). The population of people in England from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds is younger than people from white ethnic backgrounds, which means that the population of school-age pupils is more ethnically diverse than the population overall²¹. Therefore, teachers from ethnic minorities other than white that are under-represented relative to the national picture are likely to be even more under-represented compared to the ethnic backgrounds of the pupils they teach.

1.4.3 Methodology – definition of progression

While our analysis of representation is a useful indicator of what diversity in the teaching profession currently looks like, it is somewhat limited in its ability to inform our understanding of its causes or in assessing current disparities. Under-representation of teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds at leadership levels could be driven by barriers to promotion to senior leadership levels. However, other factors, such as differences in progression rates at earlier points in that cohort's career path could also be contributory factors. Therefore, representation alone does not, on its own, provide convincing evidence of systemic barriers currently facing people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Differences in the likelihood of progression from one stage of the teacher workforce to the next for people from different ethnic backgrounds, however, more accurately assess the extent of current ethnic disparities in the teacher career pathway. This is particularly the case if disparities between ethnic groups are not explained by differences in other personal and school characteristics of those teachers (e.g. teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds being more concentrated in London where progression rates may be different than in other regions).

²¹ See <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/demographics/age-groups/latest#average-age-by-ethnicity>

This is the intent of our progression analysis. Progression in teaching is a 'longitudinal' outcome (i.e. we observe the same individual over time, and determine whether they have 'progressed' in teaching or not, within a given timeframe). As with our analysis of representation, we consider progression separately across the different stages of the workforce. This means that the definition of progression is specific to the career stage (i.e. an ITT applicant 'progresses' by having their application accepted, while a classroom teacher 'progresses' by being promoted²² to middle leadership).

Progression is only observed for those who are currently in that career stage: for example, we only consider entry into teaching for trainees who had an ITT application accepted, completed their training and achieved QTS. This means that progression to the next career stage is always 'conditional' on having progressed to the current career stage. Gaps in progression rate at each stage therefore do not reflect differences in progression rates at earlier stages (e.g. differences in promotion rates for classroom teachers to middle leadership do not reflect differences in retention rates for classroom teachers). The data sources and years of analysis we use for our progression analysis for each career stage are summarised in Table 1.

We estimate progression rates by calculating the proportion of those in each career stage who progress to the next stage within a specific time frame²³ (e.g. the proportion of all qualified trainees who enter state-sector teaching by the academic year after achieving QTS). To estimate 'gaps' in rates of progression between different ethnic backgrounds, we subtract the progression rate for people from each ethnic background from the progression rate for people from white backgrounds. A gap that is greater than zero implies that people from white ethnic backgrounds are more likely to progress to the next career stage, while gaps that are less than zero imply that people from a particular ethnic background are more likely than people from a white background to move to the next career stage.

²² We use the general term 'progression' to refer to movement from one stage of the career pathway to the next, while the term 'promotion' refers specifically to classroom teachers promoted to middle leadership, middle leaders promoted to senior leadership and senior leaders promoted to headship.

²³ These time frames differ for each career stage and are outlined in Table 1 as well as in Sections 4 to 9.

Table 1: Definitions of progression and retention in the teaching profession

Stage	Applies to	Source	Year	Outcome
ITT acceptance	Applicants to postgraduate ITT	UCAS/TF	2019/20	Accepted onto an ITT course
QTS achievement	ITT trainees in their final year of training	ITT-PP	2017/18 to 2019/20	Achieves QTS
Entry into teaching	Qualified trainees	ITT-PP & SWC	2017/18 to 2019/20	Enters state-sector teaching in the academic year following QTS
Retention in teaching	Classroom teachers	SWC	2019/20	Retained in state-sector teaching in 2020/21
Promotion to middle leadership	Classroom teachers who were in teaching 2015/16 - 2020/21	SWC	2015/16	Promoted to middle leadership by 2020/21
Promotion to senior leadership	Middle leaders who were in teaching 2015/16 - 2020/21	SWC	2015/16	Promoted to senior leadership by 2020/21
Promotion to headship	Senior leaders who were in teaching 2015/16 - 2020/21	SWC	2015/16	Promoted to headship by 2020/21

Note: UCAS = Universities and Colleges Admissions Service, TF = Teach First, ITT-PP = Initial Teacher Training Performance Profiles, SWC = School Workforce Census.

In Sections 4-9 of this report, we dive deeper into each career stage to provide additional context on gaps in progression rates. For instance, we analyse whether or not progression rate gaps have changed over time.

We also analyse whether progression rate gaps vary across personal, school or ITT course characteristics (for example, whether gaps are wider or narrower for people from each ethnic group in particular regions of the country). The characteristics over which we conduct this analysis differ according to the available data and are outlined in more detail in each section.

Finally, we analyse whether differences in the personal, ITT course or school characteristics between people from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds and people from white backgrounds help to 'explain' the rate of progression at each stage. For historical and/or systemic reasons, differences between people from each ethnic group in age, gender, the region in which they live, or school phase, or other factors, may help to drive some of the overall gaps that we observe. For example, the data shows that teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are more likely than teachers from white backgrounds to be based in London and teach in secondary schools. However, progression rates differ in London from other regions, and between primary and secondary schools, and these differences may partially 'explain' some of the differences in progression rates that we observe.

That is not to say that if differences in characteristics ‘explain’ a significant portion of progression rate gaps, then we can conclude that there is equality in the profession, as we do not address why people from different ethnic groups are concentrated in particular regions or types of schools. For this reason, we lead our analysis by exploring overall gaps in progression rates between ethnic groups. Further, we are cautious about interpreting differences in progression rates between ethnic groups that are ‘explained’ by differences in characteristics, especially where there is a possibility that the differences in the characteristics themselves may be influenced by wider systemic factors affecting that ethnic group.

We are not able to account for all possible differences in the characteristics of people from different ethnic backgrounds, so any remaining gaps in progression rates may be driven by other characteristics that are not captured in the data. However, given that we have accounted for as many key characteristics as we are able to in the analysis²⁴, it seems reasonable to conclude that discrimination is likely to be playing some part in explaining the gaps that remain.

1.5 Study limitations

There are a number of limitations to our analysis. First, it relies on data held in large administrative datasets, and is therefore affected by the limitations inherent in each one. These are outlined separately for the analysis specific to each career stage (Sections 4 to 9).

Second, although the population size as a whole and in the large (‘major’) ethnic groups (white, Asian, black, mixed and other) is large enough to support robust analyses, this is not the case for some of the minor ethnic groups with smaller populations, such as Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people. We therefore combine people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller backgrounds with the group of people from other white backgrounds.

Sample sizes of people from the smaller ethnic groups are insufficient to analyse representation and progression among senior leaders and headteachers, and we have not reported findings where this is the case. The smaller ethnic groups are also not recorded at all within the UCAS data, and the smaller white ethnic groups (i.e. white British, white Irish and other white backgrounds) are recorded differently in the ITT-PP data than in the other datasets. This means that the analysis of gaps in progression rates for people from the smaller ethnic groups is limited within the ITT stages.

Third, some of the characteristics that the previous research literature suggests are key mediators of differences in progression rates (such as prior qualifications, applications for promotion, pastoral and subject leadership roles, religion and whether the person had been born in the UK) were not available in any of the datasets used in the analysis. This study is therefore designed to outline trends and statistical associations between progression rate gap and other key variables. Based on previous research, we include as many of the key mediators as possible in the analysis, however there are limitations on the number of mediators we are able to investigate.

²⁴ The analysis in these sections uses a statistical technique called the Oaxaca-Blinder Decomposition (Oaxaca, 1973; Blinder, 1973) to estimate the proportion of progression rate gaps which are not accounted for by differences in characteristics. See Appendix A for a detailed description of the model used for this analysis.

1.6 Report structure

Section 2 provides an overview of the extent to which the teacher workforce is representative of ethnic groups in the wider population and Section 3 provides an overview of progression throughout the teacher career.

The rest of the report structure provides a deeper dive into progression at each stage of the teacher career pathway, including the influence of region, training route/school type, gender and other key characteristics. Section 4 concerns acceptances onto ITT, whereas Section 5 focuses on completion of ITT and entry into state-funded teaching. Section 6 investigates teacher retention. Sections 7-9 focus on promotion to middle leadership, senior leadership and headship, respectively. Section 10 provides a discussion, conclusion and recommendations. Appendix A provides further details of the methodology and Appendix B contains additional tables not presented in the text.

2 How representative is the teacher workforce?

- A majority of schools in England (60 per cent) have no teachers from ethnic backgrounds other than white. This is particularly the case in primary schools, where 69 per cent have an all-white teaching staff.
- Most schools (86 per cent) have an all-white senior leadership team (SLT). This is more common in primary schools (88 per cent) but almost three-quarters (74 per cent) of secondary schools in England also have an all-white SLT.
- People from white ethnic backgrounds make up a larger proportion of the teacher workforce than they do of the population of England. Conversely, people from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds make up a smaller proportion of the workforce than of the wider population.
- The key exception to this is applications to initial teacher training (ITT) where applicants from white ethnic backgrounds are under-represented²⁵ compared to the overall population by six per cent, while applicants from Asian, black and other ethnic backgrounds are over-represented by 24, 38 and 77 per cent, respectively. The proportion of ITT applicants from mixed ethnic backgrounds is in line with their representation in the national population.
- People from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are under-represented (and people from white ethnic backgrounds are over-represented) among newly-qualified teachers, classroom teachers, middle leaders, senior leaders and headteachers.
- People from all ethnic backgrounds other than white are considerably under-represented among school governance volunteers.

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to determine the extent to which teachers and leaders of different ethnic backgrounds are over- or under-represented across the teacher workforce. We do so by comparing the representation of people from different ethnic backgrounds in the most recent year of data available to what proportion of the population of England is made up by people from the same ethnic background (detailed definitions of these terms can be found in Section 1.4).

We look at representation across each stage of the workforce separately (i.e. from applications to ITT up to executive headship). This allows us to compare the representation of people from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic groups across the workforce and provides a clear and recent snapshot of the extent to which people from different ethnic groups are under-represented across the teacher workforce.

²⁵ Representation means the percentage of people from a given ethnic group in the teacher workforce compared with the proportion of the same group among people of the same age in the population of England as a whole. Groups are over-represented if their percentage in the teacher workforce is significantly greater than in the wider population and under-represented if their percentage in the teacher workforce is significantly lower.

2.2 Methodology and limitations

2.2.1 Methodology

To compare and contrast across the workforce, we analyse representation separately for applicants to initial teacher training to executive headteachers, using the data source relevant to stage (Table 1 outlines which datasets are used for each stage). The analysis in this section uses the most recent year of data available in each of the relevant data sources (the 2020/21 academic year), in order to reflect the most recent representation of under-representation possible.

We define representation as how the proportion of people in each stage of the workforce that are from a particular ethnic background compares to the proportion of the population of England made up by people from the same backgrounds (Section 1.4 outlines these definitions in greater detail). People from a particular ethnic background are over-represented when they make up a larger proportion of a career stage than they do of the overall population, and vice versa.

In Section 2.10, we also analyse representation for each ethnic group across subjects for ITT trainees and classroom teachers. This uses the same definition of representation used to look at each stage of the workforce, but instead considers representation separately across the subjects ITT trainees are training in, and classroom teachers are teaching. ITT subject is observed directly in the ITT-PP data, although we have combined similar subjects together in order to maintain sufficiently large sample sizes to report (for example, we have combined mathematics and sciences into one group).

2.2.2 Limitations

The intent of this section is to show the extent of under- or over-representation of people from different ethnic groups in teaching. As such, it cannot fully inform our understanding of what is driving the differences and therefore identify appropriate policy responses. This is because it takes time for teachers to move through the teacher workforce, so our analysis of representation gives little insight on whether any discrepancies reflect the ethnic makeup of the workforce from decades past, or whether it is driven by differences in how likely teachers from each ethnic group are to progress in teaching. The findings in this section are therefore designed to complement the findings in Section 3, which seeks to understand whether there are significant differences in the likelihood of teachers from different ethnic backgrounds to move along the career pipeline.

A second key limitation concerns how ethnicity is coded across each of the different datasets. While ethnicity at the ‘major’ group level (i.e. white, Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic groups) is consistently recorded across each dataset, ethnicity at the ‘minor’ group level is not. Specifically, ethnicity is not recorded at the ‘minor’ group level at all within the UCAS/TF data, and the minor groups which make up the white ‘major’ group are different in the ITT-PP data than in the SWC. This means that we are unable to conduct any analysis of the representation of people from each of the minor ethnic groups within acceptance and enrolment to ITT, completion of QTS and entry into teaching.²⁶

²⁶ While minor groups within the Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic major groups are consistently recorded within the ITT-PP data, our analysis compares each of the minor ethnic groups to the white British group, which is not consistently recorded.

2.3 Representation of ethnic diversity among teachers in primary and secondary schools

Our analysis shows that majority of schools in England (60 per cent) have an all-white teaching staff²⁷. This is particularly the case in primary schools, 69 per cent of which have an all-white teaching staff. Diversity is greater in secondary schools, only 18 per cent of which have an all-white teaching staff. Pupils are more likely to encounter teachers from Asian ethnic backgrounds than teachers from black, mixed or other ethnic backgrounds.

Table 2: Most English primary schools have an all-white teaching staff

Percentage of schools with:	Percentage of schools (%)		
	Overall	Primary	Secondary
Teachers from white backgrounds only	60	69	18
Teachers from Asian backgrounds	27	20	64
Teachers from black backgrounds	17	10	47
Teachers from mixed backgrounds	18	13	46
Teachers from other ethnic backgrounds	7	4	25

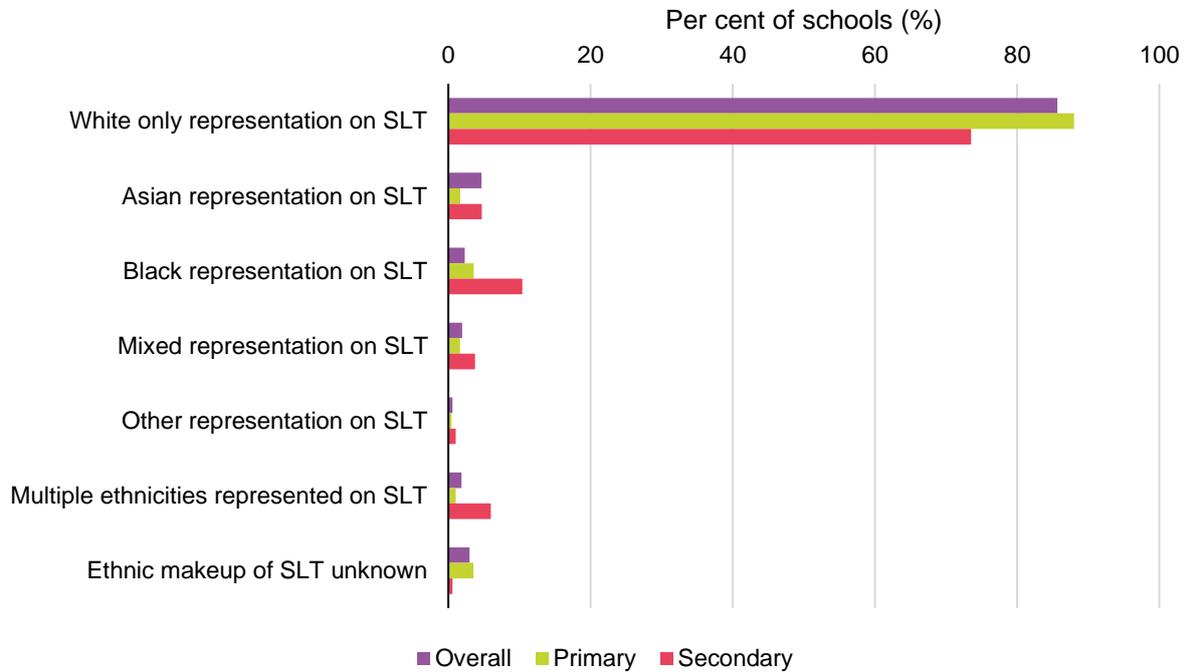
Note: Totals do not add to 100 per cent as some schools have teachers from multiple ethnic backgrounds.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2017/18 – 2019/20.

Most schools (86 per cent) have all-white SLTs. This is more common in primary schools (88 per cent) but almost three quarters (74 per cent) of secondary schools also have all-white SLTs.

²⁷ This percentage is higher than the 46 per cent reported by Tereshchenko *et al.* (2020), who investigated ethnic representation in teaching using the 2018 SWC. Rather than representing a change over time, it seems likely that our figure for the percentage of schools with all-white teaching staff is higher because we obtained permission to access the full SWC dataset, including small schools which are more likely to have an all-white teaching staff. Tereshchenko *et al.* (2020), used the publicly-available version of the SWC, which does not include information on staff working in smaller schools.

Figure 3: Most English primary and secondary schools have an all-white SLT



Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2020/21.

2.4 Regional distribution of teachers by ethnic group

There are large regional differences in the distribution of teachers from different ethnic groups. As shown in Table 3, teachers from white ethnic backgrounds are spread across regions, whereas teachers from other ethnic backgrounds tend to be more concentrated in London. This is particularly the case for teachers from black ethnic backgrounds, 62 per cent of whom are working in London schools (there is a similar pattern among ITT applicants – see Appendix B).

Table 3: Teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are much more likely than teachers from white backgrounds to be teaching in London

Region	Proportion in each region (%)				
	White	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
East of England	12	7	9	11	9
East Midlands	9	8	3	6	4
West Midlands	10	17	9	10	7
London	11	39	62	37	53
North East	5	1	< 1	2	1
North West	15	8	3	8	6
South East	17	10	9	13	12
South West	11	1	2	6	4
Yorkshire and the Humber	10	9	2	7	5

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2020/21.

2.5 Representation of the white ethnic group throughout the teacher career pathway

Figure 4 shows the representation of people from white ethnic backgrounds at ten stages of the teacher career pathway.

The proportion of applicants to postgraduate ITT²⁸ that are from white ethnic backgrounds (76 per cent) is lower than the proportion of people from the same ethnic background of the same age in the wider population (81 per cent), which means that there is a gap of five percentage points in their representation at this stage. This under-representation may be influenced by the fact that the pool of graduates was relatively smaller because young people from white backgrounds had the lowest entry rate into higher education three years before the 2020 cohort were making their applications for postgraduate training²⁹.

The representation of applicants from white ethnic backgrounds who are accepted onto postgraduate ITT is in line with the proportion of people from a white ethnic group within the age-adjusted population. However, they are over-represented (by three percentage points) at enrolment into ITT and similarly over-represented among trainees who receive QTS.

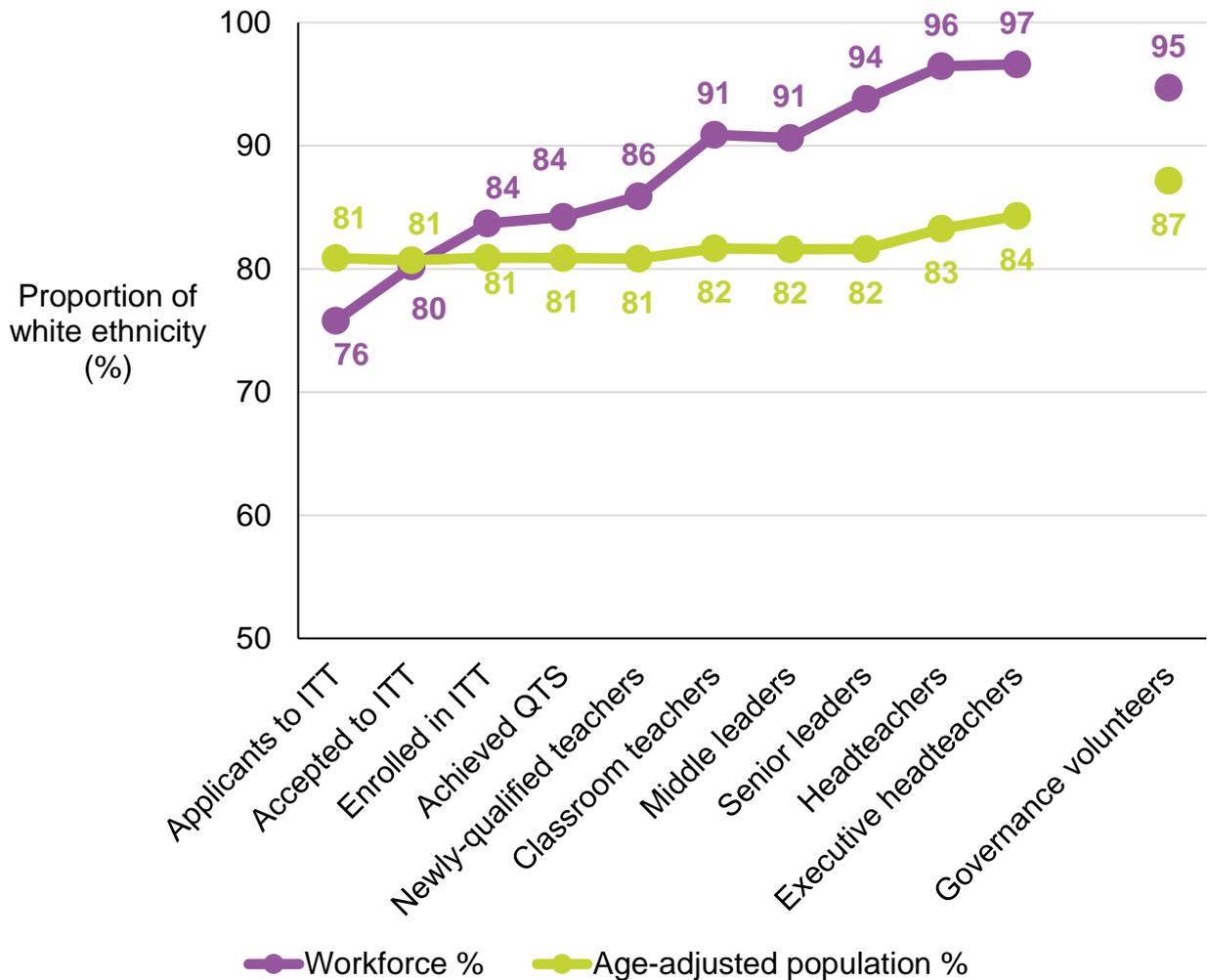
Teachers from white ethnic backgrounds are over-represented among NQTs and classroom teachers, compared to their proportion in the wider population, and this over-representation is relatively large (at five percentage points among NQTs and nine percentage points among classroom teachers). It is at a similar level for middle leaders but is higher for senior leaders (12

²⁸ Note that this represents applications and acceptance on postgraduate ITT courses only. Information on undergraduate pathways can be found in Appendix B.

²⁹ See: Entry rates into higher education - GOV.UK Ethnicity facts and figures (ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk)

percentage points). The largest difference (of 13 percentage points) is among headteachers. People from white ethnic backgrounds are also over-represented among executive headteachers (by 13 percentage points) and governance volunteers (by eight percentage points).

Figure 4: People from white ethnic backgrounds are under-represented among applicants to ITT, but over-represented at all stages from ITT enrolment onwards



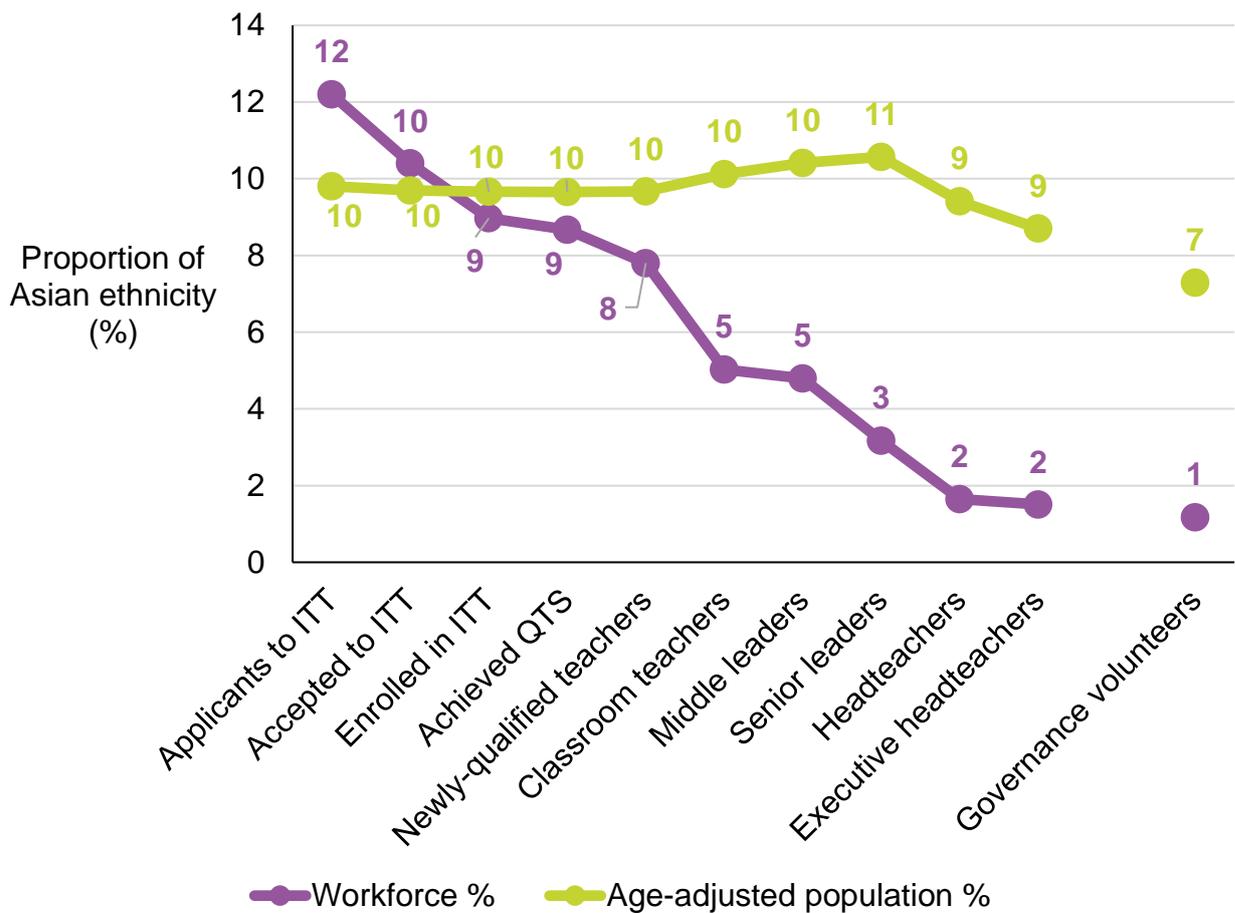
Source: NFER analysis of UCAS, TF, ITT-PP, SWC and NGA data for 2019/20.

2.6 Representation of the Asian ethnic group in teaching

The under-representation of applicants to ITT from white ethnic backgrounds implies that applicants from the other ethnic groups are over-represented at this stage, and this holds true for applicants from Asian ethnic backgrounds. Specifically, people from Asian backgrounds are over-represented by two percentage points among ITT applicants compared with people from Asian backgrounds of the same age in the wider population.

This over-representation may to an extent be influenced by ethnic-related patterns in career choice. For example, Gorard *et al.* (2020) found that undergraduates from Asian backgrounds were more likely to intend to be teachers than students from black and mixed ethnic backgrounds.

Figure 5: People from Asian ethnic backgrounds are over-represented among ITT applicants and acceptances, but under-represented at every stage from ITT enrolment onwards



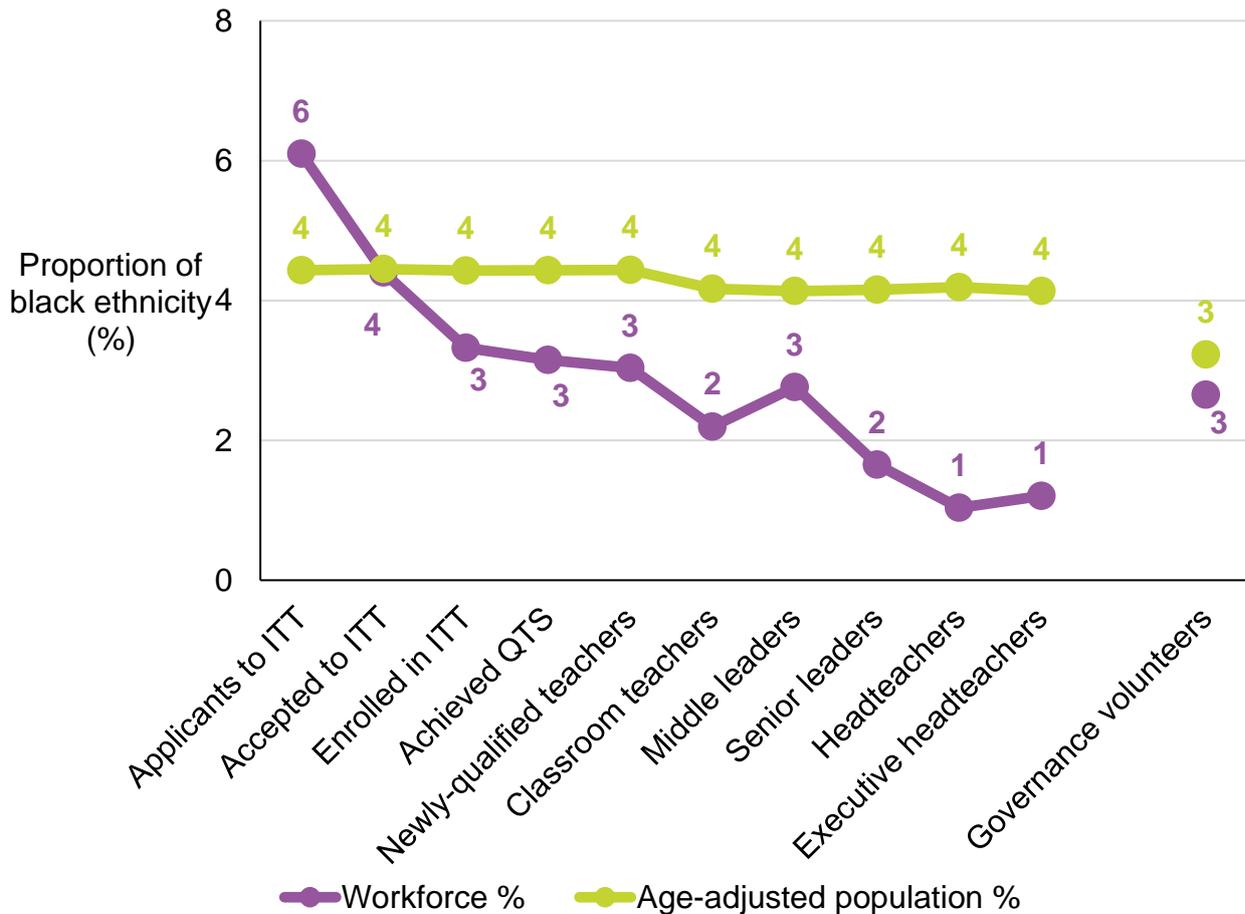
Source: NFER analysis of UCAS, TF, ITT-PP, SWC and NGA data for 2019/20.

The proportion of people from Asian ethnic backgrounds among those accepted onto postgraduate ITT programmes is closer to the proportion of people from Asian backgrounds in the wider population. People from Asian ethnic backgrounds are slightly under-represented at ITT enrolment and among trainees who receive QTS, and their representation is lower still at subsequent stages. The largest under-representation of people from Asian backgrounds relative to the age-adjusted population of people from Asian backgrounds nationally is among senior leaders and headteachers (by about seven percentage points at each stage). Governance volunteers from Asian backgrounds are also under-represented, by six percentage points.

2.7 Representation of the black ethnic group in teaching

Similarly to the Asian group, the black ethnic group is over-represented among applicants to postgraduate ITT, by two percentage points.

Figure 6: People from black ethnic backgrounds are over-represented among ITT applicants but under-represented at all stages from ITT enrolment onwards



Source: NFER analysis of UCAS, TF, ITT-PP, SWC and NGA data for 2019/20.

Although applicants from black ethnic backgrounds are over-represented relative to the national population, the proportion accepted onto an ITT course is roughly equivalent to the proportion of people from black ethnic backgrounds in the wider population. The fact that representation of applicants from black backgrounds falls sharply between these two stages suggests that there could be substantial differences in ITT acceptance rates between applicants from black and other ethnic groups, which we explore further in Sections 3 and 4.

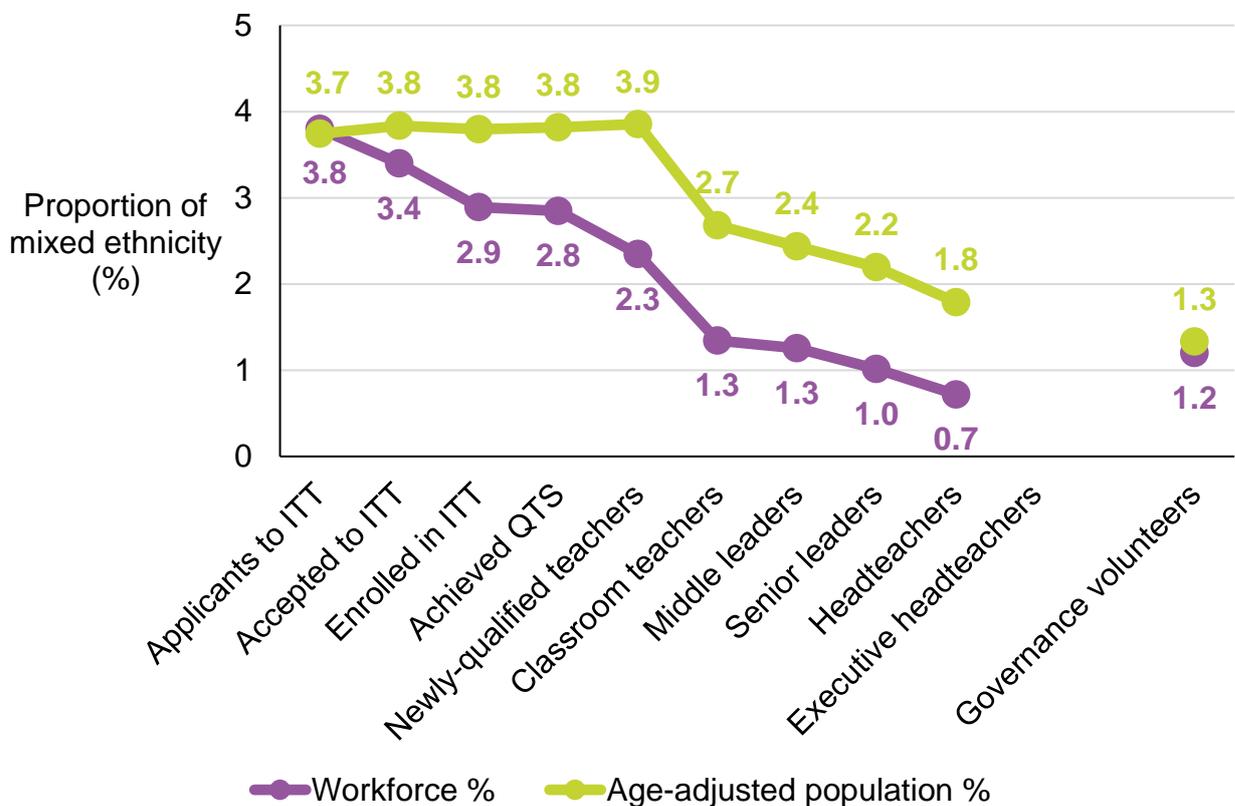
Successful applicants from black backgrounds are under-represented by one percentage point at the stage of enrolment onto postgraduate ITT and teachers from black ethnic backgrounds are under-represented at all other stages of the profession. With the exception of the middle leadership stage, the gap is wider throughout all the remaining career stages and is widest among headteachers and executive headteachers (at about three percentage points). The fact that the

proportion of middle leaders from black ethnic backgrounds is slightly higher than among classroom teachers could be indicative of differential rates of promotion to middle leadership between teachers of black and other ethnic groups, which we explore in Sections 3 and 7.

2.8 Representation of the mixed ethnic group in teaching

People from mixed ethnic backgrounds make up 3.8 per cent of applicants to ITT, which is similar to the proportion of people from mixed ethnic backgrounds in the wider population. However, they are slightly under-represented among successful ITT applicants, by 0.4 percentage points, and continue to be so at all subsequent points of the teaching profession.

Figure 7: People from mixed ethnic backgrounds are under-represented at all stages apart from application to ITT



Source: NFER analysis of UCAS, TF, ITT-PP, SWC and NGA data for 2019/20.

People from mixed ethnic backgrounds are particularly under-represented (by 1.6 percentage points) among newly-qualified teachers and among classroom teachers (by 1.4 percentage points). They are also under-represented at headship level, by 1.1 percentage points³⁰. The proportion of governance volunteers who are from mixed ethnic backgrounds is, however, only slightly lower

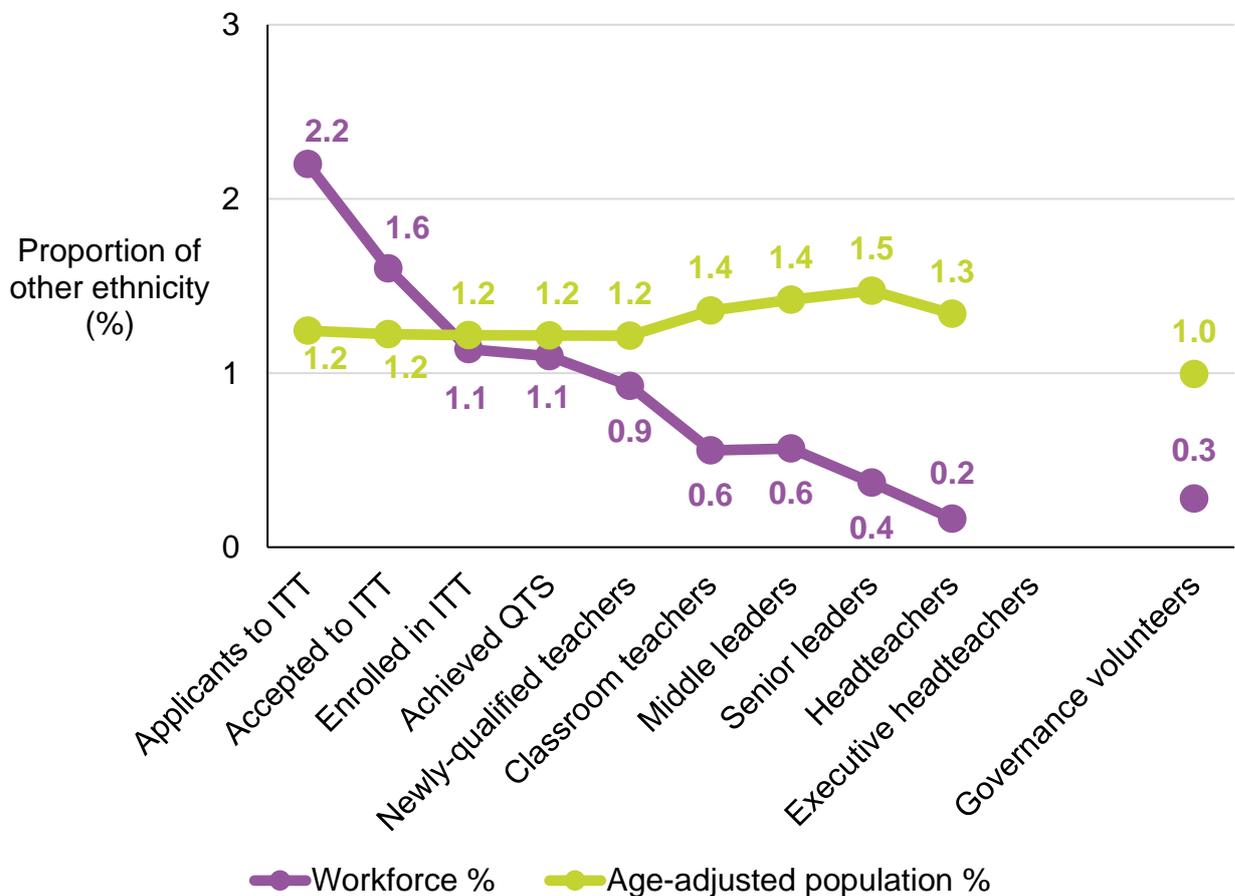
³⁰ Representation of executive headteachers from mixed ethnic backgrounds is not reported due to the small sample size.

than the percentage of people of the same age from mixed ethnic backgrounds in the national population.

2.9 Representation of people of other ethnic groups in teaching

People from other ethnic groups are slightly over-represented among applicants to ITT (in relation to their proportion in the wider population), by 1.0 percentage points. They are also slightly over-represented at the acceptance onto a postgraduate ITT course, by 0.4 percentage points.

Figure 8: People from other ethnic groups are over-represented in applications and acceptances to ITT but under-represented at all stages from ITT enrolment onwards



Source: NFER analysis of UCAS, TF, ITT-PP, SWC and NGA data for 2019/20.

Among those enrolled to an ITT course and who achieve QTS, the proportion who are from other ethnic backgrounds is similar to the proportion of people from other ethnic groups of the same age in the national population. However, teachers from other ethnic backgrounds are under-represented at all stages from NQT onwards, with the largest gaps (of 1.1 percentage points in

both cases) at senior leadership and headship. People from other ethnic groups are also under-represented among governance volunteers, by 0.7 percentage points³¹.

2.10 Comparing representation across the major ethnic groups

The previous sections have shown that people from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds tend to be under-represented across most of the teacher career pipeline. However, comparing under-representation across people from different ethnic groups can be misleading, particularly for the smaller groups, because small differences in percentage points can be proportionately large for groups which make up a small percentage of the population (and vice versa). We address this by showing representation as a percentage of the population that is made up of people from each ethnic group (for example, applicants from Asian backgrounds make up 12 per cent of all ITT applicants, and ten per cent of the overall population, which is an over-representation by 20 per cent). This allows us to compare the representation of different ethnic groups across the teaching profession on the same scale.

Figure 9 shows the percentage over- or under-representation of different ethnic groups in the teaching profession. The horizontal line at 0 indicates that there is no difference between an ethnic group's representation in the teaching profession compared with the wider population. Points above the 0 line indicate over-representation and points below the line represent under-representation. The further away from the 0 line, the greater the under- or over-representation becomes. The vertical axis indicates the percentage difference in representation, compared the population of England.

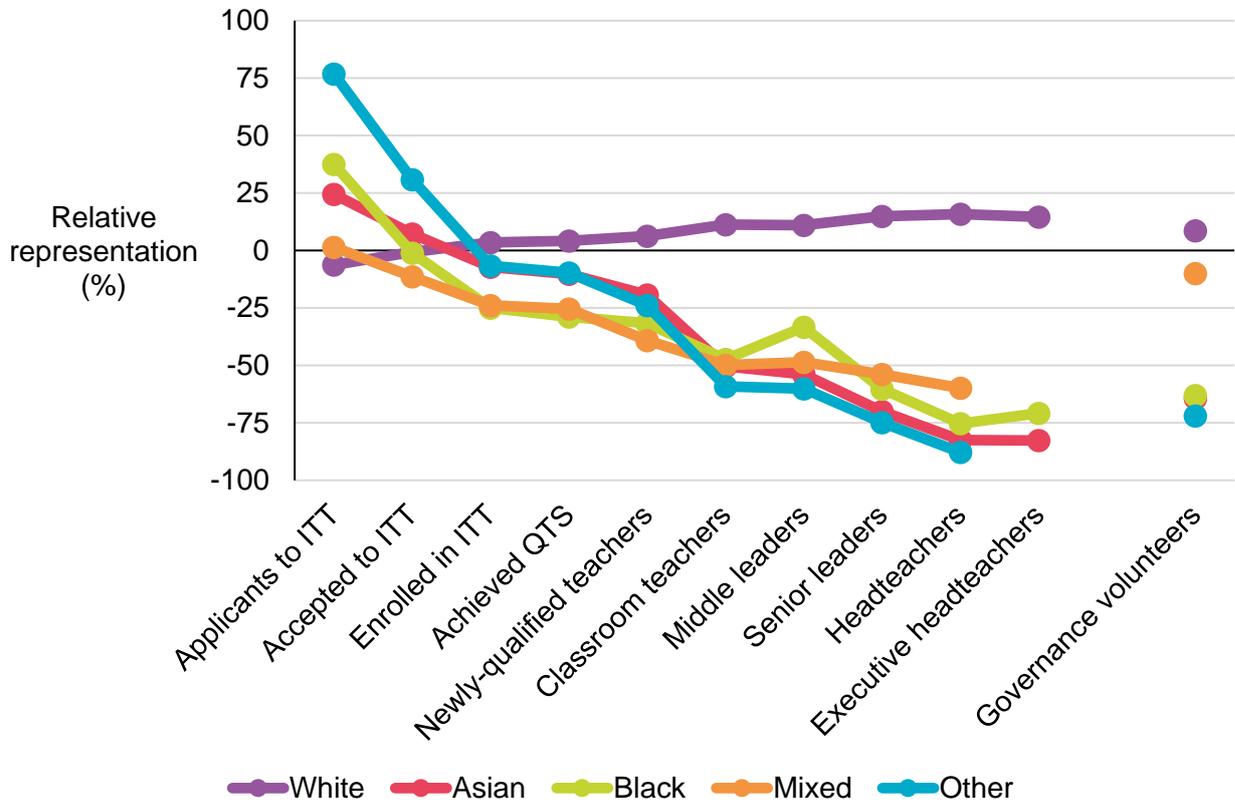
Figure 9 confirms that people from white ethnic backgrounds are under-represented among applicants to ITT and over-represented among those enrolled in an ITT course, achieve QTS, enter teaching and in higher leadership positions. Similarly, people from all other backgrounds are over-represented among applicants to ITT, and follow a similar pattern of increasing under-representation at subsequent stage of the teaching profession.

However, there are some differences between the groups. People from mixed ethnic backgrounds are less under-represented than people from Asian, black or other ethnic backgrounds, particularly among senior leaders and headteachers.

People from Asian and other ethnic backgrounds are particularly under-represented among middle/senior leaders, headteachers and executive headteachers, even though they are among the most over-represented groups among applicants to ITT. The sharpest drops in representation for people from these ethnic backgrounds (and broadly for the other minority ethnic groups) are between application to and enrolment in ITT, and between becoming a NQT and a classroom teacher. This could therefore point towards ITT and retention of NQTs as stages of the workforce in which differences in progression and retention rates may be significant drivers of under-representation. We explore these stages further in Sections 3, 5 and 7.

³¹ Representation of executive headteachers from other ethnic backgrounds is not reported due to the small sample size.

Figure 9: People from all ethnic groups other than white are over-represented in applications to ITT, but increasingly under-represented from ITT enrolment onwards



Source: NFER analysis of UCAS, TF, ITT-PP, SWC and NGA data for 2019/20.

2.11 Representation of smaller ethnic groups in teaching

So far we have focused on the representation of people from each of the major ethnic groups in teaching, but analysis at this level masks differences between groups within these large categories (for example, between people from Bangladeshi and Chinese backgrounds within the ‘Asian’ ethnic group). We therefore analyse the representation of the smaller ethnic groups that comprise the four major categories (white, Asian, black and mixed ethnicity) to explore this nuance, where sample sizes permit³².

2.11.1 Representation of different white ethnic groups in teaching

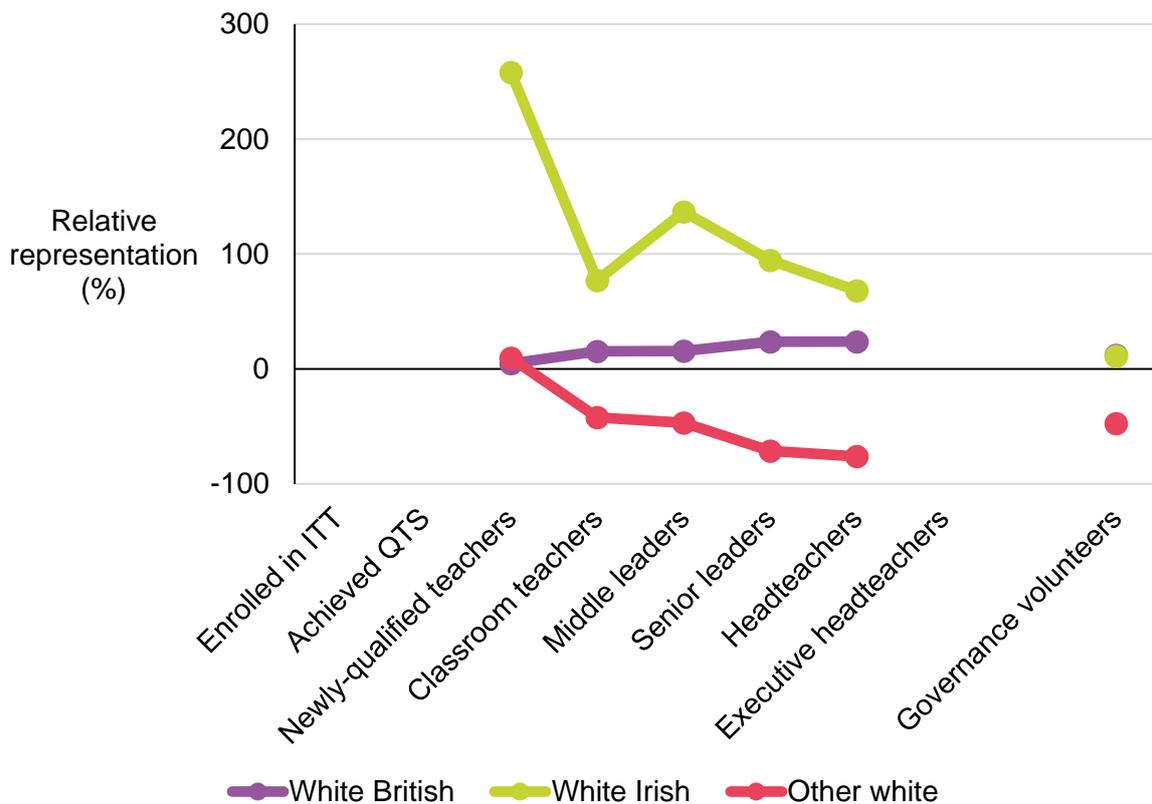
We analyse the representation of three ethnic groups within the white ethnic category: white British; white Irish; and other white.³³

³² We are unable to report representation for any of the ethnic minor groups among headteachers and executive headteachers due to small sample sizes.

³³ Sample sizes of people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller backgrounds were not sufficient to support meaningful comparisons. People from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller backgrounds were therefore considered to be people from ‘other white backgrounds’.

The representation of people from white British backgrounds in teaching is similar to the representation of people from white backgrounds as a whole, which is not surprising given that this group makes up the majority of the white ethnic group (for example, teachers from white British backgrounds make up 94 per cent of teachers in the white ethnic group)³⁴.

Figure 10: People from white Irish backgrounds are relatively over-represented in teaching, particularly at NQT stage, whereas people from other white backgrounds are under-represented at all stages from classroom teacher to headteacher



Source: NFER analysis of UCAS, TF, ITT-PP, SWC and NGA data for 2019/20.

There are considerable differences in representation of people from white Irish and other white backgrounds. People from white Irish backgrounds are over-represented at all stages from NQT to headship, but particularly among NQTs (by 258 per cent). They are also over-represented among governance volunteers, but to a lesser extent (11 per cent).

People from other white ethnic backgrounds are over-represented among NQTs (by ten per cent) but relatively under-represented at all subsequent stages. They are under-represented among classroom teachers and senior leaders (by 42 and 47 per cent respectively) and particularly among headteachers (by 76 per cent). They are also under-represented among governance volunteers (by 48 per cent).

³⁴ Note that the first two data points are missing from this and other similar figures because the white British group was not consistently recorded in the ITT-PP data.

2.11.2 Representation of different Asian groups in teaching

We are able to examine the representation in teaching of people from five Asian backgrounds, namely: Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese and any other Asian background.

Similarly to representation for the Asian group as a whole, people from each of these individual Asian backgrounds tend to show decreasing representation from ITT enrolment to headteacher. However, there are distinct differences between the groups.

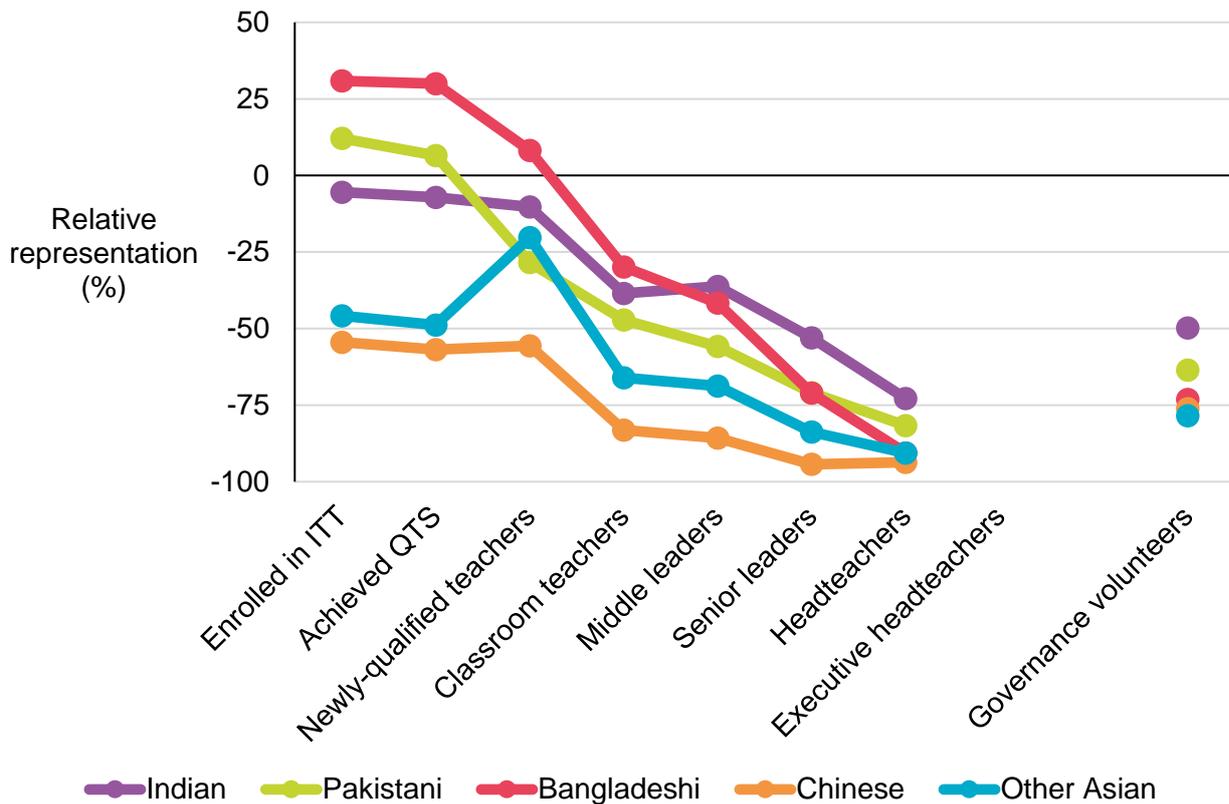
People from both Bangladeshi and Pakistani ethnic backgrounds are over-represented at enrolment to ITT (by 31 and 12 per cent respectively) and among those who achieve QTS. Among NQTs, however, people from Bangladeshi backgrounds are still over-represented (by eight per cent), whereas people from Pakistani backgrounds are under-represented among NQTs (by 28 per cent).

Representation of people from both Bangladeshi and Pakistani backgrounds is lower at all stages from QTS onwards. The representation of people from Bangladeshi backgrounds drops most steeply of any of the Asian groups from middle leadership to headteacher level (where they are 91 per cent under-represented). Both groups are also considerably under-represented among governance volunteers (by 64 per cent for people from Pakistani backgrounds and 73 per cent for people from Bangladeshi backgrounds).

People from Indian ethnic backgrounds show a particular drop in representation at the stage of progression from NQT to classroom teacher, which points to this as a key stage for driving under-representation at leadership level. They are under-represented by 73 per cent among headteachers. They are also under-represented among governance volunteers, by 50 per cent.

People from Chinese ethnic backgrounds have the greatest under-representation within the larger Asian ethnic group at all stages. Their representation at ITT enrolment stage is particularly low, and there is a drop in representation between NQT and classroom teacher stages, which suggests that these are drivers of their under-representation among headteachers (94 per cent). They are also under-represented among governance volunteers, by 76 per cent.

Figure 11: The representation of different Asian ethnic groups tends to show a similar downwards trajectory from ITT enrolment to headteacher, but there are distinct differences between the groups



Source: NFER analysis of UCAS, TF, ITT-PP, SWC and NGA data for 2019/20

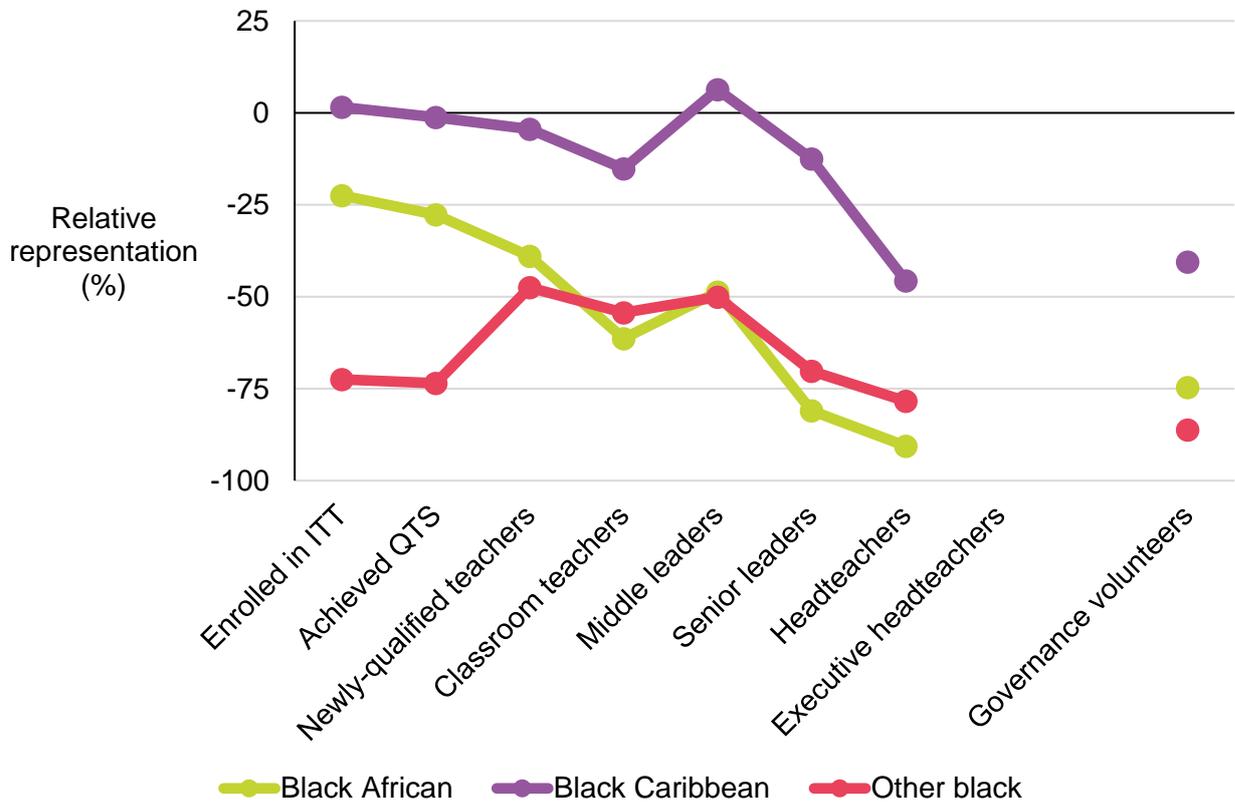
People from other Asian ethnic backgrounds are considerably under-represented at all stages from ITT enrolment to headteacher. Following a low representation at enrolment to ITT, there is a particular drop in representation between NQT and classroom teacher, which points to ITT enrolment and the early years of teaching as particular drivers for their under-representation at headteacher level. Their under-representation among headteachers (91 per cent) is similar to that of people from Chinese ethnic backgrounds, as is their under-representation among governance volunteers (78 per cent).

2.11.3 Representation of different black ethnic groups in teaching

We are able to examine the representation in teaching of three black ethnic groups: Caribbean, African and any other black background, from enrolment in ITT to headteacher³⁵.

³⁵ We are unable to report representation for executive headteachers due to the small sample sizes.

Figure 12: People from black African and other black ethnic groups are under-represented at all stages from ITT onwards, whereas people from black Caribbean backgrounds are slightly over-represented at ITT enrolment and middle leadership stages



Source: NFER analysis of UCAS, TF, ITT-PP, SWC and NGA data for 2019/20.

The three groups within the larger black ethnic group have distinctive patterns of representation at different stages of the teaching profession.

Graduates from black Caribbean backgrounds are slightly over-represented among trainees who enrol in ITT (by two per cent) and slightly under-represented among those who achieve QTS (by one per cent). People from black Caribbean backgrounds are also under-represented among NQTs (by four per cent) and classroom teachers (by 15 per cent). However, people from black Caribbean backgrounds are over-represented by six per cent among middle leaders, which breaks the trend of falling representation for people from black Caribbean backgrounds in higher leadership positions. The representation analysis in this section does not provide a clear reason as to why this would be the case, but it does suggest that promotion rates to middle leadership for teachers from black Caribbean backgrounds may be higher than teachers from other ethnic backgrounds. This is investigated further in Section 3 and Section 7.

The over-representation of middle leaders from black Caribbean backgrounds does not, however, translate into over-representation among senior leaders and headteachers. People from black Caribbean backgrounds are under-represented among senior leaders (by 13 per cent), among headteachers (by 46 per cent) and among governance volunteers (by 40 per cent).

People from black African ethnic backgrounds are under-represented at ITT enrolment stage by 22 per cent and are more under-represented than people from black Caribbean backgrounds throughout the teacher workforce. Similarly to people from black Caribbean backgrounds, people from black African backgrounds are less under-represented among middle leaders than classroom teachers, which could suggest they are more likely to be promoted to middle leadership than their white counterparts (we investigate this further in Sections 3 and 7).

People from black African backgrounds are the most under-represented at senior leader and headteacher levels, where they are under-represented by 81 and 91 per cent respectively. People from black African ethnic backgrounds are also substantially under-represented among governance volunteers, by 75 per cent.

2.11.4 Representation of people from different mixed ethnic backgrounds in teaching

We were able to examine the representation in teaching of four groups of people from mixed ethnic backgrounds: white and black Caribbean; white and Asian; white and black African; and other mixed ethnicity from ITT enrolment to headteacher³⁶.

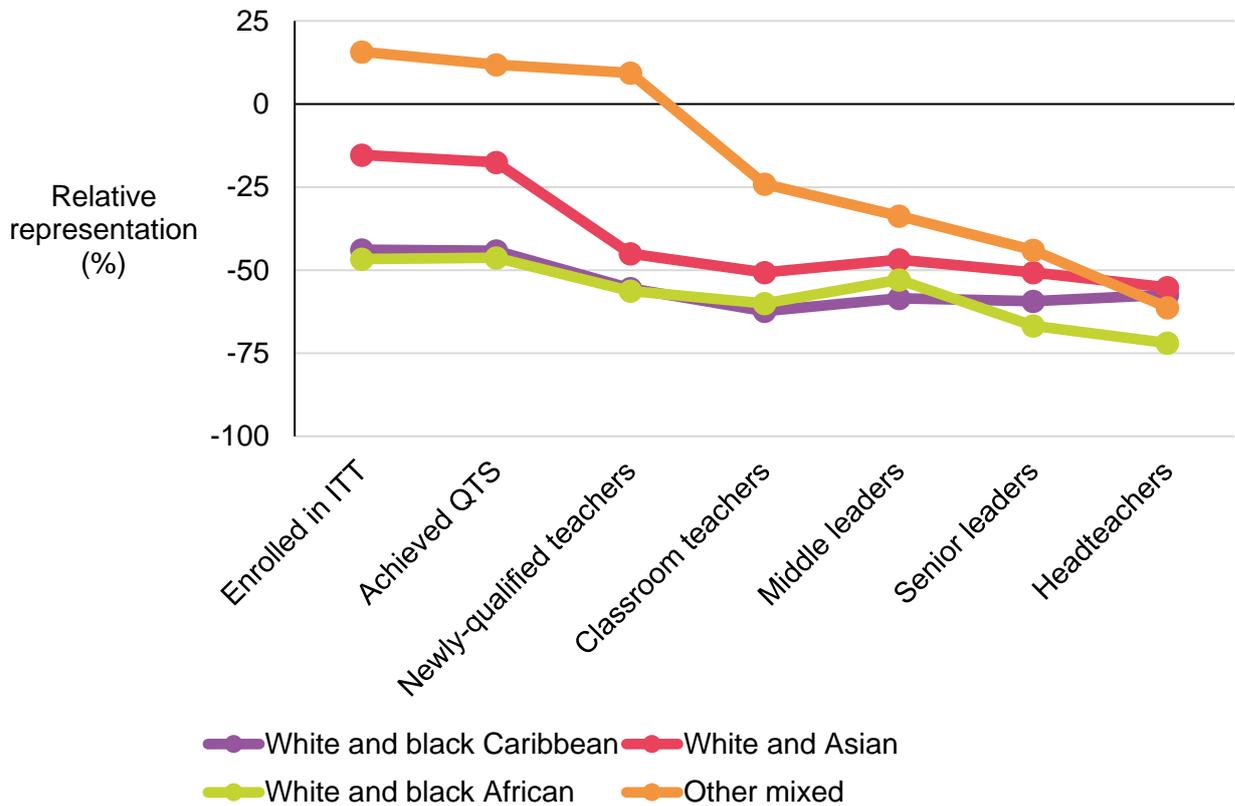
People from all mixed ethnic backgrounds show a similar drop in representation from ITT to headteacher levels, though from different starting points.

People from white and Asian mixed ethnic backgrounds are under-represented at ITT enrolment by 15 per cent and considerably more under-represented among NQTs (by 45 per cent). People from white and Asian mixed ethnic backgrounds are similarly under-represented among classroom teachers, middle/senior leaders and headteachers, which points to ITT and entry into teaching as potential drivers of under-representation at more senior leadership levels.

People from other mixed ethnic backgrounds are over-represented at ITT enrolment by 16 per cent and continue to be over-represented among those who achieve QTS and NQTs (by 12 and nine per cent, respectively). However, people from other mixed ethnic backgrounds are under-represented among classroom teachers by 24 per cent, and among headteachers (61 per cent), which similarly points to entry into teaching as a potential driver of under-representation.

³⁶ We are unable to report representation among executive headteachers or governance volunteers due to the small sample sizes.

Figure 13: People from different mixed ethnic backgrounds show a similar fall in representation from ITT enrolment to headteacher, although those from other mixed backgrounds are over-represented at ITT enrolment, QTS and NQT stages



Source: NFER analysis of UCAS, TF, ITT-PP, SWC and NGA data for 2019/20.

People from mixed white and black Caribbean and mixed white and black African ethnic backgrounds have the greatest under-representation among the mixed ethnic groups. However, the pattern is different than for people from mixed white and Asian and other mixed ethnic groups. People from white and black Caribbean and white and black African backgrounds are fairly evenly under-represented across the profession, including at enrolment to ITT, where under-representation for people from white and black Caribbean and white and black African backgrounds is significantly more pronounced than the other mixed ethnic groups.

Under-representation of people from these backgrounds does not appear to change significantly across the profession, which leads to people from black Caribbean and black African backgrounds being among the most under-represented of all the mixed ethnic groups.

2.11.5 Representation of teachers from different ethnic groups by subject areas

In addition to analysing representation in each career stage, we investigate whether there are any significant differences by subject in the representation of teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds.

Figure 14: Teachers from all ethnic backgrounds other than white are under-represented in primary teaching and most subjects, although teachers from Asian and black backgrounds are over-represented in maths

Subject	Representation (%)				
	White	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Primary	13	-58	-64	-55	-72
Sciences	< 1	10	1	-39	-20
Mathematics	-5	33	40	-43	5
English	9	-41	-36	-37	-56
Modern foreign languages	11	-75	-47	-22	90
History	15	-72	-67	-44	-65
Geography	16	-72	-71	-59	-77
Art & design, music, drama	16	-83	-55	-40	-73
Design and technology	5	-29	25	-54	-54
Physical education	16	-88	-57	-40	-82
Other subjects	2	-6	11	-40	-35

Notes: Positive numbers highlighted in blue indicate over-representation. Negative numbers highlighted in red indicate under-representation.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2019/20.

Teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are considerably under-represented in primary teaching and in most subjects. The main exceptions to this are that teachers from Asian, black and other backgrounds are over-represented in maths; teachers from Asian backgrounds are over-represented in science and teachers from black backgrounds are over-represented in design and technology. In addition, teachers from other ethnic backgrounds are considerably over-represented in modern foreign languages (possible explanations for this is that they may have moved to England from abroad to teach languages or were raised in England within bi/multi-lingual families).

3 Overview of progression and retention of teachers from different ethnic backgrounds in the teaching profession

- Before controlling for other characteristics (such as region, ITT route and phase) people from white ethnic backgrounds are more likely than people from other ethnic backgrounds to progress³⁷ from each stage of the teaching profession to the next, apart from progression to middle leadership.
- The gap in progression rates between people from white backgrounds and each of the other ethnic groups is largest at acceptance to postgraduate initial teacher training. This means that applicants from white ethnic backgrounds are more likely to be successful in securing a training place than applicants from all other ethnic backgrounds.
- Compared with people from white ethnic backgrounds, people from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are less likely to achieve qualified teacher status, enter or stay in teaching.
- Promotion rates to senior leadership and headship are also lower for leaders from Asian, black and other ethnic backgrounds than for their white counterparts.
- Gaps in progression rates are largest in the early career stages, which suggests that these are a potential driver for the under-representation of people from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds at later career stages.

3.1 Introduction

Section 2 shows that all ethnic groups other than the white group are under-represented as classroom teachers, middle and senior leaders, headteachers and governance volunteers. While useful to demonstrate how ethnic groups are currently represented in teaching, this conveys little information about why these ethnic groups are under-represented at these stages, as under-representation may be a reflection of lack of diversity in the workforce from previous decades.

This section seeks to determine whether, using the most recent available data, ethnicity appears to play a role in the likelihood of people from different ethnic backgrounds progressing through the profession. We first provide an overview of progression and retention rates for each ethnic group, compared to teachers from white ethnic backgrounds. We then compare gaps in progression and retention rates across the profession, to determine where they are the largest and the smallest. This could help inform an understanding of where progression rate gaps are the largest and require particular attention.

3.2 Methodology and limitations

3.2.1 Methodology

We use the general term ‘progression’ in this section to refer to the probability of people moving from one stage of the teacher career pipeline to the next. However, progression has a slightly

³⁷ Progression means that people at one stage of the teaching profession move to the next stage within the profession (e.g. an applicant to ITT is accepted onto a course, a newly-qualified teacher enters teaching, or a senior leader is promoted to headship).

different meaning within each stage of the workforce (e.g. an ITT applicant ‘progresses’ by having their application accepted, while a middle leader ‘progresses’ by being promoted to senior leadership). Detailed definitions of the progression outcomes specific to each career stage are discussed in Section 1.4.

To enable comparisons across the workforce, we calculate progression rates for people from different ethnic backgrounds compared to their white counterparts as an ‘odds ratios’, which are plotted in the key charts for this section. (See Section 1.4.3 for an explanation of the rationale for selecting this measure.) An odds ratio greater than one indicates that teachers from a particular ethnic group are more likely than teachers from white ethnic backgrounds to progress to the next career stage, while an odds ratio less than one indicates that teachers from that ethnic group are less likely to progress. Estimates of the odds ratio are statistically significant where the confidence interval (represented by vertical bars on the plot) does not cross the horizontal axis³⁸.

3.2.2 Limitations

Although smaller³⁹ ethnic groups are recorded within the ITT-PP and SWC datasets, some of the sample sizes are too small to analyse meaningfully so we do not present estimates where this is the case.

In addition, the smaller ethnic groups within the white group as a whole were defined differently in the ITT-PP data than in the SWC. Due to this inconsistency, we do not report QTS achievement rates and entry into teaching rates for the smaller ethnic groups.

3.3 Progression in teaching for people from Asian ethnic backgrounds

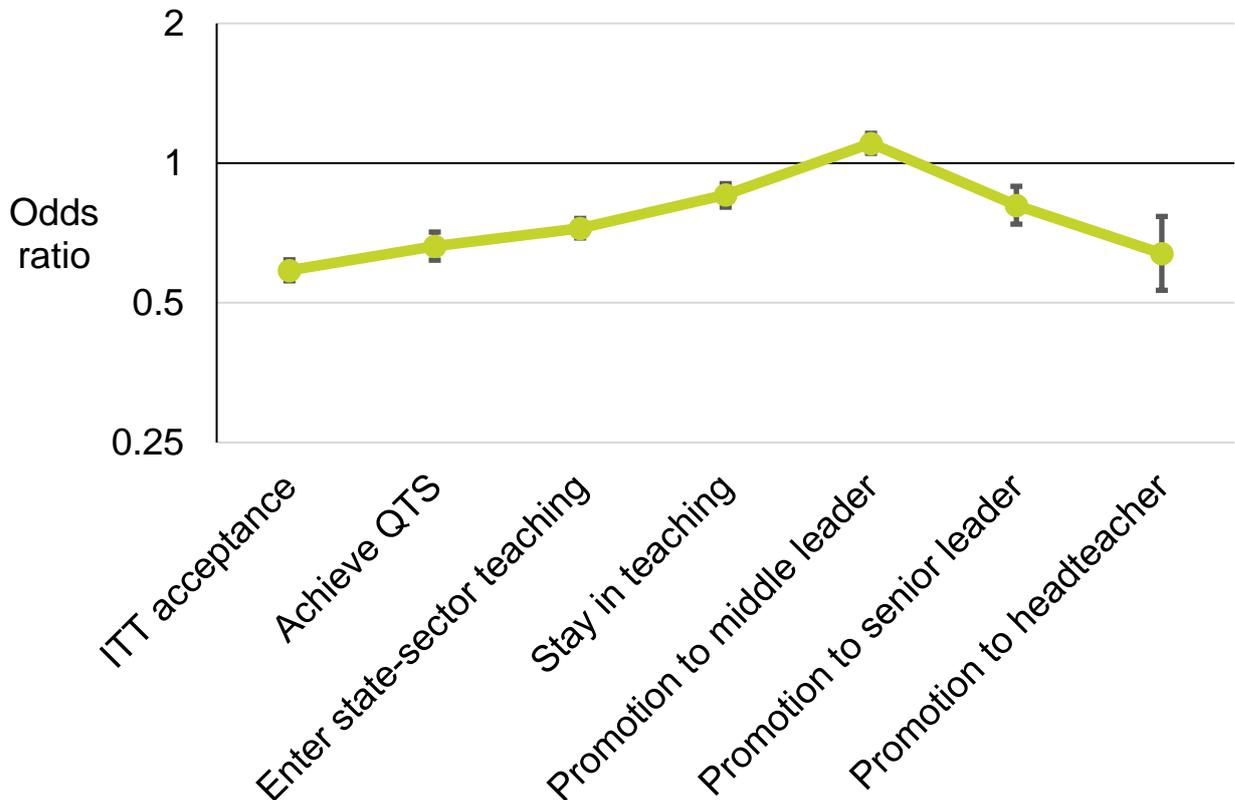
Looking first at progression within teaching among people from Asian ethnic backgrounds, we can see that, across the profession, they are generally less likely to progress in teaching, compared to people from white ethnic backgrounds. This is particularly evident in the early career stages, where applicants from Asian backgrounds are much less likely to be accepted to an ITT course or to achieve QTS than their white counterparts.

The following charts use odds ratios to show the likelihood of people from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic groups moving to the next stage of the profession, compared with people from white ethnic backgrounds

³⁸ Confidence intervals are not plotted for the smaller ethnic groups as multiple ethnic groups are plotted at each career stage.

³⁹ Smaller ethnic groups are also referred to as ‘minor’ ethnic groups in official statistics.

Figure 15: People from Asian backgrounds are less likely to enter teaching and progress to the next stage of teaching than their counterparts from white ethnic backgrounds apart from middle leadership, where their likelihood of promotion is slightly higher



Note: The vertical bars above and below each point correspond to the confidence interval. The estimate is not statistically significant where the bars cross the horizontal axis.

Source: NFER analysis of UCAS, TF, ITT-PP and SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

Teachers from Asian ethnic backgrounds are less likely to stay in teaching compared to their white counterparts, but this difference is relatively small compared to the earlier stages of ITT acceptance, achieving QTS and entry into teaching. Classroom teachers from Asian backgrounds are slightly more likely to be promoted to middle leadership than their white counterparts. However, this difference is largely driven by the regions and types of school in which they teach (see Section 6 for further details).

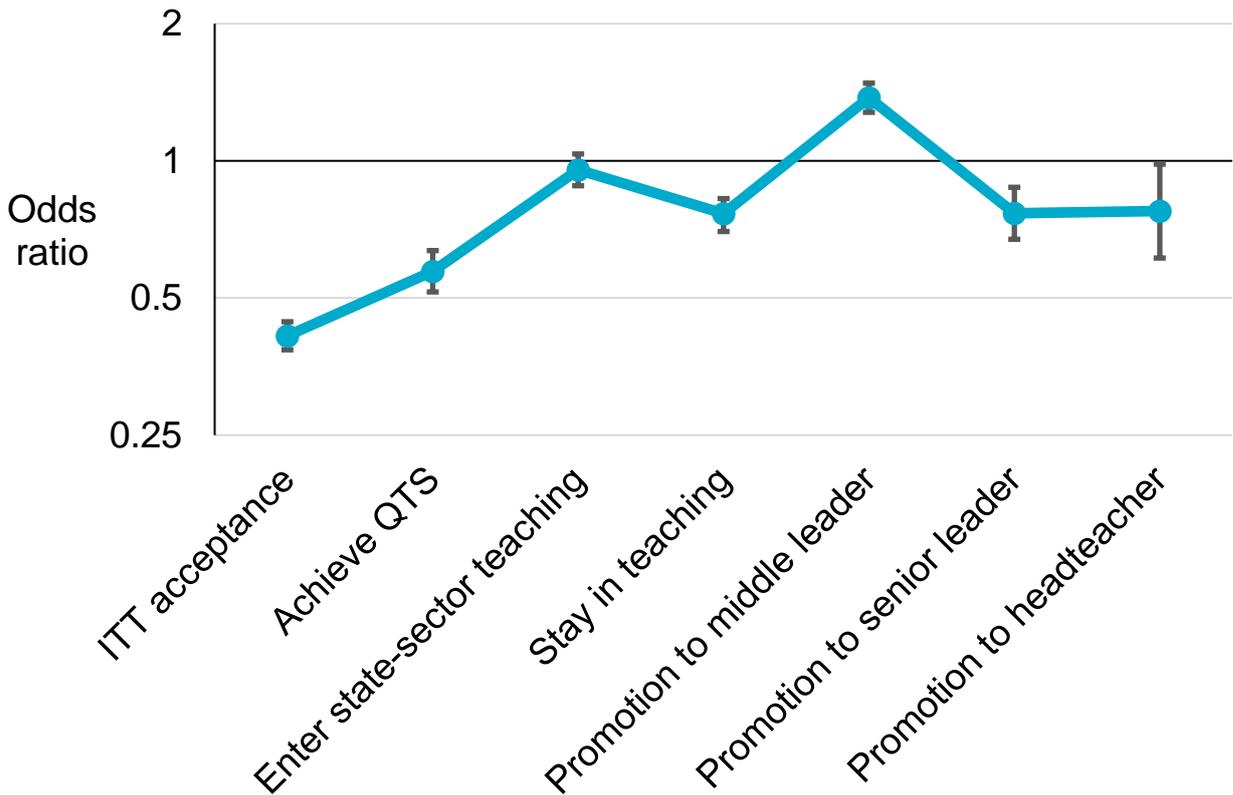
Middle leaders from Asian backgrounds are less likely to be promoted to senior leadership than their white counterparts. Similarly, senior leaders from Asian backgrounds are also less likely to be promoted to headship than their white counterparts.

3.4 Progression in teaching for people from black ethnic backgrounds

People from black ethnic backgrounds are less likely to progress in teaching than teachers from white ethnic backgrounds at all stages apart from promotion to middle leadership. The gaps are particularly large in the ITT stages, where applicants from black ethnic backgrounds are

substantially less likely to be accepted onto an ITT course or to achieve QTS than their white counterparts.

Figure 16: People from black backgrounds are less likely to be accepted onto an ITT course, gain QTS and progress to senior leadership and headship than their white counterparts



Note: The vertical bars above and below each point correspond to the confidence interval. The estimate is not statistically significant where the bars cross the horizontal axis.

Source: NFER analysis of UCAS, TF, ITT-PP and SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

Middle and senior leaders from black ethnic backgrounds are less likely than their white counterparts to be promoted to senior leadership and headship. However, as we discuss in Section 9, the difference in progression to headship is mostly driven by teacher and school characteristics. After accounting for these differences, progression rates to headship are roughly equal for senior leaders from black and white ethnic backgrounds.

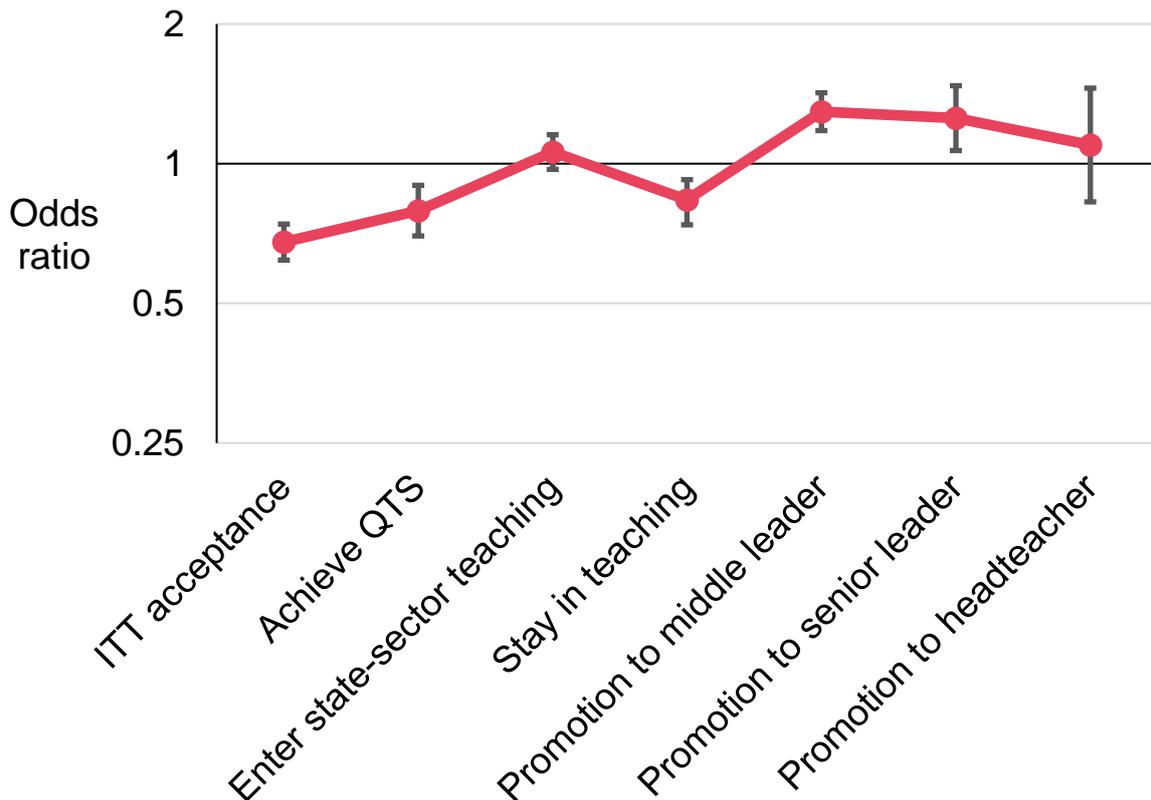
Classroom teachers from black backgrounds are more likely to be promoted into middle leadership than teachers from white backgrounds, but this is driven by the regions and types of schools in which teachers from black backgrounds tend to teach (see Section 6 for further details).

3.5 Progression in teaching for people from mixed ethnic backgrounds

The likelihood of progression in teaching for people from mixed ethnic backgrounds appears to be slightly different from the other ethnic groups, particularly at more senior levels. While the likelihood of being accepted onto ITT for applicants from mixed ethnic backgrounds is lower than their white

counterparts, the size of this gap is considerably smaller than for applicants from black ethnic backgrounds (although it is similar to that of ITT applicants from Asian backgrounds).

Figure 17: People from mixed ethnic backgrounds are less likely to be accepted onto ITT or gain QTS, but slightly more likely to be promoted to middle and senior leadership than their white counterparts



Note: The vertical bars above and below each point correspond to the confidence interval. The estimate is not statistically significant where the bars cross the horizontal axis.

Source: NFER analysis of UCAS, TF, ITT-PP and SWC data 2015/16 – 2020/21.

The likelihood of teacher trainees from mixed ethnic backgrounds achieving QTS is lower than that of people from white ethnic backgrounds, although this gap is comparatively smaller than for trainees from Asian and black ethnic groups. The likelihood of NQTs from mixed ethnic backgrounds entering state-sector teaching in England is slightly higher than their white counterparts, though not significantly so.

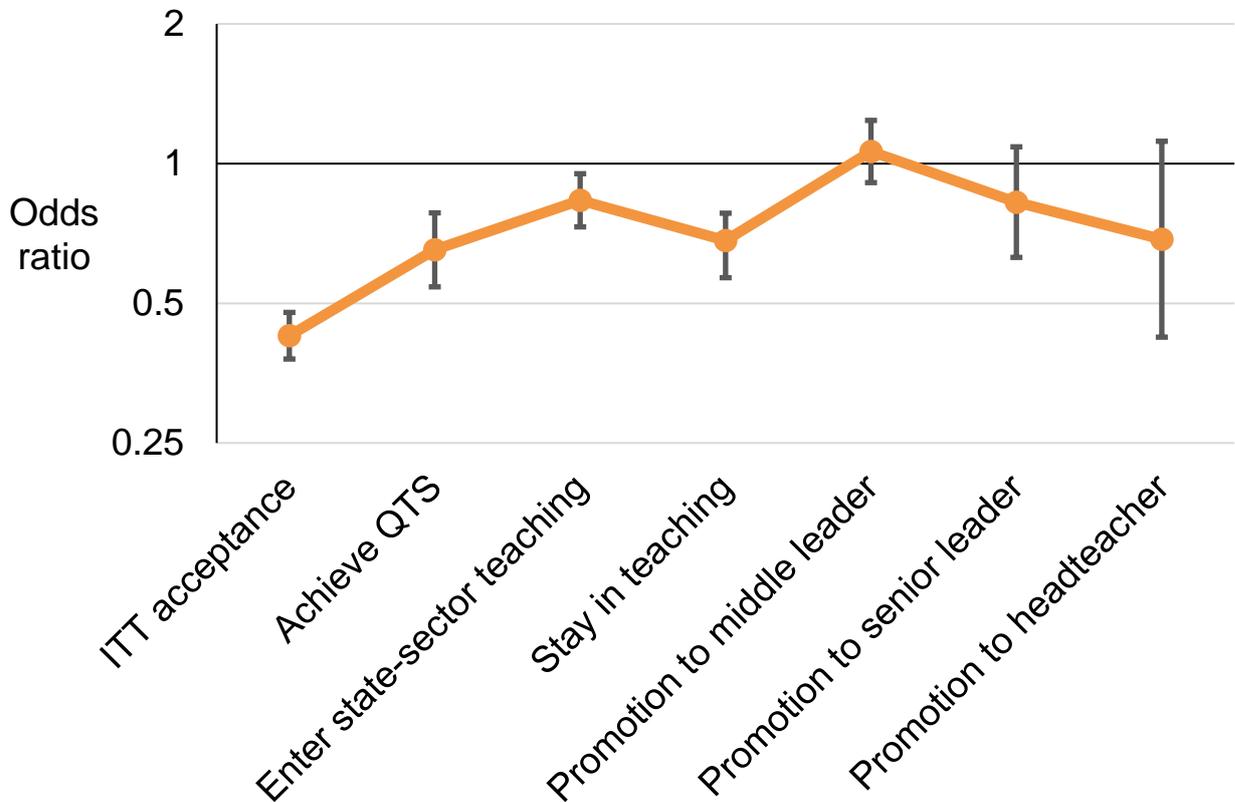
As with teachers from Asian and black backgrounds, people from mixed ethnic backgrounds are less likely than their white counterparts to stay in teaching and more likely to be promoted to middle leadership. Unlike teachers from Asian and black ethnic backgrounds, they are more likely than their white counterparts to be promoted to senior leadership posts. However, their greater likelihood of promotion to middle and senior leadership is driven by differences in teacher and school characteristics, as we show in Sections 7 and 8.

Senior leaders from mixed ethnic backgrounds are slightly more likely to be promoted to headship than their white counterparts, but this difference is not statistically significant.

3.6 Progression in teaching for people from other ethnic minority backgrounds

The biggest disparities in progression between people from other ethnic minority backgrounds and their white counterparts take place in the earliest career stages, particularly in acceptance onto ITT. This is similar to the pattern for people from Asian, black and mixed ethnic backgrounds.

Figure 18: People from other ethnic minority backgrounds are less likely to be accepted onto ITT, gain QTS or enter and stay in teaching than their white counterparts



Note: The vertical bars above and below each point correspond to the confidence interval. The estimate is not statistically significant where the bars cross the horizontal axis.

Source: NFER analysis of UCAS, TF, ITT-PP and SWC data 2015/16 – 2020/21.

People from other ethnic minority backgrounds are significantly less likely to be accepted onto an ITT course, less likely to achieve QTS, less likely to enter state-sector teaching and less likely to stay in teaching than their white counterparts.

Classroom teachers from other ethnic minority backgrounds are slightly more likely to be promoted to middle leadership than their white counterparts. However, after accounting for differences in characteristics, such as region and phase, we find teachers from other ethnic minority backgrounds

are significantly less likely to progress into middle leadership than teachers from white ethnic backgrounds (see Section 7).

3.7 Progression in teaching for smaller ethnic groups

In this section we look at whether the key findings from our analysis of progression rates in each of the large ethnic groups holds true for the smaller ethnic groups within them.

We find that although there are similarities, there is considerable variation in the size of progression rate gaps for people in the smaller ethnic groups, compared to people from white British backgrounds.

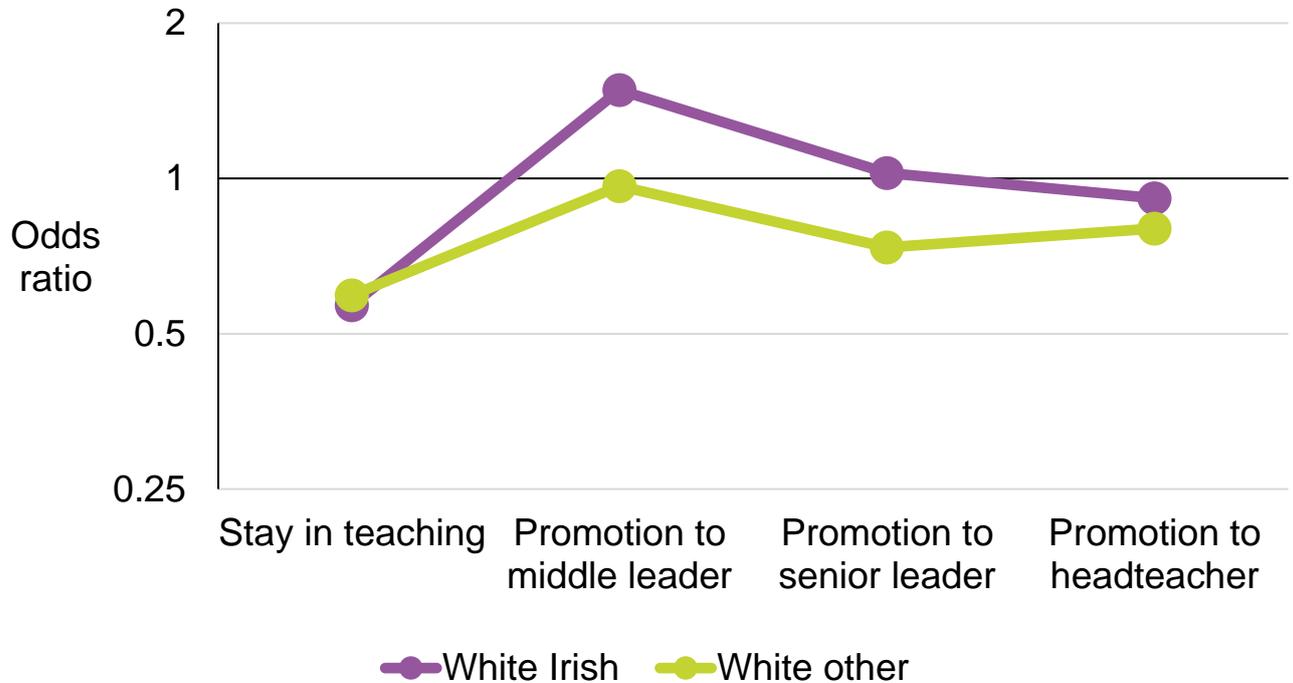
As highlighted in Section 1, we are not able to identify these smaller ethnic groups in the UCAS/TF data, and there are inconsistencies in how white minority groups are recorded in the ITT-PP data. Therefore we are not able to report findings for application and acceptance to ITT, achieving QTS or entry into teaching for any of the smaller ethnic groups.

3.7.1 Progression in teaching for white ethnic groups

Teachers from white Irish and other white backgrounds are less likely to stay in the profession than teachers from white British backgrounds but their likelihood of promotion to middle leadership is greater than their counterparts from white British backgrounds.

People from other white ethnic backgrounds have a lower likelihood of staying in teaching than teachers from white British backgrounds. They are about equally likely to be promoted to middle leadership as teachers from white British backgrounds, though less likely to be promoted to senior leadership and headship.

Figure 19: Teachers from white Irish and other white backgrounds are less likely to stay in teaching than their white British counterparts



Source: NFER analysis of UCAS, TF, ITT-PP and SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

3.7.2 Progression in teaching for Asian ethnic groups

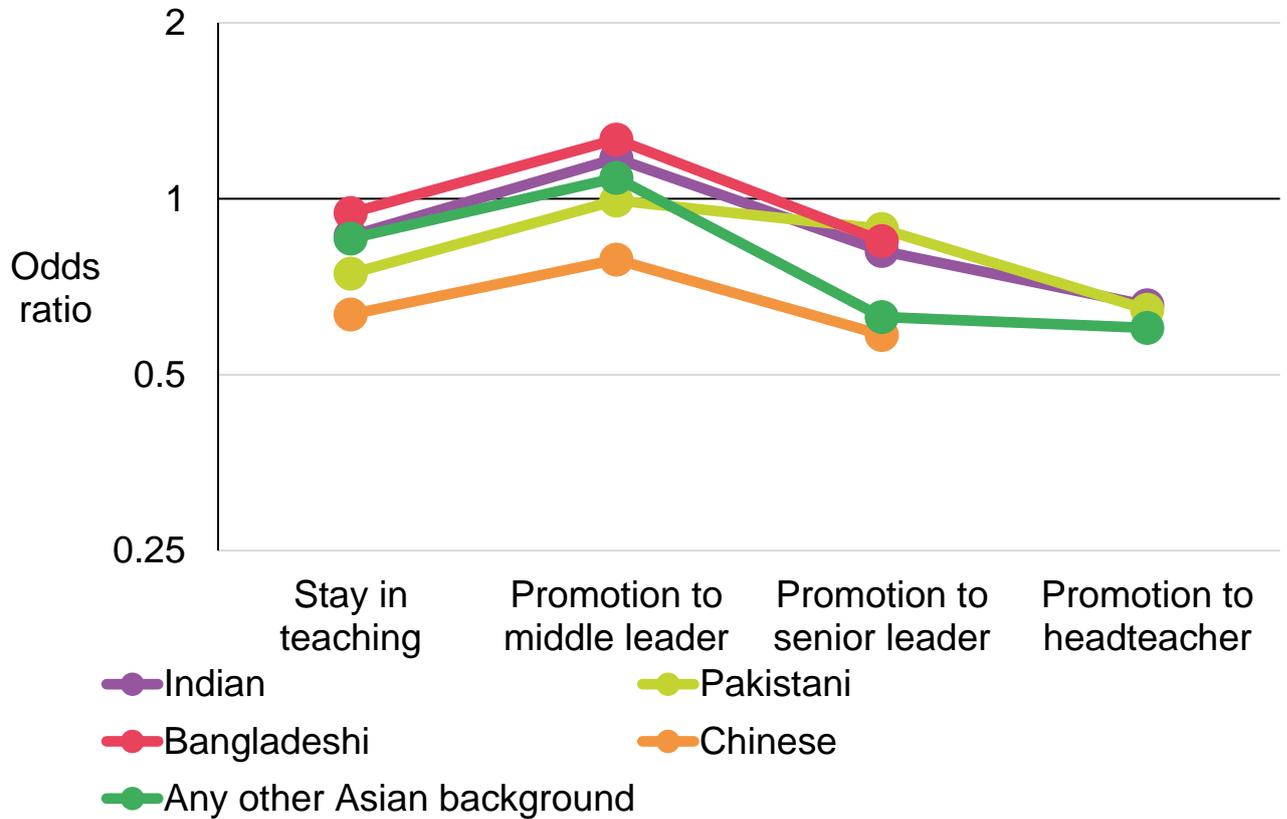
People from all five Asian groups are less likely to remain in teaching, and progress to senior leadership and headship than people from white British backgrounds⁴⁰. Gaps are relatively smaller for people from Bangladeshi, Indian and other Asian groups and larger for teachers from Pakistani and Chinese backgrounds, compared to their white British counterparts.

Middle leaders from all five Asian groups are less likely than those from white British backgrounds to progress to senior leadership, and this gap is largest for middle leaders from Chinese backgrounds. Senior leaders from Pakistani, Indian and other Asian backgrounds are also less likely to progress to headship than their white British counterparts⁴¹.

⁴⁰ Using the white British group as the comparator changes the picture from the previous comparisons between the larger (major) ethnic groups because people from white British backgrounds have slightly different rates of progression than the white ethnic group as a whole.

⁴¹ Promotion to headship for senior leaders from Bangladeshi and Chinese ethnic backgrounds is not reported as sample sizes are too small.

Figure 20: People from different Asian backgrounds show similar patterns of progression in teaching with a few notable differences

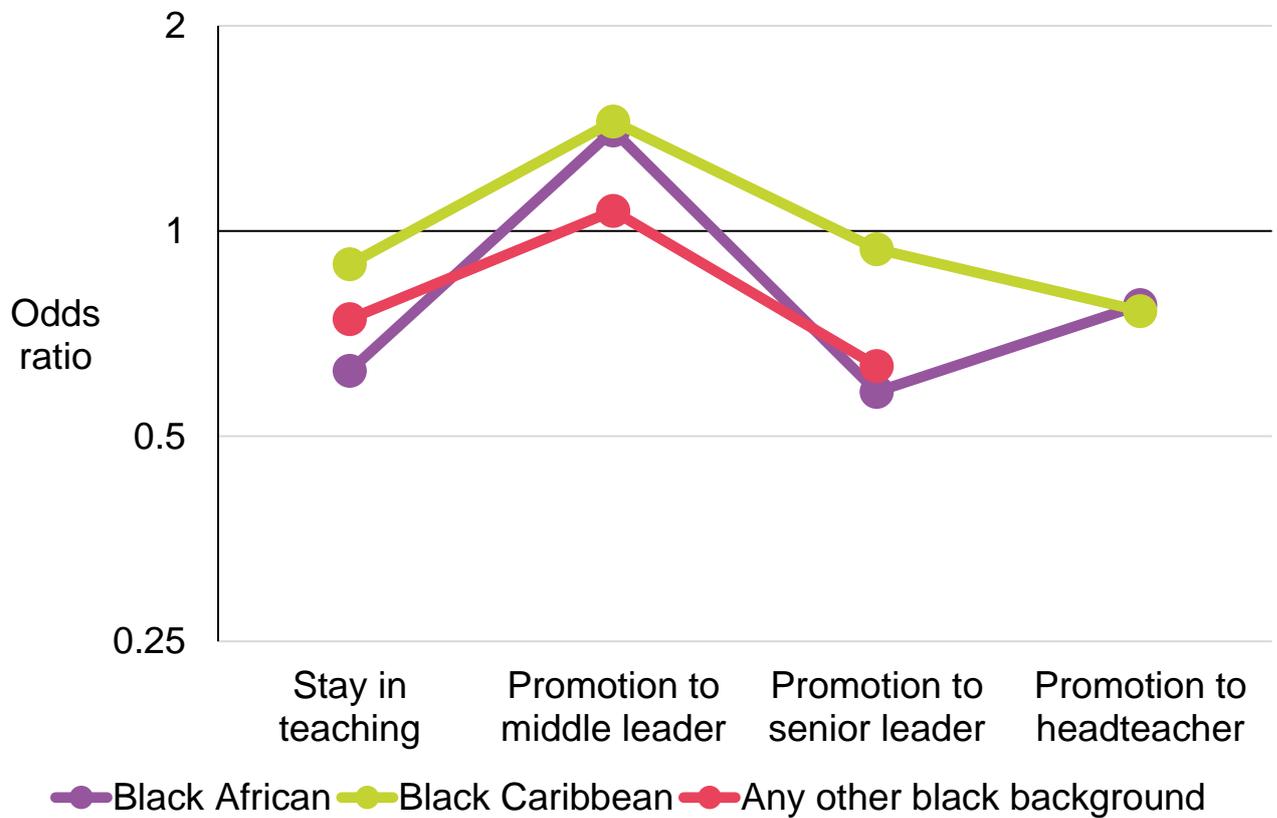


Source: NFER analysis of UCAS, TF, ITT-PP and SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

3.7.3 Progression in teaching for black ethnic groups

While the progression of people from black African, black Caribbean and other black backgrounds is broadly similar, there are some differences between them.

Figure 21: People from different black ethnic backgrounds have broadly similar patterns of progression in teaching



Source: NFER analysis of UCAS, TF, ITT-PP and SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

People from black African, black Caribbean and other black backgrounds are less likely than their counterparts from white British backgrounds to stay in teaching. These gaps are largest for people from black African backgrounds and smallest for people from black Caribbean backgrounds.

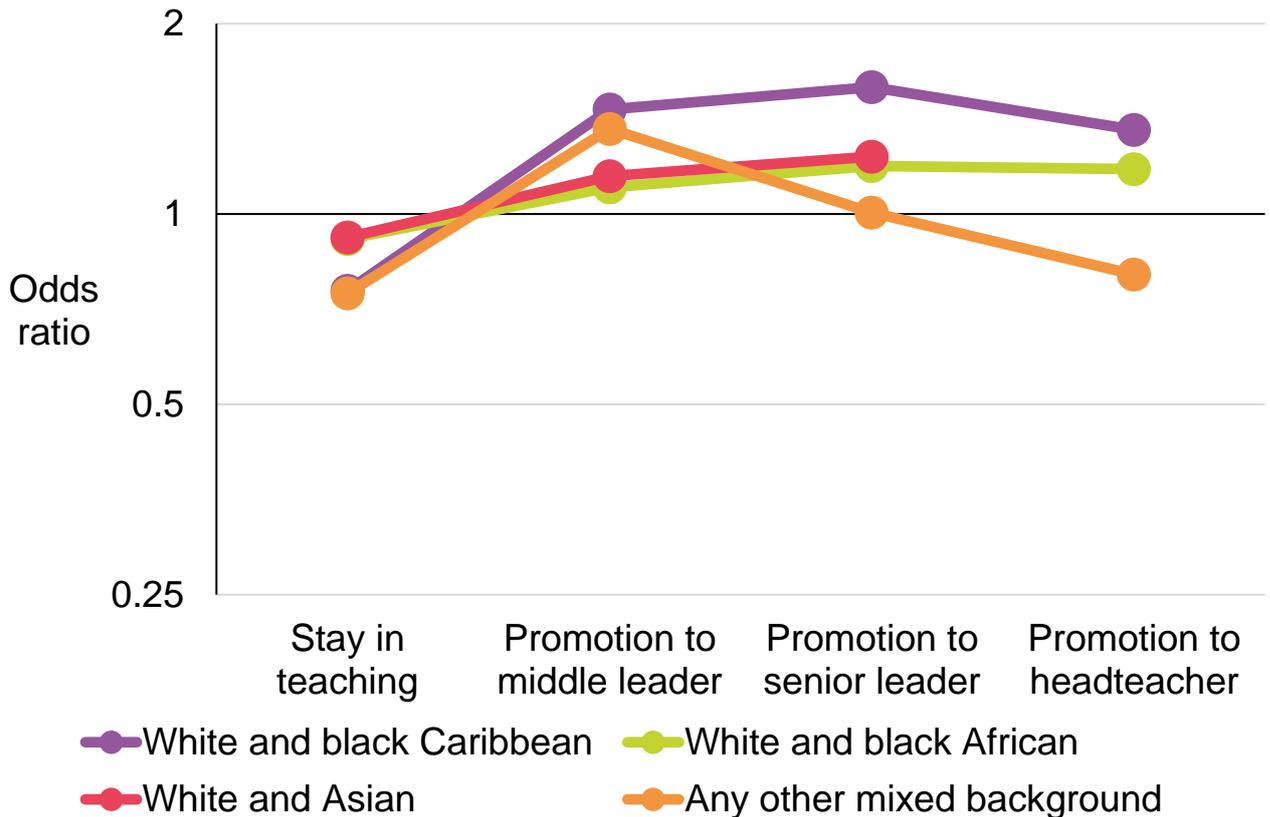
Teachers from black African, black Caribbean and other black backgrounds are all more likely than their white British counterparts to be promoted to middle leadership, though less likely to be promoted to senior leadership and headship (with the largest gap for promotion to senior leadership for middle leaders from black African backgrounds).

3.7.4 Progression in teaching for people from mixed ethnic groups

The progression of people in each of the smaller mixed ethnic groups is similar to the mixed ethnic group as a whole. People from each of the four mixed ethnic groups are less likely to stay in state-sector teaching than people from white British backgrounds. Similarly, all are more likely than their white British counterparts to be promoted to middle and senior leadership and headship, with the

exception of senior leaders from other mixed backgrounds, who are less likely to be promoted to headship⁴² than their white British counterparts.

Figure 22: People from most mixed ethnic backgrounds are less likely to stay in teaching, but more likely to be promoted to middle and senior leadership their white British counterparts



Source: NFER analysis of UCAS, TF, ITT-PP and SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

⁴² We are not able to report findings for the progression of senior leaders from mixed white and Asian backgrounds to headship, due to small sample sizes.

4 Acceptance onto initial teacher training

- People from Asian, black and other ethnic backgrounds are over-represented among applicants to postgraduate initial teacher training (ITT), indicating a high interest in teaching.
- Two thirds (66 per cent) of people from white ethnic backgrounds have their applications accepted. Acceptance rates are substantially lower for all other ethnic groups: 57 per cent for applicants from mixed ethnic backgrounds; 53 per cent for applicants from Asian ethnic backgrounds; and 45 per cent for applicants from black and other ethnic groups.
- The combination of higher application rates and lower acceptance rates means that successful applicants from Asian, black and other ethnic groups are more representative of the wider population (although applicants from mixed ethnic backgrounds are under-represented at ITT acceptance stage).
- Postgraduate ITT acceptance rate gaps between Asian and white ethnic groups, and black and white ethnic groups were larger in 2013/14 and narrowed significantly by 2019/20, particularly for applicants from black ethnic backgrounds. This suggests there has been an improvement in progression for these groups over time.
- There is some regional variation in acceptance rate gaps. Gaps are smaller for all ethnic minority groups compared to their white counterparts in London than they are nationally. Conversely, the gap is larger for people from black ethnic backgrounds compared with their white counterparts in the South East of England than it is nationally.
- There is also variation in acceptance rate gaps by ITT route. Gaps are smaller for applicants from black, mixed and other ethnic groups compared to their white counterparts applying to Teach First than they are nationally. However, gaps in ITT acceptance rates are larger for people from all ethnic groups compared with their white counterparts for the School Direct fee-paying route than they are nationally.
- Differences in age, phase and route explain some of the postgraduate ITT acceptance gaps between ethnic groups, but the lower acceptance rates for people from ethnic minority groups compared with their white counterparts remain significant and largely unexplained by the personal and ITT characteristics available in the data.

4.1 Introduction

This section focuses on the very first stage of the teacher workforce, of entry to ITT. We explore whether the probability of acceptance onto a postgraduate ITT course differs for applicants from different ethnic groups, whether these gaps have increased or decreased over time, and whether there is significant variation by region, ITT route or phase.

In Section 4.6, we explore some of the context around these gaps to determine whether there are any key differences in characteristics which help to ‘explain’ the gaps in acceptance rates for different ethnic groups.

The existing literature in this area is relatively sparse, but we know that aspiring teachers are primarily intrinsically motivated, for example, by a desire to work with children and young people or

to help others (Heinz, 2015; Han and Yin, 2016; Gorard *et al.*, 2021), and this applies equally to people from different ethnic backgrounds (Tereshchenko *et al.*, 2020). However, people from ethnic minorities other than white may also have a particular motivation to support young people from a similar background to their own, by acting as role models, supporting pupil achievement and encouraging greater participation in education from their own communities (Edmunds *et al.*, 2002; Cunningham and Hargreaves, 2007; Tereshchenko *et al.*, 2020).

Whether driven by differences in educational attainment or otherwise, acceptance rates to ITT courses that are systematically lower for applicants from particular ethnic backgrounds indicate that some aspiring teachers are not able to enter the system in the first place. As ITT is the point of entry into the profession, it is therefore important to investigate acceptance onto an ITT course as part of a complete understanding of diversity in the teacher workforce.

4.2 Methodology and limitations

4.2.1 Methodology

This stage of the analysis uses data from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and Teach First (TF) to estimate acceptance rates onto postgraduate ITT courses. The UCAS/TF data record every application to postgraduate ITT within an application cycle,⁴³ including those applicants who submit multiple applications. An applicant is considered to have been accepted to an ITT course if they accepted one of the places they were offered, and was considered not to have been accepted if they did not accept an offer⁴⁴.

The focus of this section is the ‘acceptance rate gap’, which is the difference in acceptance rates between applicants from a particular ethnic minority group and their white counterparts. A gap that is greater than zero indicates that applicants from white ethnic backgrounds have higher acceptance rates than applicants from other ethnic backgrounds, and vice versa.

We investigate acceptance rates in the 2019/20 application cycle, which ran from October 2019 to September 2020). We also compare this to acceptance rates for the 2013/14 cycle to analyse changes over time.

Overall, the number of ITT applications in the 2019/20 academic year were atypical because the number of applications to ITT increased substantially during the Covid-19 pandemic (Worth and Faulkner-Ellis, 2021), particularly from applicants from ethnic backgrounds other than white (Fullard, 2021). However, acceptance rate gaps in the 2019/20 cycle were similar in the 2018/19 cycle and so, for consistency across the analysis, we focus on the 2019/20 application cycle.

In Section 4.5, we analyse differences in acceptance rate gaps across ITT route, phase and region. We do this by estimating acceptance rates, and the acceptance rate gap compared to white

⁴³ Each application cycle runs from October to September.

⁴⁴ ITT route, subject and phase were occasionally different between an applicant’s multiple applications. If an applicant had at least one successful application, we recorded the route, subject and phase of the successful application. If no application was successful, we recorded route, subject and phase based on the criteria outlined in Appendix A.

applicants, for applicants from each ethnic background separately across each of these characteristics.

We then estimate the extent to which acceptance rate gaps can be explained by differences in individual and course characteristics. The individual characteristics included in the analysis are age, gender and domicile region, while course characteristics include phase and route. A detailed discussion of the methodology used in this section can be found in Section 1.4.

4.2.2 Limitations

We combine the data from the UCAS and TF datasets in order to observe applicants to postgraduate ITT through all ITT routes, including Teach First, which is not recorded in the UCAS data. However, an applicant may be double-counted in the combined dataset if they apply for Teach First and one or more additional courses via other routes. Applications to Teach First account for a relatively small proportion of all postgraduate ITT applications however (about 12 per cent of applications in our combined dataset are via Teach First routes), so any possible double-counting is expected to be small.

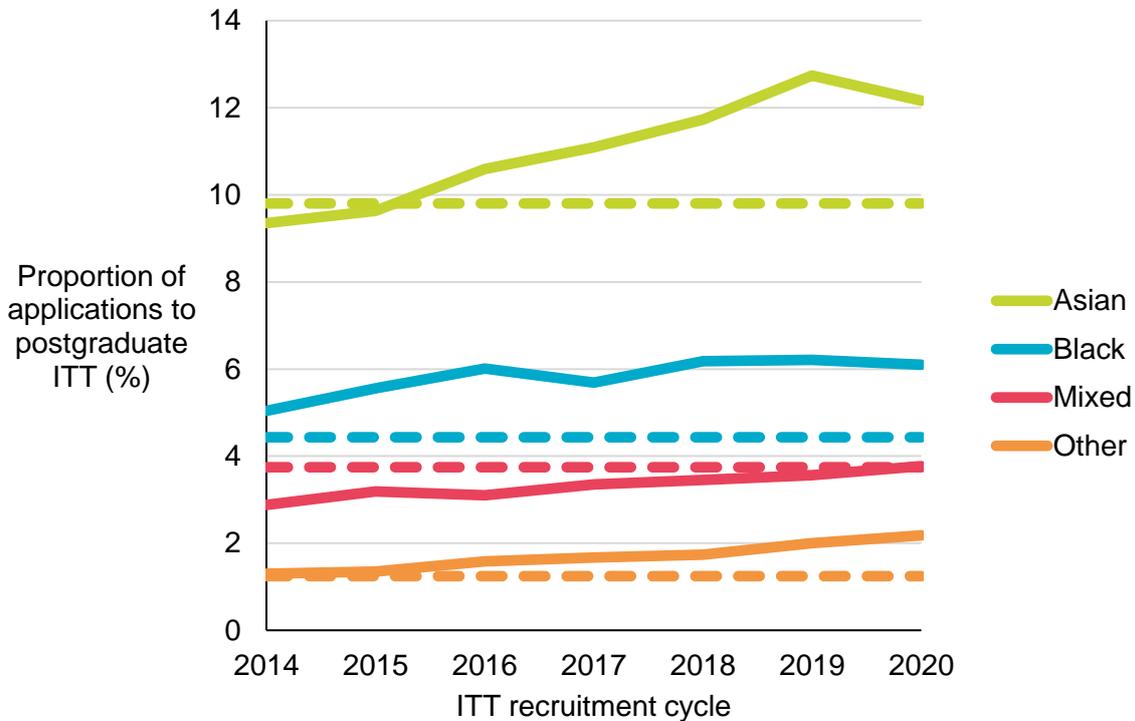
Additionally, we assess the extent to which differences across ethnicities in applicants' characteristics, and differences in the route and phase of the course can help to explain some of the acceptance rate gaps. However, the number of variables observed in the UCAS/TF data is limited and so we are unable to include in the analysis a number of key variables that are likely to be associated with acceptance rate gaps, such as educational qualifications. We are also unable to analyse acceptance rates for smaller (minor) ethnic groups because ethnicity in the UCAS data is only recorded at the major ethnic group level.

4.3 Are there significant differences in ITT application rates for different ethnic groups?

In Section 2, we established that the proportion of all ITT applications from graduates from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds was substantially larger than the proportion of the population made up by individuals from those ethnic groups. This aligns with findings from the literature where a survey of English undergraduates (Gorard *et al.*, 2020) suggests that students' desire to enter teaching differs amongst ethnic groups – specifically, students from Asian backgrounds were more likely to say they intended to be teachers than students from black or mixed ethnic backgrounds.

Recent years have seen an increase in the proportion of ITT applications among people from ethnic backgrounds other than white.

Figure 23: ITT application rates have increased over time among applicants from Asian, black, mixed and other backgrounds



Note: The dashed lines represent the proportion of the age-adjusted population made up by people from each ethnic background.

Source: NFER analysis of UCAS and TF data for 2014/15 – 2020/21.

In 2014, ITT applicants from black backgrounds were slightly over-represented compared to the proportion of people from black backgrounds in the wider population, applicants from Asian and mixed ethnic backgrounds were under-represented, and applicants from other ethnic minority backgrounds were representative of the wider population. By 2020, ITT applications have risen for all ethnic minority groups so that they are at or above the level that might be expected, given their representation in the wider population.

However, as shown in Table 5, we find that there are relatively large and statistically significant differences in the postgraduate ITT acceptance rates between those from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic minority groups compared with their white counterparts. The gaps in acceptance rates are greatest for applicants from black and other ethnic groups (21 percentage points, compared to their white counterparts).

Table 5: ITT acceptance rates are significantly lower for four ethnic groups compared to applicants from white ethnic backgrounds, and lowest among applicants from black and other ethnic backgrounds

Ethnic group	ITT acceptance rate (%)	White-Group gap (p.p.)	Statistically significant difference?
White	66	-	-
Asian	53	13	Yes
Black	45	21	Yes
Mixed	57	9	Yes
Other	45	21	Yes

Source: NFER analysis of UCAS and Teach First data for 2019/20.

4.4 Have ITT acceptance rates changed over time?

The gap in acceptance rates between applicants from Asian and black backgrounds compared with their white counterparts was significantly smaller in 2020 than in 2014⁴⁵ by two and five percentage points respectively. Acceptance rates did not change significantly over this period for the other two ethnic groups in relation to their white counterparts.

Table 6: The gap in ITT acceptance rates was smaller in 2020 than 2014 for applicants from Asian and black backgrounds compared to their white counterparts

Ethnic group	White-Group gap (p.p.)		2020 vs 2014 change (p.p.)	Statistically significant change?
	2014	2020		
Asian	15	13	-2	Yes
Black	26	21	-5	Yes
Mixed	7	9	2	No
Other	22	21	-1	No

Source: NFER analysis of UCAS and Teach First data for 2013/14 and 2019/20.

4.5 Variation in ITT acceptance rates by personal and course characteristics

We found significant differences in the gap in acceptance rates between applicants from white ethnic backgrounds and those from the other four ethnic groups, across region, ITT route and phase.

⁴⁵ 2014 is the first year of ITT data available from UCAS and Teach First.

Table 7: There are substantial variations in ITT acceptance rate gaps across region, application route and phase. Acceptance rate gaps are significantly smaller in London, but larger for the School Direct fee-paying route

		Acceptance rate gaps (p.p.)			
		Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Overall		13	21	9	21
Region	London	8	12	4	10
	South East	17	29	9	24
	South West	17	29	5	23
	East of England	16	26	13	21
	East Midlands	14	25	13	26
	West Midlands	10	19	7	24
	North West	15	26	15	28
	North East	17	-	15	-
	Yorkshire and the Humber	9	25	1	31
ITT Route	Higher Education	11	19	8	23
	SCITT	8	28	6	10
	School Direct Fee	15	29	13	28
	School Direct Salaried	14	20	8	18
	Postgraduate Teaching Apprenticeship	13	18	-	-
	Teach First	8	10	-3	4
Phase	Primary	7	15	6	15
	Secondary	15	23	10	22

Note: Acceptance rate gaps in cells highlighted in green are statistically significantly smaller than the overall average, and larger in red-highlighted cells. Cells marked with ‘-’ indicate cell sizes that are too small to report.

Source: NFER analysis of UCAS and Teach First data for 2019/20.

The gaps in ITT acceptance rates between applicants from ethnic minority groups and their white counterparts, though present in all regions, are smaller in London⁴⁶. For example, the national gap in acceptance rates for applicants from black ethnic backgrounds compared to white is 21 percentage points, but this gap is 12 percentage points (11 percentage points smaller) in London. The gap in ITT acceptance rates for applicants from black ethnic backgrounds is significantly larger in the South East (by eight percentage points).

In relation to ITT route, acceptance rate gaps are significantly larger for all four ethnic minority groups applying to the School Direct fee-paying route compared to the overall ITT acceptance rate gaps nationally. For example, the acceptance rate gap for applicants from black ethnic groups

⁴⁶ We had access to data on the region of the applicant’s domicile, rather than the region of the ITT provider. While these may differ, the majority of applicants apply to a provider based in their home region.

compared to their white counterparts is 21 percentage points when you look across all ITT routes, but the gap is 29 percentage points for applicants from black ethnic groups applying to School Direct fee paying routes. Gaps are significantly smaller for applicants from black, mixed and other ethnic groups applying to Teach First compared to the overall ITT acceptance rate gaps⁴⁷. However, although acceptance gaps are smaller for Teach First, they are still present for applicants from black and other ethnic groups (i.e. applicants to Teach First from black and other ethnic backgrounds have statistically significantly lower acceptance rates than their white counterparts). For example, there is a gap of 21 percentage points in the acceptance rate of applicants from black ethnic backgrounds and their white counterparts when you look across all ITT routes, but the gap between applicants from black and white ethnic backgrounds is ten percentage points among those applying to Teach First. In contrast, applicants to Teach First from mixed ethnic backgrounds have a higher acceptance rate than their white counterparts, despite applicants from mixed ethnic backgrounds having a lower acceptance rate than their white counterparts when you look across all ITT routes.

Gaps are significantly smaller (though still present) for graduates from black and Asian ethnic groups applying to primary courses. Similar to applicants to the Teach First route, applicants to primary courses from black ethnic backgrounds are about 15 percentage points less likely than their white counterparts to have their application accepted, but this gap is statistically significantly lower than the overall gap of 21 percentage points. The equivalent acceptance gap on primary courses for people from Asian backgrounds compared with their white counterparts is seven percentage points, which is also statistically significantly lower than the overall gap of 13 percentage points.

The ITT datasets do not record applicants' qualifications, so we are unable to investigate what part, if any, these play in explaining acceptance rate gaps. However, by looking at government ethnicity facts and figures⁴⁸ for England as a whole, we see that young people from white ethnic backgrounds are less likely to go to university than young people from other ethnic backgrounds, but those who do are more likely to gain a first or upper second degree. For example, in 2018/19, 81 per cent of students from white ethnic backgrounds gained a first or upper second class honours degree, which is higher than for students in Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic groups. Undergraduates from black ethnic groups achieved the lowest percentage of first and upper second class degrees (77 per cent). It is therefore possible that these differences in degree classification could be contributing to differences in ITT acceptance rates, and this is worthy of further investigation⁴⁹.

⁴⁷ There is no significant difference in the acceptance rate gap for applicants from Asian backgrounds to Teach First compared to the overall acceptance rate gap between applicants from Asian backgrounds and their white counterparts.

⁴⁸ See <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and-training>

⁴⁹ We considered whether international applications might be influencing the disparities in acceptance rates, but as these account for less than one per cent of ITT applications overall, we find that this is not responsible for driving the acceptance rate gaps.

4.6 How much of the gap in ITT acceptance rates can be explained by differences in personal and course characteristics?

The first row of Table 8 shows the overall gaps in ITT acceptance rates for applicants from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds compared to applicants from white ethnic backgrounds. As explained above, there are significant gaps in ITT acceptance rates for applicants from all four of these minority ethnic groups compared to their white counterparts.

However, the gaps in the first row do not account for the role that differences in other personal and course characteristics might play in accounting for the gaps. The gaps in the second row are the gaps between ethnic groups and their white counterparts that remain after accounting for the differences between ethnic groups in age, gender, region, phase and route and the role they play in driving the overall gaps.

The analysis in Table 8 shows that the gaps in ITT acceptance rates for applicants from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic groups are smaller, but still significant compared with their white counterparts with similar characteristics. This means that differences in characteristics explain a portion of the acceptance rate gaps for applicants in all ethnic groups. (A table outlining how acceptance rate gaps are explained by each of the applicant and course characteristic we included in the analysis can be found in Appendix B.)

Table 8: Differences in ITT acceptance rates are largely unexplained by applicants' observed personal and course characteristics

	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Before controlling for characteristics (p.p.)	13	21	9	21
After controlling for characteristics (p.p.)	10	15	6	16

Note: Highlighted cells indicate statistical significant differences.

Source: NFER analysis of UCAS/TF data for 2019/20.

ITT route and phase appear to be particularly important drivers of these gaps. This is because applicants from white ethnic backgrounds are more likely than applicants from other ethnic groups to apply to School Direct fee-paying routes and to primary ITT training, where acceptance rates are generally higher for all applicants, regardless of ethnic background.

Age is also a significant factor. Applicants from white ethnic backgrounds tend to be younger on average than the other ethnic groups, and acceptance rates for younger applicants tend to be higher than for older applicants. Applicants from black and other ethnic backgrounds tend to be substantially older than those from other ethnic groups, and this age difference accounts for part of the acceptance rate gaps for people from black, compared to white ethnic backgrounds.

However, even after accounting for all of these differences, significant gaps remain (15 percentage points for applicants from black backgrounds; ten percentage points for applicants from Asian backgrounds; six percentage points for applicants from mixed ethnic backgrounds; and 16 percentage points for applicants from other ethnic backgrounds) compared to their white counterparts.

The findings in this section suggest that there are large, unexplained gaps in ITT acceptance rates for applicants from all ethnic minority backgrounds compared to their white counterparts. Differences in region, age, phase and route help to explain some of these gaps, but a large proportion remain unexplained. Since the variables we can observe in the UCAS/TF datasets are limited, it is possible that these remaining gaps could be driven, in part, by differences in other unobserved variables. One such variable is the educational qualifications of applicants from each ethnic group. However, further research would be needed to establish whether such differences in qualifications exist between ethnic groups and, if so, how they change the picture. Based on our analysis, we find that there are significant differences in ITT acceptance rates for all four minority ethnic groups compared to the white group, which are not accounted for by differences in observed variables and merit further investigation.

5 Progression from initial teacher training to entering teaching

Achievement of qualified teacher status

- The majority of initial teacher training (ITT) trainees from all ethnic backgrounds achieve qualified teacher status (QTS) in the final year of their training. However, the proportion of trainees from white ethnic backgrounds who achieve QTS (92 per cent) is higher than for trainees from Asian, black, mixed or other minority backgrounds (88, 87, 90 and 88 per cent, respectively).
- The gaps in QTS achievement rates between trainees from white ethnic backgrounds and the other four ethnic groups were significantly smaller in 2020 than in 2014. This suggests some improvement over time.
- Differences in the characteristics of trainees from different ethnic groups, such as differences in ITT route and age, help to explain some of the gaps in QTS achievement rates, but the majority of the gaps are unexplained.

Entry into teaching

- Qualified trainees from white and mixed ethnic backgrounds have the highest rates of entry into teaching⁵⁰ (68 and 69 per cent respectively). However, qualified trainees from Asian and other ethnic backgrounds have significantly lower rates of entry into teaching (61 and 64 per cent respectively).
- Gaps in rates of entry into teaching were significantly smaller in 2020 than in 2014 for qualified trainees from Asian and black ethnic backgrounds, which suggests some improvement over time.
- There are large and widespread differences in entry rates in different regions. For example, compared with the national picture, gaps are significantly larger for qualified trainees from Asian, black and other ethnic groups who attended ITT courses in the West Midlands; and for qualified trainees from Asian and black ethnic backgrounds who attended ITT courses in Yorkshire and the Humber.
- Gaps in rates of entry into teaching are generally not explained by characteristics such as age, route, degree classification and subject. In fact, if qualified trainees from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds had the same characteristics as their white counterparts, we would expect the gaps in entry rates to be larger.

5.1 Introduction

This section focuses on the progression outcomes for trainees who are enrolled onto ITT courses. Sections 5.3 to 5.6 explore differences in the probability of receiving QTS for trainees of different ethnic backgrounds, while Sections 5.7 to 5.10 explore similar differences between trainees who are awarded QTS in the probability of entering teaching in a state-funded school.

⁵⁰ The rate of entry into teaching means the percentage of qualified trainees from each ethnic groups who went on to get a teaching job in a state-funded school in the academic year following QTS.

We explore whether any gaps in the probability of receiving QTS and entering teaching for trainees from each ethnic minority group compared with their white counterparts have changed over time. We also consider whether gaps differ in relation to individual and course characteristics (such as age, gender, region and subject).

Finally we investigate the extent to which key differences in characteristics between trainees of different ethnic backgrounds help to explain any of the gaps in the probability of receiving QTS and entering teaching.

5.2 Methodology and limitations

5.2.1 Methodology

This stage of the analysis uses data from the Initial Teacher Training Performance Profile (ITT-PP), which observes all ITT trainees enrolled in a course. This includes all postgraduate trainees as well as those on ITT courses through an undergraduate route (which are not included in the UCAS/TF data used in the previous section).

Trainees in the ITT-PP data are recorded in the final year of their course,⁵¹ where we observe whether or not they received qualified teacher status upon the completion of their programme. A trainee must successfully complete an ITT training course in order to receive QTS and so we calculate the rate of QTS completion as the proportion of all trainees enrolled on ITT courses who achieve QTS.

QTS is a legal requirement to teach in many English schools and is considered desirable for teachers in the majority of schools in England⁵². However, trainees who do not receive QTS in the final year of their programme may have withdrawn from training, not been successful in completing their training to the required standard or have not completed their programme by their final year⁵³.

To examine rates of entry into teaching, we use the ITT-PP data linked to the SWC. This allows us to observe qualified trainees who are employed in a school and are completing their induction. Qualified trainees were considered to have 'entered teaching' if, according to the SWC, they were contracted to a school in the academic year following the completion of their ITT programme^{54 55}. Similarly to how receiving QTS is 'conditional' on having been accepted to an ITT course, the rate

⁵¹ Most postgraduate courses are one year in length, so this distinction is mostly relevant for those on higher-education and undergraduate routes.

⁵² See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/qualified-teacher-status-qts>

⁵³ The ITT-PP data distinguishes between those who had not yet completed their training in their final year and those who had withdrawn/otherwise not been successful. For the few trainees who continue their training past their final 'official' year, they will be recorded as not having achieved QTS.

⁵⁴ Data for the SWC is collected in early November of each academic year, so newly-qualified teachers who entered teaching in the year after their qualification year were contracted to a school prior to November of that academic year.

⁵⁵ The majority of newly-qualified teachers who ever enter state-sector teaching after their qualification tend to do so in the first academic year following their year of qualification. We used this as our definition of entry into teaching as it is consistent across all cohort years in the ITT-PP data, since we observe at least one year of SWC data for all but the 2020/21 cohorts of ITT trainees.

of entry into teaching is only observed for those who have QTS – and is therefore conditional on having successfully completed an ITT course.

Due to relatively small sample sizes in the analysis, we combine years together to estimate differences in rates of QTS completion and entry into teaching. Specifically, rather than focussing only on 2019/20, we analyse trainees from all of 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20.

5.2.2 Limitations

There are two main limitations in the ITT-PP and SWC datasets which are relevant to this section. First, the SWC only observes teachers teaching in state-sector schools in England. Therefore, if an ITT trainee receives QTS and begins teaching in a private school or outside of England in the following year, they will appear to us as if they were not contracted to a school.

Second, the ethnic minor groups within the ‘white’ major group (i.e. white British, white Irish, other white backgrounds) are recorded differently in the ITT-PP data than in the other datasets. Specifically, there is an additional general ‘white’ minor group which overlaps with the white British, white Irish and other white backgrounds. Trainees recorded as being from white British backgrounds are therefore only a small proportion of the total number of trainees from white British backgrounds and may not be comparable with the other datasets. Due to this inconsistency we do not report progression rate gaps for the smaller ethnic groups.

5.3 Are there significant differences in QTS achievement rates for different ethnic groups?

The rate at which ITT trainees achieve QTS is generally high (around 90 per cent). It is, however, higher among trainees from white ethnic backgrounds than the other four ethnic groups and the gaps are statistically significant in each case. The gap is largest for trainees from black ethnic backgrounds (who are five percentage points less likely to receive QTS than their white counterparts) and smallest for people from mixed ethnic backgrounds (who are two percentage points less likely to receive QTS than their white counterparts).

Table 9: QTS achievement rates are lower among trainees from black, Asian, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds, compared to their white counterparts

Ethnic group	QTS completion rate (%)	White-Group gap (p.p.)	Statistically significant difference?
White	92	-	-
Asian	88	4	Yes
Black	87	5	Yes
Mixed	90	2	Yes
Other	88	4	Yes

Source: NFER analysis of ITT-PP data for 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20.

These findings are different from an earlier study by Hobson *et al.* (2009) which found no significant differences in withdrawal rate of people from ethnic minorities compared with people from white ethnic backgrounds. However, research has found that trainees from ethnic groups other than white encounter particular issues during ITT. For example, Hobson *et al.* (2008) found that trainees from minority ethnic groups were significantly less likely than those from white ethnic backgrounds to report positive relationships with teaching staff, non-teaching staff and peers. Wilkins (2011) suggests that peer support is particularly important for trainees from ethnic minority backgrounds. Other studies have found that trainees from ethnic minority backgrounds other than white experience racism and ignorance during their courses and particularly during school placements (Edmunds *et al.*, 2002; Wilkins, 2011; Lander and Zaheerali, 2016). This may be more likely to occur in areas of low cultural diversity (Cole and Stuart, 2005). Wilkins (2014) suggests that such negative experiences during ITT can be attributed, at least in part, to institutional policies within ITT providers and regulators that do not sufficiently challenge existing racial inequalities.

5.4 Have QTS achievement rates changed over time?

The gap in QTS achievement rates between people from white ethnic backgrounds and all other major ethnic groups has narrowed significantly since earlier in the decade, but a significant gap still remains. The gap reduced most for trainees from black ethnic groups, but this group still has the largest gap in QTS achievement rate, compared to their white counterparts.

Table 10: The gap in QTS achievement rates between people from white ethnic backgrounds and all other major ethnic groups was smaller in 2020 than 2014

Ethnic group	Average white-group gap (p.p.)		2017/18 – 2019/20 vs. 2010/11 – 2013/14 change (p.p.)	Statistically significant change?
	2010/11 – 2013/14	2017/18 – 2019/20		
Asian	10	4	-6	Yes
Black	14	5	-9	Yes
Mixed	5	2	-3	Yes
Other	10	4	-6	Yes

Source: NFER analysis of ITT-PP data for 2017/18-2019/20 and 2010/11-2013/14.

5.5 Variation in QTS achievement rates by personal and course characteristics

We investigated variations in QTS achievement by personal characteristics (age, gender, degree class, and subject) and course characteristics (ITT route and region) and found evidence of significant variation in QTS achievement rate gaps. While the gaps varied somewhat over other personal characteristics such as gender, age and degree classification, most of these differences were not statistically significant. The gaps for subject and region can be found in Table 11. (A table showing how the gaps vary across all of the characteristics included in the analysis can be found in Appendix B.)

Table 11: There are differences in QTS achievement rate gaps for subject and region

		QTS achievement rate gaps (p.p.)			
		Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Overall		4	5	2	4
Subject	General primary	5	6	2	4
	Sciences	4	6	1	3
	Mathematics	3	9	4	5
	English	1	1	2	4
	Modern foreign languages	-1	5	0	3
	History	-	8	2	-
	Geography	4	12	-	-
	Art, design, music and drama	3	-	2	-
	Design and technology	12	7	-	-
	Physical education	7	5	5	-
	Computing	1	9	-	-
	Other subjects	1	1	-1	-
Region	East of England	3	6	3	-
	East Midlands	4	13	0	-
	West Midlands	4	6	2	4
	London	3	4	2	2
	North East	9	-	-	-
	North West	4	5	3	6
	South East	6	13	3	6
	South West	5	9	7	-
	Yorkshire and the Humber	4	11	0	12

Notes: QTS achievement rate gaps in cells highlighted in green are statistically significantly smaller than the overall average, and larger in red-highlighted cells. Cells marked with ‘-’ indicates cell sizes that are too small to report.

Source: NFER analysis of ITT-PP data for 2017/18 – 2019/20.

5.5.1 Subject

The gap in QTS achievement is statistically significantly smaller among trainees from Asian backgrounds who trained to teach English, modern foreign languages and computing, compared to their white counterparts who trained to teach the same subjects. Indeed, people from Asian backgrounds who trained to teach languages have a greater chance of achieving QTS than otherwise similar trainees from white ethnic backgrounds.

However, the gap in QTS achievement rate is larger for trainees from Asian backgrounds who trained to teach physical education or design and technology, compared to their white counterparts who trained to teach the same subjects. This was also true for people from mixed ethnic backgrounds who trained to teach physical education, compared with their white counterparts.

5.5.2 Region

The QTS achievement rate gap is larger among people from Asian and black ethnic backgrounds who attend ITT courses in the South East of England, compared with their white counterparts. The QTS achievement gap is also significantly larger for people from black ethnic backgrounds who attended ITT courses in the East Midlands compared with their white counterparts.

5.6 How much of the gap in QTS achievement rates can be explained by personal and course characteristics?

Section 5.3 shows that there are some relatively large and statistically significant differences in the likelihood of achieving QTS between people from Asian, black, mixed or other ethnic backgrounds and people from white ethnic backgrounds. We now determine the role that differences in personal and course characteristics (age, gender, ITT route, degree class, subject, provider type and region) might play in accounting for the gaps.

The first row of Table 12⁵⁶ shows the overall QTS achievement rate gaps, which, as described above, indicate that ITT trainees from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are less likely than their white counterparts to achieve QTS. The gaps in the second row are those that remain after accounting for the differences in characteristics between the ethnic groups and the role they play in driving the overall gaps.

Table 12: ITT entry rate gaps would be smaller if NQTs from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds had the same characteristics as NQTs from white backgrounds

	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Before controlling for characteristics (p.p.)	4	5	2	4
After controlling for characteristics (p.p.)	3	4	2	3

Note: Highlighted cells are statistically significant at the five per cent level.

Source: NFER analysis of ITT-PP data for 2017/18-2019/20.

The gaps in QTS achievement rates for trainees from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are slightly smaller after accounting for differences in characteristics, indicating that differences in observed characteristics account for part of the gaps. The changes are mostly driven by differences in ITT route. Trainees from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are more likely than their white counterparts to be training via higher education routes, where QTS achievement rates are generally lower for trainees from all ethnic groups.

Differences in age also account for part of the gap for trainees from black and other ethnic backgrounds. Trainees from these groups are older on average than trainees from white backgrounds and QTS achievement rates are lower for older trainees across all ethnic groups. This is why QTS achievement rate gaps are proportionately smaller for trainees from black and other ethnic backgrounds after accounting for observed characteristics, as differences in age

⁵⁶ A table showing the influence of each variable on QTS achievement gaps can be found in Appendix B.

account for more of the gap for trainees from these groups than for trainees from Asian or mixed ethnic backgrounds.

However, differences in factors such as route and age only explain a small part of the overall gaps in QTS achievement rates for trainees from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds. Statistically significant gaps remain for all of these groups which are not accounted for by differences in any observed characteristics.

5.7 Are there significant differences in rates of entry into teaching for different ethnic groups?

The previous sections have focussed on the probability of achieving QTS for ITT trainees from different ethnic backgrounds. This section now turns to the likelihood of qualified trainees entering state-sector teaching. Achievement of QTS is no guarantee that a qualified trainee will take up a teaching position in a state-funded school in England. Indeed, DfE (2022a) describe this as a 'leaky pipeline' as only 73 per cent of those who were awarded QTS in 2019/20 went on to teach in a state-funded English school.

Qualified trainees from white and mixed ethnic backgrounds have the highest rate of entry into state-funded teaching (68 per cent and 69 per cent respectively)⁵⁷. Although the rate of progression is slightly higher among people from mixed ethnic backgrounds, there is no significant difference in their progression rate compared to their white counterparts.

⁵⁷ Our average entry rate estimates are slightly lower than those reported by DfE (2022a), which measures entry into teaching up to 16 months after QTS. We report entry into teaching by November of the following academic year (which is when the SWC data is collected). Teachers who receive QTS by August and go on to enter teaching will have done so within three months of QTS. This was done to ensure that we could focus on entry into teaching for the most recent cohort of ITT trainees in the dataset.

Table 13: Entry into state-funded teaching is lower among people from Asian and other ethnic groups, compared to qualified trainees from white ethnic backgrounds

Ethnic group	Entry into teaching rate	White-Group gap (p.p.)	Statistically significant difference?
White	68	-	-
Asian	61	7	Yes
Black	67	1	No
Mixed	69	-1	No
Other	64	4	Yes

Source: NFER analysis of ITT-PP data for 2017/18 – 2019/20.

We find that the rate of entry into state-funded teaching is significantly lower among qualified trainees from Asian and other ethnic backgrounds (by seven and four percentage points respectively), compared to their white counterparts.

5.8 Have gaps in rates of entry into state-funded teaching changed over time?

The gap in rates of entry into teaching have reduced significantly for people from black and Asian ethnic backgrounds (by six and one percentage points, respectively), compared to earlier in the decade.

Table 14: The gap in rates of entry to teaching was smaller between 2017/18-2019/20 than earlier in the decade, for people from black and Asian ethnic backgrounds compared to their white counterparts

Ethnic group	Average white-group gap (p.p.)		2017/18-2019/20 vs. 2010/11-2013/14 change (p.p.)	Statistically significant difference?
	2010/11 - 2013/14	2017/18 - 2019/20		
Asian	9	7	-1	Yes
Black	7	1	-6	Yes
Mixed	-1	-1	-1	No
Other	2	4	2	No

Source: NFER analysis of ITT-PP data for 2010/11-2013/14 and 2017/18-2019/20.

Qualified trainees from mixed ethnic backgrounds were more likely to enter teaching than their white counterparts in both the 2017/18-2019/20 and 2010/11-2013/14 periods, but there is no statistically significant change in the gap. Gaps for qualified trainees from other ethnic backgrounds have also not changed significantly over time.

5.9 Variation in the rates of entry into teaching by personal and course characteristics

We analysed the gaps in entry into teaching between ethnic minority groups and their white counterparts for differences related to age, gender, training route, degree class, subject and region and found significant relationships for all variables apart from gender. Results for age, training route, subject and region are shown in Table 15 below (full results can be found in Appendix B).

Table 15: There are differences in gaps for rate of entry into teaching across personal and school characteristics

		Entry into teaching rate gaps (p.p.)			
		Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Overall		7	1	-1	4
Age	Age <= 25	9	-4	-2	0
	Between 25 and 30	9	1	-2	8
	Between 30 and 40	3	3	0	1
	Age 40+	4	10	11	13
Route	Higher education	4	1	-5	2
	Undergraduate	15	1	-1	-8
	SCITT	12	9	2	5
	School Direct - fee	7	1	4	13
	School Direct - salary	4	1	-1	2
	Teach First	-1	-1	2	-
Subject	General primary	11	-1	-2	0
	Sciences	3	3	1	4
	Mathematics	2	6	4	13
	English	5	6	1	0
	MFL	5	6	9	9
	History	3	-14	-6	-
	Geography	-2	1	-3	-
	Art, design, music and drama	-5	4	2	9
	Design and technology	-1	4	1	-
	Physical education	6	-7	-12	-
	Computing	5	3	-2	10
	Other subjects	6	-6	1	-6
Region	East of England	9	6	12	7
	East Midlands	13	10	-2	-
	West Midlands	15	10	3	17
	London	4	6	0	7
	North East	16	-	18	-
	North West	12	6	-1	7
	South East	4	5	0	12
	South West	16	8	7	4
	Yorkshire and the Humber	19	20	3	14

Notes: Entry rate gaps in cells highlighted in green are statistically significantly smaller than the overall average, and larger in red-highlighted cells. Cells marked with ‘-’ indicate cell sizes that were too small to report.

Source: NFER analysis of ITT-PP data for 2018/19 and 2019/20.

Some of the largest and most widespread differences in the gaps in entry into teaching are related to the region where qualified trainees completed their ITT. Gaps for qualified trainees in the West Midlands are statistically significantly larger than the overall gap for qualified trainees from Asian, black and other ethnic backgrounds, at 15, 10 and 17 percentage points respectively. Yorkshire and the Humber is associated with gaps that are statistically significantly larger than the overall gaps for qualified trainees from Asian and black ethnic groups (at 19 and 20 percentage points respectively). Gaps in entry to teaching are also significantly larger for: qualified trainees from Asian backgrounds who attended ITT courses in the East Midlands (13 percentage points) and North West of England (12 percentage points); qualified trainees from black ethnic backgrounds who attended ITT courses in London (six percentage points); and for qualified trainees from mixed ethnic backgrounds who attended ITT courses in the East of England and the North East (12 and 18 percentage points respectively).

Training route is related to significantly larger gaps in entry into teaching for qualified trainees from Asian and black ethnic groups on SCITT courses (12 and nine percentage points respectively), for qualified trainees from Asian backgrounds on undergraduate routes (15 percentage points); and qualified trainees from mixed and other ethnic backgrounds on School Direct fee-paying courses (four and 13 percentage points respectively). However, there is a smaller gap in the rate of entry to teaching for qualified trainees from Asian backgrounds who trained with a higher education provider (four percentage points), compared with their white counterparts.

Subject choice is associated with different patterns of relationships across ethnic groups. Gaps in entry rates are significantly larger than the overall gap for trainees from black and other ethnic groups who trained to teach maths. Other significant relationships between subject and a larger gap in entry into teaching were evident for: trainees from Asian backgrounds who qualified to teach in primary schools; trainees from black backgrounds who qualified to teach English; and trainees from mixed ethnic backgrounds who qualified to teach modern foreign languages.

Smaller gaps in entry to teaching related to subject can be seen for trainees from Asian backgrounds who qualified to teach science, maths, geography and arts subjects. Smaller gaps are also found for trainees from black ethnic backgrounds who qualified to teach history, and for trainees from mixed ethnic backgrounds who qualified to teach physical education.

There is some significant variation in entry rate gaps related to age. Gaps are generally smaller for qualified trainees who are 25 or younger, but this relationship is only statistically significant for qualified trainees from black backgrounds. Conversely, gaps are generally larger for qualified trainees who are aged 40 or older, but this is only statistically significant for trainees from black and mixed ethnic backgrounds, compared with their white counterparts.

5.10 How much of the gap in rates of entry into teaching can be explained by differences in personal and course characteristics?

As explained above, there are significant gaps in entry rates among qualified trainees from Asian and other ethnic backgrounds compared to their white counterparts. The first row of Table 16 shows the overall gaps in rates of entry into teaching for qualified trainees from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds compared to their white counterparts.

The gaps in the first row of Table 16 do not account for the role that differences in other personal and course characteristics (namely age, gender, training route, degree class, subject, provider type and region) might play in accounting for the gaps progression from QTS to entering teaching. The gaps in the second row are the gaps between ethnic groups and their counterparts from white ethnic backgrounds that remain after accounting for the differences in characteristics between the ethnic groups and the role they play in driving the overall gaps.

The analysis in Table 16 shows that the gaps in rates of entry into teaching for qualified trainees from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds compared to their white counterparts, are larger after accounting for differences in characteristics than they are overall. In other words, qualified trainees from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds tend to have other personal and course characteristics that mean their rate of entry into teaching could be expected to be higher than their counterparts from white ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, the other personal and course characteristics mask the overall gaps, which would be greater if qualified trainees from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds had similar characteristics to their white counterparts.

Table 16: Entry rate gaps would be larger if NQTs from Asian, black and other ethnic backgrounds had the same observed characteristics as NQTs from white backgrounds

	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Before controlling for characteristics (p.p.)	7	1	-1	4
After controlling for characteristics (p.p.)	10	5	1	6

Note: Highlighted cells are statistically significant at the five per cent level.

Source: NFER analysis of ITT-PP data for 2017/18-2019/20.

The gap in the rate of entry to teaching between qualified trainees from Asian backgrounds and their white counterparts is seven percentage points overall, but is ten percentage points after accounting for differences in their characteristics. This is primarily driven by differences in the regions where qualified trainees from Asian backgrounds attended ITT and their choices of ITT subject (details on how each characteristic affects entry rate gaps can be found in Appendix B).

Qualified trainees from Asian backgrounds are more concentrated in London than their white counterparts, where entry rates into teaching tend to be higher than in other regions, across all ethnic groups. They are also more likely than their white counterparts to be qualified to teach science and mathematics. These subjects tend to have higher entry rates into teaching, across all ethnic groups. However, qualified trainees from Asian backgrounds are also more likely than their counterparts from white ethnic backgrounds to train through a higher education route, which tends

to have lower entry rates into teaching than in other routes. Overall, the differences in characteristics between qualified trainees from Asian backgrounds and their counterparts from white ethnic backgrounds do not explain the gap, and even slightly mask a larger underlying gap.

While the overall gap in rates of entry into teaching between qualified trainees from black backgrounds and their white counterparts (one percentage point) is small and not statistically significant, the gap is larger (five percentage points) and statistically significant after accounting for differences in their characteristics. This is primarily driven by differences in the regions where qualified trainees from black backgrounds attended ITT. Qualified trainees from black backgrounds are much more concentrated in London than their counterparts from white ethnic backgrounds, where entry rates into teaching tend to be higher than in other regions, across all ethnic groups.

The gaps in rates of entry into teaching between qualified trainees from mixed ethnic backgrounds and their white counterparts are small and not statistically significant both overall and after accounting for differences in their characteristics. However, the rate of entry into teaching for qualified trainees from mixed ethnic backgrounds is slightly lower than their white counterparts after accounting for differences in their characteristics. Again, this is primarily driven by region: qualified trainees from mixed ethnic backgrounds are more concentrated in London than their white counterparts from, where entry rates into teaching tend to be higher than in other regions, across all ethnic groups.

The gap between qualified trainees from other ethnic backgrounds and their counterparts from white ethnic backgrounds is four percentage points overall, but it is six percentage points after accounting for differences in their characteristics. This is primarily driven by differences in region and ITT subject choice. Qualified trainees from other ethnic backgrounds are more concentrated in London and are more likely to have trained in mathematics, sciences and languages compared to their white counterparts, which tend to have higher rates of entry into teaching across all ethnic groups. However, qualified trainees from other ethnic backgrounds are also more likely to train through a higher education route, which tends to have lower entry rates into teaching than other routes.

Overall, the analysis shows that the gaps in rates of entry into teaching between qualified trainees from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds and their white counterparts are not explained by differences in age, gender, region, degree class, ITT subject and training route. Indeed, the overall gaps appear to be smaller than might be expected if qualified trainees from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds had similar personal and course characteristics to their counterparts from white ethnic backgrounds. Region plays an important role, since trainees from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds tend to be more concentrated in ITT courses in London, where entry rates into teaching tend to be higher than in other regions, across all ethnic groups.

6 Retention in state-sector teaching

- Most (91 per cent) teachers from white ethnic backgrounds who were teaching in 2019/20 remained in teaching the following year. However, retention rates for teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds were significantly lower, ranging from 90 per cent of teachers from Asian backgrounds to 87 per cent of teachers from other ethnic groups.
- Retention rate gaps have widened significantly since 2013/14 for teachers from Asian and black backgrounds compared to teachers from white ethnic backgrounds.
- Retention rate gaps for teachers from Asian and black ethnic backgrounds are significantly smaller in London compared to nationally, whereas they are significantly larger in Yorkshire and the Humber.
- In schools with diverse senior leadership teams, retention rates for teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are either about the same as or higher than teachers from white ethnic backgrounds.
- Differences in teacher and school characteristics largely explain the gaps in retention rates for teachers from black, mixed and other ethnic groups compared to their white counterparts. This is mainly driven by region, because teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds other than white are concentrated in London, where retention rates are lower.
- Teachers from Asian backgrounds have significantly lower retention rates than their white counterparts even after accounting for differences in region, age and experience.

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Introduction

This section considers whether there are differences in rates of teacher retention in the profession between classroom teachers from different ethnic backgrounds.

The first five years of a teacher's career are a critical stage, as that is the time when teachers are most likely to leave the profession⁵⁸ (see also Long and Danechi, 2021). Even small differences in the likelihood of staying in teaching for qualified teachers in ethnic groups other than white can dramatically reduce the long-term supply of teachers from those backgrounds and play a significant part in their under-representation in leadership positions, as outlined in Section 2.

To provide further context for differences in retention rates for teachers from different ethnic backgrounds, we explore whether gaps have changed over time. We also consider whether gaps differ in relation to their characteristics (such as age, gender, region and subject).

Finally we investigate the extent to which key differences in characteristics between teachers from different ethnic backgrounds help to explain any of the retention rate gaps.

⁵⁸ Taken from <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-workforce-in-england>.

6.2 Methodology and limitations

6.2.1 Methodology

We estimate retention rates for teachers from each ethnic background using data from the SWC, which observes teachers in state-funded schools in England. A teacher is defined as having been ‘retained’ in state-sector teaching if, according to the SWC, they were teaching in a state-sector school in a particular year, and then again the following year.

For this section, we focus mainly on retention between the 2019/20 and 2020/21 academic years⁵⁹ of the SWC. For every teacher recorded in the SWC in the 2019/20 academic year, we observe whether or not they were retained in state-sector teaching in 2020/21. We then calculate retention rate gaps as the difference between retention rates teachers from white ethnic backgrounds and teachers from all other ethnic backgrounds. We also compare differences over time by comparing teacher retention rates between the 2013/14 and 2014/15 academic years.

The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the retention of teachers between the 2019/20 and 2020/21 in the wake of increased economic uncertainty (Worth and Faulkner-Ellis, 2021; Worth, 2021). However, retention rate gaps (between teachers from different ethnic minority backgrounds and their white counterparts) were similar in the 2019/20 academic year to the 2018/19 academic year, and so we focus on 2019/20 for consistency with the other sections.

We analyse whether retention rate gaps are different across teacher and school characteristics, including gender, region, phase, academy status, Ofsted rating and diversity of the SLT. These gaps are calculated independently for teachers in each group and compared against the overall retention rate gap.

We then analyse the extent to which differences in observed characteristics (age, experience, working pattern, region and school characteristics) between different ethnic groups help to explain the retention rate gaps between teachers in particular ethnic groups and teachers from white ethnic backgrounds, and how much of the gaps are unexplained by these factors.

6.2.2 Limitations

The SWC only observes teachers in state-sector schools in England, which means that any teachers who move to independent schools, or who move to teach in schools outside of England are considered to have left state-sector teaching, even though they remain in teaching. Similarly, any teachers who temporarily leave teaching but later return are considered by our year-to-year retention measure to have left teaching. While alternative retention definitions (e.g. retention within two years, rather than one year) are possible, estimating year-to-year retention rates allows us to focus on the most recent year of data available (2019/20), for consistency with the rest of the analysis.

⁵⁹ Data for the SWC is collected on the first Thursday of November in each academic year, so this will consist of all teachers working in a state school in England in November, 2019 and in November, 2020.

6.3 Are there significant differences in retention rates between different ethnic groups?

Table 17 shows that retention rates are lower for teachers of Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds, compared to their white counterparts. The smallest retention rate gap is for Asian teachers, who are one percentage point less likely to stay in teaching than their white counterparts. The largest gap is for teachers from other ethnic backgrounds, who are four percentage points less likely to stay in teaching than teachers from white ethnic backgrounds.

This broadly aligns with a previous national study of NQTs (DfE, 2018a), which found that teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds were more likely to leave teaching than their white counterparts. Specifically, in 2017, 86 per cent of NQTs from white backgrounds were still in teaching the following year compared with 83 per cent from all other ethnic backgrounds⁶⁰.

Table 17: Retention rates are significantly lower for teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic groups than for teachers from white ethnic backgrounds

Ethnic group	Retention rate (%)	White-Group gap (p.p.)	Statistically significant difference?
White	91	-	-
Asian	90	1	Yes
Black	88	2	Yes
Mixed	89	2	Yes
Other	87	4	Yes

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2019/20.

There is a body of survey-based and qualitative research that has investigated the reasons for lower retention rates among teachers from ethnic minority groups other than white. The findings consistently point to three main concerns: overt and covert racial discrimination from staff, pupils and parents; disillusionment with their ability to make a difference for pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds; and a lack of opportunities for progression (Hargreaves, 2011; Haque and Elliott, 2016; Lander and Zaheerali, 2016; Haque, 2017; Tereshchenko *et al.*, 2020).

In relation to racial discrimination, Haque (2017) found that, compared to their colleagues from white ethnic backgrounds, teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds were more likely to report that they were not viewed as professionals and that their opinions were not valued by school management. Twice the proportion of teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds reported they had experienced discrimination in the workplace and nearly two-thirds (64 per cent) reported verbal abuse from pupils in the last 12 months, compared to just over half (51 per cent) of teachers from white backgrounds. Tereshchenko *et al.* (2020) found that teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds other than white were made to feel that they did not belong in teaching. Racism and

⁶⁰ Note that the higher retention rates found in the current study are likely to be influenced by the inclusion of all teachers, rather than just NQTs and the general higher retention rates due to the pandemic.

associated inequalities were at the forefront of their thoughts about leaving the profession, and that dealing with ‘micro aggressions’ (such as colleagues questioning their views or making stereotypical assumptions about their backgrounds), was such a burden that it amounted to an additional workload.

Teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds who are committed to making a difference to pupils from their communities can be demotivated by schools’ rejection of their culturally sensitive approaches to teaching (Hargreaves, 2011; Tereshchenko *et al.* 2020) and lack of support from family and the wider community (Bush *et al.*, 2006). They may also be demotivated by a lack of opportunities to progress to leadership roles (see Bush *et al.*, 2006; Hargreaves, 2011; Haque and Elliott, 2016; Lander and Zaheerali, 2016; Tereshchenko *et al.* 2020).

6.4 Have retention rate gaps changed over time?

Average retention rates are higher for all ethnic groups in the 2019/20 academic year, compared to the 2013/14 academic year⁶¹. However, average retention rates increased slightly more for teachers from white ethnic backgrounds than teachers from other ethnic backgrounds. This led to a widening of the retention rate gap between white teachers and the other ethnic groups since 2013/14. The widening of retention rate gaps is greatest for teachers from Asian and black ethnic backgrounds, where there is a statistically significant increase in the retention gap.

Table 18: Retention rate gaps have grown since 2013/14 for teachers from Asian and black ethnic backgrounds compared to their white counterparts

Ethnic group	White-group gap (p.p.)		2019/20 vs 2013/14 change (p.p.)	Statistically significant change?
	2013/14	2019/20		
Asian	0	1	1	Yes
Black	1	2	1	Yes
Mixed	1	2	1	No
Other	4	4	0	No

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2013/14 and 2019/20.

⁶¹ This could partly be driven by the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic, which broadly increased retention rates between the 2019/20 and 2020/21 academic years, relative to previous years. We assume that the Covid-induced retention effects impacted teachers of all ethnicities equally, so that the retention rate gap is unaffected.

6.5 Are there significant differences in retention rates between the smaller ethnic groups?

There is considerable variation in retention rates gaps between the smaller groups within each of the larger ethnic minority groups and their white British counterparts, particularly within the white ethnic group.

Table 19: Retention rate gaps are largest for teachers from white Irish, other white and black African backgrounds compared their white British counterparts

Larger (major) group	Smaller (minor) group	Retention rate (%)	Retention rate gap compared to white British (percentage points)	Statistically significant difference?
White	White British	91	-	-
	White Irish	86	6	Yes
	Other white background	86	5	Yes
Asian	Indian	90	1	Yes
	Pakistani	89	3	Yes
	Bangladeshi	91	0	No
	Chinese	87	4	Yes
	Any other Asian background	90	1	No
Black	Black African	87	5	Yes
	Black Caribbean	90	1	No
	Any other black background	89	3	Yes
Mixed	White and black Caribbean	89	3	Yes
	White and Asian	91	1	No
	White and black African	90	1	No
	Any other mixed background	89	3	Yes
Other	Any other ethnic group	87	4	Yes

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2019/20.

Retention rates are significantly higher for teachers from white British backgrounds than for teachers from white Irish and other white ethnic backgrounds (by six and five percentage points, respectively). Indeed, these gaps are the largest of any of the ethnic groups. It is possible that

these large retention rate gaps could be reflective of teachers being trained and entering state-sector teaching in England, but ultimately leaving to teach abroad⁶². This is because teachers within the white Irish and other white groups are likely to have nationality in other countries linked by geographic proximity or a common language (e.g. Ireland, countries in continental Europe, North America, or elsewhere within the Commonwealth).

There are also considerable differences within the Asian ethnic group, though to a lesser degree than within the white group. The retention rate gaps for teachers from Pakistani and Chinese backgrounds are relatively large, at three and four percentage points respectively. Conversely, there is no gap for Bangladeshi teachers, who were equally likely to stay in teaching as their white British counterparts.

Among teachers from black ethnic backgrounds, the gap is the largest for teachers from black African backgrounds compared to their white British counterparts, at five percentage points, and there is no gap for black Caribbean teachers.

Within mixed ethnic groups, the largest gaps are for teachers from white and black Caribbean and other mixed ethnic backgrounds compared with their white British counterparts (both three percentage points). There is no significant gap in retention between teachers from teachers from mixed white and Asian and white and black African ethnic minority backgrounds compared with their white counterparts.

6.6 How do retention gaps vary by personal and school characteristics?

Our analysis of the SWC finds that, while teachers from white backgrounds are well distributed across nine English regions, teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds tend to be clustered in London (see Section 2.4 for further details). Previous research has found that retention rates vary substantially based on region and school deprivation. For example, (DfE, 2018a) found that lower retention rates of NQTs from ethnic backgrounds other than white were largely due to the ‘London effect’ whereby teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds are more concentrated in London, which has a relatively low retention rate. In addition, Allen *et al.* (2018) found that schools with higher deprivation among their pupil population tend to recruit more ethnically diverse teachers and have a higher turnover rate. A US study (Ingersoll *et al.*, 2019) concluded that poorer organisational conditions (especially in relation to a lack of autonomy and inability of teachers to influence decision making), were largely responsible for this relationship, because hard-to-staff schools are more likely have less desirable organisational conditions and to employ teachers from ‘minority’ backgrounds.

Previous research has also emphasised the importance of senior leaders in creating a supportive organisational culture for equality and diversity (Tereshchenko *et al.* 2020; Haque, 2017). On the other hand, a lack of diversity in the SLT is linked with lower perceived opportunities for progression among teachers from ethnic backgrounds other than white, which can lead to lower retention. Teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds other than white want to work in schools with

⁶² Since the SWC only records teachers in state-sector schools in England, teachers who move to schools outside of the country are not observed, and so this hypothesis cannot be tested.

commitment to equity and diversity, and consider this more likely to be the case in schools with diverse leadership teams (Cunningham and Hargreaves, 2007; Tereshchenko *et al.* 2020). A US study (Grissom and Keiser, 2011) found that teachers report higher job satisfaction and are less likely to leave the school when supervised by a same-race principal.

Accordingly, we looked at differences in retention rate gaps across many of these characteristics, namely: region, gender, phase, Ofsted rating, school type and the diversity of the SLT. The gaps across gender, phase, Ofsted rating and school type are not generally significantly different from the overall gap (full results for this analysis can be found in Appendix B.) However, in line with findings from the existing literature, we find statistically significant differences in retention rate gaps related to region and the diversity of the SLT. These can be seen in Table 20.

London and Yorkshire and the Humber have different retention rate gaps for one or more ethnic minority groups. Retention rate gaps in London are significantly smaller than the overall average for Asian and black teachers. On the other hand, retention rate gaps in Yorkshire and the Humber are significantly larger than the overall gap for teachers from Asian and black backgrounds. This could suggest that retention of teachers from Asian and black backgrounds is a particular challenge in that region.

Our analysis also found that retention rate gaps differ significantly depending on the diversity of the school's senior leadership team (SLT). In particular, the retention rates for teachers from Asian and black backgrounds in schools that have SLTs with at least one Asian member are identical to the retention rate of their white counterparts, and these gaps are statistically significantly lower than the national average for teachers from Asian and black ethnic groups. Retention rates for teachers from Asian, black and mixed ethnic backgrounds are significantly higher than for their white counterparts in schools with SLTs that have representation from more than one ethnic group other than white.

Table 20: Retention rate gaps are generally larger in Yorkshire and the Humber, but smaller in London and schools with diverse senior leadership teams

		Retention rate gaps (p.p.)			
		Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Overall		1	2	2	4
Region	East of England	1	2	2	5
	East Midlands	2	6	4	-
	West Midlands	2	2	0	9
	London	-1	1	0	2
	North East	6	-	-	-
	North West	3	0	1	-
	South East	1	2	1	4
	South West	1	5	8	-
	Yorkshire and the Humber	4	10	-1	-
Diversity of the SLT	All white SLT	2	3	2	5
	At least one Asian SLT member	< 1	< 1	0	3
	At least one black SLT member	1	2	0	1
	At least one mixed ethnicity SLT member	0	1	4	-
	At least one other ethnicity SLT member	-3	1	-	-
	Multiple ethnic minority groups in SLT	-2	-1	-4	0

Notes: Retention rate gaps in cells highlighted in green are statistically significantly smaller than the overall average, and larger in red-highlighted cells. Cells marked with ‘-’ indicate cell sizes that are too small to report.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 20219/20.

6.7 How much of the retention rate gaps are explained by differences in teacher and school characteristics?

The first row of Table 21 shows the overall gaps in teacher retention for teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds compared to their white counterparts. As explained above, there are significant gaps in entry rates among qualified trainees from all other ethnic backgrounds compared to their counterparts from white ethnic backgrounds.

The gaps in the first row do not, however, account for the role that differences in other personal and course characteristics might play in accounting for the gaps. The gaps in the second row are the gaps between ethnic groups and their counterparts from white ethnic backgrounds that remain after accounting for the differences in characteristics between the ethnic groups and the role they play in driving the overall gaps. We included the following characteristics in this analysis: age and experience, working pattern, gender, phase, school type, region, school deprivation, diversity of the pupil intake, Ofsted rating and the diversity of the SLT.

The analysis in Table 21 shows that the gaps in rates of retention for teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are smaller after accounting for differences in teachers' characteristics, and only remain statistically significant for teachers from Asian backgrounds. In other words, teachers from black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds tend to have other characteristics that mean that their rate of retention could be expected to be lower than their white counterparts.

Table 21: Retention rate gaps for teachers from black, mixed and other ethnic groups compared to their white counterparts are largely explained by differences in their characteristics

	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Before controlling for characteristics (p.p.)	1	2	2	4
After controlling for characteristics (p.p.)	1	0	1	2

Note: Highlighted cells are statistically significant at the five per cent level.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2019/20.

Differences in region explain a significant portion of the retention gap for each ethnic group (Appendix B lists the effect of each characteristic independently). Teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds were more likely than their white counterparts to be teaching in schools in London, where retention rates are generally lower than other regions across all ethnic groups.

Differences in age and experience are also significant drivers of the gap. Teachers from Asian and mixed ethnic backgrounds tend to be younger and less experienced than their white counterparts and retention rates tend to be significantly lower among younger and less experienced teachers. Differences in working pattern, however, have the opposite effect. Teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic minority backgrounds are much more likely than their white counterparts to be teaching full time, rather than part time, and retention rates for full-time teachers are higher than for part-time teachers.

School characteristics are generally similar across ethnic groups, but teachers from Asian ethnic backgrounds are more likely to be teaching in more-deprived schools, where retention rates are lower.⁶³

However, even after accounting for all of these differences, the retention rate gap between teachers from Asian backgrounds and teachers from white backgrounds is still a statistically significant one percentage point. This suggests that, even if teachers from Asian and white ethnic backgrounds were of similar age and experience and taught in similar schools in the same regions, teachers from Asian ethnic backgrounds would still be less likely to remain in teaching than their white counterparts.

This was different for teachers from black backgrounds, for whom observed characteristics explained the majority of the retention rate gap. Teachers from black ethnic backgrounds are more

⁶³ See: <https://www.smf.co.uk/publications/social-inequalities-in-access-to-teachers/>

concentrated in London than their counterparts from white ethnic backgrounds (62 per cent of teachers from black ethnic backgrounds teach in London, compared to 11 per cent of teachers from white ethnic backgrounds), and retention rates in London tend to be lower than in other regions. Teachers from black ethnic backgrounds are more likely than their white counterparts to be teaching in more-deprived schools where retention rates are lower. Teachers from black ethnic backgrounds are also more likely to be teaching in schools with diverse SLTs, which are associated with higher retention rates. Age and experience contribute to the retention rate gaps for teachers from black backgrounds. This is because, like teachers from Asian, mixed and other backgrounds, teachers from black ethnic backgrounds tend to be less experienced than those from the white ethnic groups, and less experienced teachers are generally less likely to stay in teaching. Teachers from black ethnic backgrounds also tend to be older than the other ethnic groups when they enter teaching (as we show in Section 5), which is associated with lower retention rates.

These results suggest that, after accounting for differences in all of these characteristics, teachers from black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are about equally as likely as teachers from white ethnic backgrounds to stay in teaching but teachers from Asian backgrounds are less likely to remain in teaching than their white counterparts with similar characteristics.

7 Promotion to middle leadership

- The proportion of teachers promoted to middle leadership⁶⁴ is higher among teachers from black, mixed and Asian ethnic backgrounds (47, 45 and 41 per cent, respectively) than for their white counterparts (39 per cent). However, these higher promotion rates are largely driven by differences in teachers' characteristics, especially region and phase.
- Gaps in promotion to middle leadership have not changed significantly since 2010/11.
- The gap in promotion rates is larger in London for teachers from Asian, black and mixed ethnic groups, and in Yorkshire and the Humber for teachers from Asian and black ethnic backgrounds. There are also larger gaps in promotion rates for teachers from Asian backgrounds in the North East, East Midlands, East of England and North West.
- The middle leadership promotion gap is larger for teachers from Asian, black and other ethnic backgrounds working in secondary schools, and for teachers from black ethnic backgrounds working in special schools.
- After taking account of differences in their characteristics (especially region and phase), teachers from Asian, black and other ethnic groups are significantly less likely to be promoted to middle leadership than their white counterparts.

7.1 Introduction

As shown in Section 3, we found that the teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic groups are more likely to be promoted to middle leadership, compared to their white counterparts. This helps to explain why the under-representation is lower among Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds among middle leaders than classroom teachers (see Section 2).

To provide further context on differences in rates of promotion to middle leadership for teachers from different ethnic backgrounds, we explore whether promotion rate gaps have changed over time. We also consider whether gaps are different across individual and course characteristics (such as age, gender, region or subject).

Finally, we investigate the extent to which key differences in characteristics between trainees of different ethnic backgrounds help to explain any of the promotion rate gaps.

7.2 Methodology and limitations

7.2.1 Methodology

As in Section 6, we use data from the SWC to estimate promotion rates to middle leadership by using the role recorded for each teacher in a state-sector school in England. Due to the relatively small number of role transitions that occur between two consecutive years (particularly when grouping teachers by ethnicity), we consider promotion over five years. Specifically, we observe all classroom teachers recorded in the SWC in 2015/16 and record their role for each year from

⁶⁴ By promotion to middle leadership, we mean the proportion of teachers who were in the workforce in both 2015/16 and 2020/21, who were promoted to a middle leadership post during that period.

2016/17 to 2020/21. If a teacher was promoted to a middle leadership role in at least one of these years, they were recorded as having ‘progressed’ into middle leadership.

Progression into middle leadership is only defined for teachers who stay in teaching, and so it is ‘conditional’ on not having left teaching between 2015/16 and 2020/21, having entered teaching and successfully moved through each of the ITT stages. Promotion rate gaps for teachers of Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are calculated as the difference in promotion rates for teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds compared to their white counterparts.

We analyse whether promotion rate gaps are significantly different across teacher and school characteristics. We use the same teacher and school characteristics for this analysis as in Section 6 (i.e. gender, region, phase, whether the school is an academy, Ofsted rating and diversity of the SLT). These gaps are calculated independently for teachers in each category and compared against the overall retention rate gap.

We then analyse to what extent differences in observed characteristics (the characteristics listed above in addition to age, experience and working pattern) help to explain promotion rate gaps, and how much of the gaps are unexplained by these factors.

7.2.2 Limitations

As the SWC only observes teachers in state-sector schools in England, any teachers who move to an independent school or a school outside of England would appear to have left teaching and are therefore not observed.

7.3 Are there significant differences in rates of promotion to middle leadership for different ethnic groups?

We find that the rate of promotion to middle leadership is significantly higher among people from Asian, black and mixed ethnic groups compared to their white counterparts. Teachers from black and mixed ethnic groups have the highest promotion rates, which are eight and six percentage points higher than teachers from white ethnic backgrounds, respectively.

Table 22: Middle leadership promotion rates are higher for teachers from Asian, black and mixed ethnic groups compared to their white counterparts

Ethnic group	ML promotion rate (%)	White-Group gap (p.p.)	Statistically significant difference?
White	39		-
Asian	41	-2	Yes
Black	47	-8	Yes
Mixed	45	-6	Yes
Other	40	-1	No

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

7.4 Have middle leadership promotion rate gaps changed over time?

Average gaps in the rate of teacher being promoted to middle leadership within five years are not significantly different for teachers from black, mixed or other ethnic groups in 2015/16 compared with 2010/11. The size of the middle leadership promotion rate gap between teachers from Asian backgrounds and their white counterparts has reduced significantly over time.

Table 23: Gaps in promotion rates to middle leadership have reduced among teachers from Asian backgrounds between 2010/11 – 2015/16 and 2015/16 and 2020/21

Ethnic group	White – group gap (p.p.)		2015/16 vs. 2010/11 change (p.p.)	Statistically significant change?
	2010/11 – 2015/16	2015/16 – 2020/21		
Asian	-5	-2	2	Yes
Black	-8	-8	0	No
Mixed	-9	-6	3	No
Other	-3	-1	2	No

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2010/11 – 2020/21.

7.5 Are there significant differences in middle leadership promotion rates between the smaller ethnic groups?

Comparing the rate of middle leadership promotion in each of the smaller ethnic groups compared with people from white British backgrounds, we find that the pattern is similar to that of the larger ethnic groups to which they belong. However, there are some differences among the smaller ethnic groups.

Specifically, teachers from white Irish backgrounds have a much higher promotion rate to middle leadership than people from white British backgrounds (a difference of ten percentage points). In contrast to the pattern for the Asian ethnic group as a whole (which has a higher rate of promotion than their white counterparts), the gap for teachers from Pakistani backgrounds is roughly zero, indicating that they are about as likely to be promoted to middle leadership as teachers from white British backgrounds. Also unlike teachers from most other Asian ethnic groups, teachers from Chinese backgrounds are about six percentage points less likely to be promoted to middle leadership than teachers from white British backgrounds.

Full information on middle leadership promotion gaps is provided in Appendix B.

7.6 Variation in middle leadership promotion rates by personal and school characteristics

So far we have seen that teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are more likely than their white counterparts to be promoted to middle leadership. However, this overall finding masks significant variation in promotion rate gaps for teachers in different regions and types of schools.

We therefore look at promotion rate gaps separately across teacher and school characteristics, namely: region, gender, phase, Ofsted rating, school type (LA-maintained, single academy or multi-academy trust) and the ethnic composition of the SLT. Table 24 presents the key findings for region, phase and SLT diversity (full results can be found in Appendix B).

Table 24: Gaps in middle leadership promotion rates vary substantially by region, phase and SLT diversity

		Promotion rate gaps (p.p.)			
		Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Overall		-2	-8	-6	-1
Region					
	East of England	4	-2	-6	9
	East Midlands	6	-1	-3	-
	West Midlands	-3	-2	-9	0
	London	2	< 1	-1	4
	North East	14	-	1	-
	North West	3	-3	-1	4
	South East	2	1	0	-2
	South West	5	-3	3	-
	Yorkshire and the Humber	5	11	-9	-
Phase					
	Nursery or primary	-3	-10	-6	-1
	Secondary or 16 plus	3	< 1	-5	5
	Special	-5	2	-4	-8
Diversity of the SLT					
	All white SLT	0	-6	-4	0
	At least one Asian SLT member	5	4	-5	9
	At least one black SLT member	2	< 1	7	2
	At least one mixed ethnic SLT member	-5	-1	-14	-1
	At least one other ethnic SLT member	3	10	-	-
	Multiple ethnic minority groups in SLT	13	2	-6	6

Notes: Promotion rate gaps in cells highlighted in red are statistically significantly larger than the overall average. Cells marked with '-' indicate cell sizes that are too small to report.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

Promotion rate gaps are significantly greater than the overall gaps for teachers from Asian, black, and mixed ethnic backgrounds in London, and for teachers from Asian and black ethnic backgrounds in Yorkshire and the Humber. The gap in promotion rates is particularly large for teachers from Asian backgrounds in the North East (14 percentage points).

Middle leadership promotion rate gaps also vary by school phase. Specifically, gaps are larger for teachers from Asian, black and other ethnic groups working in secondary schools, and for teachers from black ethnic groups working in special schools.

Promotion rate gaps are larger for teachers working in schools with diverse SLTs. This is true for teachers from all ethnic groups compared to their white counterparts. It is not clear why this might be the case, particularly given the finding that SLT diversity is associated with higher retention rates for teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds (see Section 6).

7.7 How much of the gap in rates of promotion to middle leadership can be explained by differences in personal and school characteristics?

As with the previous sections, we now explore whether the observed characteristics of teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are a significant driver of the gaps in promotion rates. As outlined above, promotion rates are higher for teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds than teachers from white ethnic backgrounds, and this is reflected in the negative gaps in the first row of Table 25.

However, after we account for differences in key characteristics (the second row in Table 25), we find that promotion rate gaps are positive. This is because the observed characteristics of teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds could be expected to have led to higher promotion rates teachers from these ethnic groups, than for teachers from white backgrounds. Indeed, this helps to explain why teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds appear to be more likely than their white counterparts to be promoted to middle leadership, whereas other gaps tend to favour people from white ethnic backgrounds.

Table 25: Taking account of their characteristics reverses the gap in promotion to middle leadership for teachers from Asian, black and other backgrounds relative to the white ethnic group

	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Before controlling for characteristics (p.p.)	-2	-8	-6	-1
After controlling for characteristics (p.p.)	8	5	1	4

Notes: Highlighted cells are statistically significant at the five per cent level.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

Similar to our finding in Section 5, we find that accounting for observed characteristics serves to increase gaps in promotion to middle leadership. Differences in observed characteristics mask the fact that gaps would be present if teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds had the same characteristics as teachers from white backgrounds. This is because if teachers from white backgrounds had the same characteristics as teachers from the other ethnic backgrounds, we could expect them to be more likely to be promoted to middle leadership than teachers from the other ethnic groups. We can also see this effect in Table 24 where the gaps are significantly larger and in favour of teachers from white ethnic backgrounds within each of the characteristics (e.g. looking only at teachers in London).

Region and school phase are two characteristics which account for much of the differences in promotion to middle leadership between teachers from white backgrounds and teachers from all

other ethnic backgrounds. Specifically, teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic groups are more likely to be working in London and secondary schools, where promotion rates are generally higher.

Other characteristics have similar effects. Teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are more likely than their white counterparts to be working full-time rather than part-time, in more deprived schools and in schools with more ethnically diverse intakes, where promotion rates are also higher.

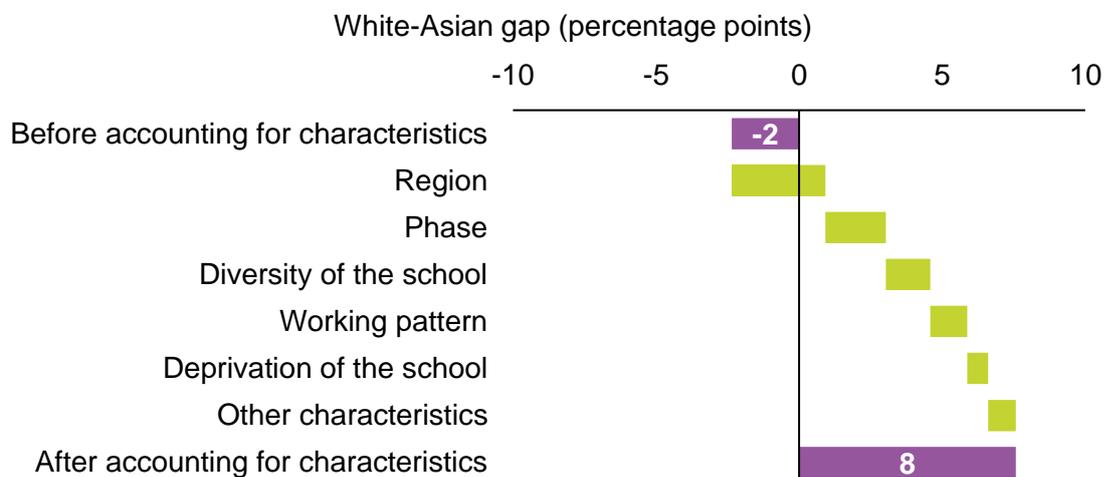
The results of our analysis seem to stand in contrast to the study by DfE (2018b), which concluded that there were no differences in leadership promotion rates between teachers from different ethnic backgrounds after taking differences in characteristics into account. However, DfE (2018bc) did find that teachers from Asian, black and other ethnic backgrounds were less likely to be promoted into middle leadership, compared to teachers with similar characteristics from white backgrounds, although these effects were not statistically significant. It is therefore possible that had the DfE study included larger sample sizes, this would have led to statistically significant results. An updated version of this study (DfE 2022b) found that teachers from white British backgrounds were more likely to progress to middle leadership.

7.7.1 Effects on the middle leadership promotion gap of taking characteristics into account for teachers from Asian ethnic backgrounds

In Figures 24 – 27, we show how the gaps in promotion rates are driven by differences in observed characteristics for teachers from each ethnic group in turn.

For teachers from Asian backgrounds, all observed characteristics tend to increase the promotion rate gap, which changes from minus two percentage points to plus eight percentage points compared to their white counterparts after accounting for differences in their characteristics. This means that, after taking their characteristics into account, teachers from Asian backgrounds are less likely to be promoted to middle leadership positions than their white counterparts.

Figure 24: White-Asian group promotion rate gaps are present after accounting for region, phase and other characteristics



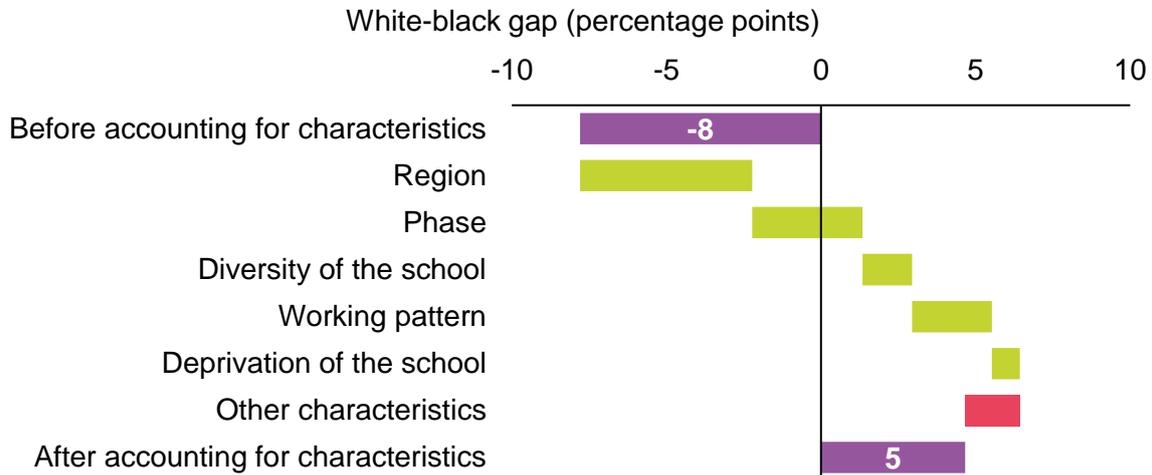
Note: Bars highlighted in purple reflect progression rate gaps before and after accounting for characteristics. Bars highlighted in green represent characteristics which tend to increase the gap while bars highlighted in red represent characteristics which tend to decrease the gap.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015/16-2020/21.

7.7.2 Effects on the middle leadership promotion gap of taking characteristics into account for teachers from black ethnic backgrounds

Teachers from black backgrounds are eight percentage points more likely to be promoted to middle leadership than their white counterparts. However, accounting for their characteristics serves to increase the gap, so that teachers from black backgrounds are five percentage points less likely to progress than teachers from white ethnic backgrounds once differences in their characteristics are taken into account.

Figure 25: White-black group promotion rate gaps are present after accounting for region, phase and other characteristics



Note:

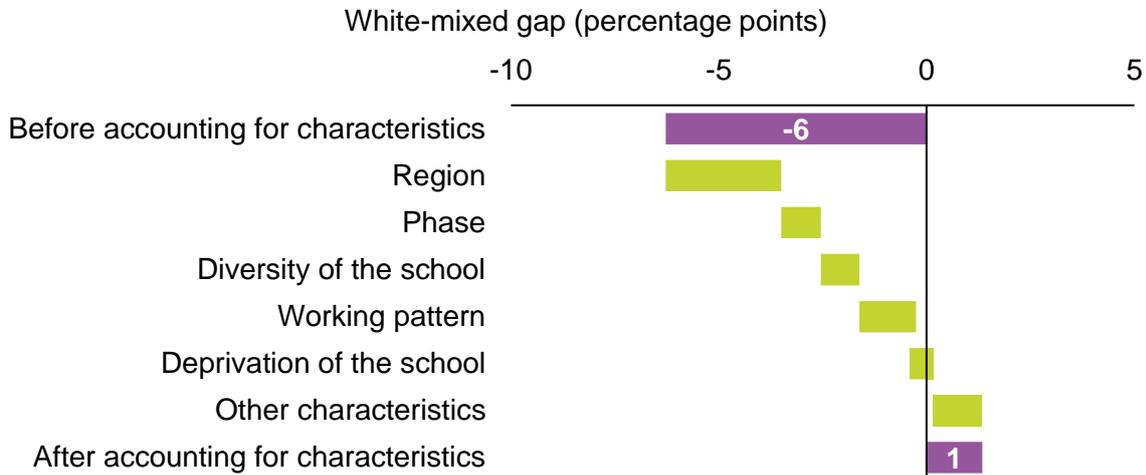
Bars highlighted in purple reflect progression rate gaps before and after accounting for characteristics. Bars highlighted in green represent characteristics which tend to increase the gap while bars highlighted in red represent characteristics which tend to decrease the gap.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21

7.7.3 Effects on the middle leadership promotion gap of taking characteristics into account for teachers from mixed ethnic backgrounds

As with teachers from Asian and black backgrounds, promotion rate gaps for teachers from mixed ethnic backgrounds are negative before accounting for their characteristics, which means that they are more likely to be promoted to middle leadership. After accounting for differences in the characteristics of teachers from mixed ethnic backgrounds compared to white, the gap is small and not statistically significant. This suggests that virtually all of the differences in promotion rates between teachers from mixed and white ethnic backgrounds can be attributed to differences in their characteristics. After accounting for these differences, teachers from mixed ethnic backgrounds are about equally as likely to be promoted to middle leadership as teachers from white ethnic backgrounds.

Figure 26: White-mixed group promotion rate gaps are small and not significant after accounting for observed characteristics



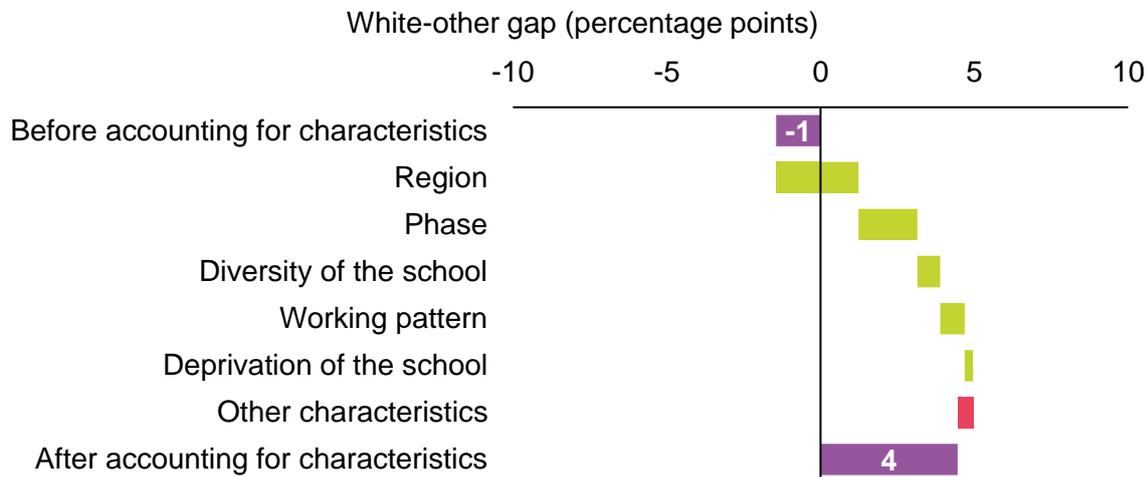
Note: Bars highlighted in purple reflect progression rate gaps before and after accounting for characteristics. Bars highlighted in green represent characteristics which tend to increase the gap while bars highlighted in red represent characteristics which tend to decrease the gap.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

7.7.4 Effects on the middle leadership promotion gap of taking characteristics into account for teachers from other ethnic backgrounds

Similarly to teachers from Asian and black backgrounds, teachers from other ethnic backgrounds are more likely to be promoted to middle leadership than their white counterparts (by about one percentage point), but taking account of differences in their observed characteristics reverses this relationship. After accounting for all observed characteristics, teachers from other ethnic backgrounds are about four percentage points less likely to progress into middle leadership.

Figure 27: White-other promotion rate gaps are present after accounting for region, phase and other characteristics



Note: Bars highlighted in purple reflect progression rate gaps before and after accounting for characteristics. Bars highlighted in green represent characteristics which tend to increase the gap while bars highlighted in red represent characteristics which tend to decrease the gap.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

These findings are consistent with analysis by DfE (2022b), which found that, after controlling for the influence of region, the rate of promotion to middle leadership was significantly lower for teachers from ethnic minorities compared to their white counterparts.

If teachers from Asian, black and other ethnic groups are less likely to gain promotion to middle leadership than would be expected given their characteristics, what might be the reasons for this? It is possible that there are differences between ethnic groups in their rate of application for promotion, but we do not have the evidence to investigate this. Even if teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds were less likely to apply for promotion than their white counterparts, this could be influenced by their perceived likelihood of success. Limited opportunity for promotion is a widespread theme in the literature (see Bush *et al.*, 2006; Hargreaves, 2011; Haque and Elliott, 2016; Lander and Zaheerali, 2016; Tereshchenko *et al.* 2020). Teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds may have fewer opportunities for taking responsibility and attending leadership training than their white counterparts, and come to recognise that a ‘glass ceiling’ is in operation which prevents them from advancing to more senior roles (Tereshchenko *et al.* 2020).

8 Promotion to senior leadership

- The proportion of middle leaders promoted to senior leadership⁶⁵ is largest for middle leaders from mixed ethnic backgrounds (21 per cent). It is larger for middle leaders from white ethnic backgrounds (18 per cent) than for middle leaders from Asian and black ethnic backgrounds (at 15 per cent and 14 per cent respectively).
- Gaps in promotion rates have not changed significantly since 2010/11.
- The promotion rate gap is larger for middle leaders from Asian ethnic backgrounds working in London and for middle leaders from black ethnic backgrounds working in the West Midlands, but smaller for middle leaders from mixed ethnic backgrounds working in the East Midlands.
- Differences in rates of promotion to senior leadership are partially driven by differences in region and deprivation of the school intake. Middle leaders from ethnic minority groups other than white tend to be clustered in London and more deprived schools, which are associated with higher rates of promotion to senior leadership.
- Accounting for these differences means that middle leaders from mixed ethnic backgrounds are equally likely to be promoted to senior leadership as their white counterparts. However, even after controlling for their characteristics, middle leaders from Asian and black ethnic backgrounds are significantly less likely to be promoted to senior leadership than their white counterparts.

8.1 Introduction

Many of the key findings emerging from this study point to inequities in progression rates at initial career stages as key drivers of under-representation in teaching. However, there are still significant differences in the likelihood of middle leaders from black, Asian, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds being promoted to senior leadership.

To provide further context, this section explores whether promotion rate gaps have changed over time. We also consider whether gaps are different across individual and course characteristics (such as age, gender, region or subject).

Finally, we investigate to what extent key differences in characteristics between middle leaders from different ethnic backgrounds help to explain any rate gaps.

8.2 Methodology and limitations

8.2.1 Methodology

The dataset and methodology used in this section is nearly identical to Section 7. To estimate progression rates to senior leadership (deputy and assistant headteachers), we use records of a teacher's post from the SWC. As with progression to middle leadership, due to the relatively small number of role transitions that occur between two consecutive years (particularly when divided into ethnic groups), we consider progression over a five-year period.

⁶⁵ By promotion to senior leadership, we mean the proportion of middle leaders who were in the workforce between 2015/16 and 2020/21, and who were promoted to a senior leadership post in that period.

Specifically, we observe all middle leaders recorded in the SWC in 2015/16 and record their role for each year from 2016/17 to 2020/21. If a middle leader was promoted to a more senior leadership role in at least one of those years they were recorded as having ‘progressed’ into senior leadership. While this included some middle leaders who progressed from middle leadership directly into headship, the vast majority (94 per cent) progressed from senior leadership positions. Since we focus only on middle leaders in this section, progression into senior leadership is conditional on having been promoted to a middle leadership position by 2015/16 and not having left teaching between 2015/16 and 2020/21.

Progression rate gaps for middle leaders from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are calculated as the difference in progression rates compared to their white counterparts. We then analyse whether progression rate gaps are significantly different across individual and school characteristics. The characteristics we consider are: gender, region, phase, whether the school is an academy, Ofsted rating and diversity of the SLT. Progression rate gaps are calculated independently for middle leaders in each category and compared against the overall progression rate gap compared with their white counterparts.

We then analyse the extent to which differences in observed characteristics (the characteristics listed above in addition to age, experience and working pattern) help to explain progression rate gaps, and how much of the gaps are unexplained by these factors.

8.2.2 Limitations

There are two primary limitations to this section. First, as the SWC only observes middle leaders in state-sector schools in England, any middle leaders who move to an independent school or a school outside of England would appear to have left teaching and are not observed.

Second, the sample of middle leaders is smaller than at previous career stages. This leads to sample sizes that are too small to report when considering differences in characteristics for middle leaders from other ethnic backgrounds, so we have not included this group in Sections 8.7 and 8.8.

8.3 Are there significant differences in rates of promotion to senior leadership for different ethnic groups?

As we show in Section 3, the rate of progression to senior leadership is higher for middle leaders from white ethnic backgrounds compared to middle leaders from Asian and black backgrounds, but lower than for middle leaders from mixed ethnic backgrounds. Relative to the gaps in ITT acceptance and retention rates, the differences in percentage point terms are not large, but they are statistically significant for teachers from Asian, black and mixed ethnic backgrounds.

Middle leaders from white and mixed ethnic groups have the highest promotion rates to senior leadership within five years, at 18 and 21 per cent respectively (so roughly one in five middle leaders from white and mixed ethnic backgrounds might expect to gain promotion to senior leadership in a five-year period). Middle leaders from Asian and black ethnic groups have lower promotion rates, by three and four percentage points (so roughly three in twenty might expect to be promoted in five years). The promotion rate for middle leaders from other ethnic backgrounds is not significantly different from that of middle leaders from white ethnic backgrounds.

Table 26: Senior leadership promotion rates are lower for middle leaders from Asian and black ethnic backgrounds, but higher for middle leaders from mixed ethnic backgrounds, compared to their white counterparts

Ethnic group	SL promotion rate (%)	White-Group gap (p.p.)	Statistically significant difference?
White	18		
Asian	15	3	Yes
Black	14	4	Yes
Mixed	21	-4	Yes
Other	15	3	No

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015 and 2020.

8.4 Have senior leadership promotion rate gaps changed over time?

Comparing promotion to senior leadership within ethnic groups during the period 2010/11 to 2015/16 with the period 2015/16 to 2020/21, we found no evidence of significant changes in promotion rate gaps between middle leaders from Asian, black, mixed or other ethnic groups compared to their white counterparts⁶⁶.

8.5 Are there significant differences in rates of promotion to senior leadership between the smaller ethnic groups?

We now turn to consider evidence of gaps between smaller ethnic groups. Within the Asian group, middle leaders from all minor ethnic groups have lower promotion rates than people from white British backgrounds, but promotion rates are lowest among middle leaders from Chinese ethnic groups.

Within the black ethnic group, promotion rates are similar for middle leaders from black Caribbean backgrounds compared to middle leaders from white British backgrounds, but are lower for middle leaders from Black African and other black backgrounds.

Middle leaders from all mixed ethnic groups have higher promotion rates compared with middle leaders from white British backgrounds, with the highest promotion rates for teachers from white and black Caribbean backgrounds. A table showing promotion rates for each of the smaller ethnic groups can be found in Appendix B.

⁶⁶ Please see Appendix B for further details.

8.6 Variation in senior leadership promotion rates by personal and school characteristics

As at previous career stages, we now consider how promotion rate gaps vary across several factors, namely: region, gender, phase, Ofsted rating, school type and the diversity of the SLT. We find no significant differences in these characteristics, with the exception of region.

The promotion rate gap is larger in London for middle leaders from Asian ethnic backgrounds compared to middle leaders from white ethnic backgrounds (by seven percentage points). Similarly, the gap in the West Midlands is larger for middle leaders from black ethnic backgrounds, by ten percentage points.

On the other hand, the promotion rate gap for middle leaders from mixed ethnic backgrounds working in the East Midlands shows that they are more likely than their white counterparts to progress to senior leadership posts in that region. There were no other significant relationships between progression rates and other characteristics (see Appendix B for the full results).

Table 27: The gaps in senior leadership promotion rates between middle leaders from each ethnic group compared to their white counterparts are fairly similar across observed characteristics, apart from region

		Promotion rate gaps (p.p.)			
		Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Overall		3	4	-4	3
Region	East of England	0	5	0	-
	East Midlands	-1	-	-18	-
	West Midlands	4	10	0	-
	London	7	5	0	6
	North East	-	-	-	-
	North West	1	-	-4	-
	South East	5	6	-12	-
	South West	-	-	-	-
	Yorkshire and the Humber	-1	-	-1	-

Notes: Promotion rate gaps in cells highlighted in green are statistically significantly smaller than the overall average, and larger in red-highlighted cells. Cells marked with ‘-’ indicate cell sizes that are too small to report.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

8.7 How much of the gap in rates of progression to senior leadership can be explained by differences in personal and school characteristics?

We conducted further analysis to gain a better understanding of how ethnicity affects progression to senior leadership, and how this is mediated by other variables such as gender, age, experience, region and phase.

The first row of Table 28 shows the overall gaps in rates of promotion to senior leadership for middle leaders from Asian, black and mixed ethnic backgrounds⁶⁷. Before taking account of differences in characteristics, we find that senior leadership promotion rates are lower for middle leaders from Asian and black ethnic backgrounds but higher for people from mixed ethnic backgrounds compared with their white counterparts.

The second row of Table 28 shows that after accounting for differences in key characteristics, the promotion rate gap is larger for middle leaders from Asian backgrounds. The promotion gap is smaller but still significant for middle leaders from black ethnic backgrounds compared with their white counterparts. The gap for middle leaders from mixed ethnic backgrounds is also smaller after controlling for characteristics and is no longer statistically significant.

Table 28: If they had the same characteristics as middle leaders from white backgrounds, senior leadership promotion rate gaps would be smaller for middle leaders from black and mixed ethnic backgrounds but larger for middle leaders from Asian backgrounds

	Asian	Black	Mixed
Before controlling for observed characteristics (p.p.)	3	4	-4
After controlling for observed characteristics (p.p.)	5	3	-2

Notes: Highlighted cells are statistically significant at the five per cent level.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

This suggests that promotion rate gaps for middle leaders from black and mixed ethnic backgrounds are driven at least in part by differences in their characteristics. For middle leaders from black backgrounds, this is mostly because they tend to be older but less experienced than their white counterparts and these characteristics are associated with lower promotion rates overall. However, these differences only account for a small part of the promotion rate gap. After accounting for these differences, middle leaders from black ethnic backgrounds are still about three percentage points less likely to be promoted to senior leadership than middle leaders from white ethnic backgrounds.

Middle leaders from mixed ethnic backgrounds are more concentrated in London and more likely to be teaching in more-deprived and secondary schools, both of which tend to be associated with increased promotion rates overall. After accounting for these differences, there is no statistically

⁶⁷ We do not present promotion rate gaps for middle leaders from other ethnic backgrounds due to small sample sizes.

significant difference in promotion rate gaps for middle leaders from mixed ethnic backgrounds compared to their white counterparts.

On the other hand, the characteristics of middle leaders from Asian backgrounds are associated with a higher likelihood of progression. This is primarily driven by the deprivation of the school, as middle leaders from Asian backgrounds are more likely to work in deprived schools, which have higher staff turnover and therefore higher promotion rates. Region is also a key driver because middle leaders from Asian backgrounds are more likely to work in London, which has higher promotion rates than other regions. Middle leaders from Asian ethnic backgrounds are also more likely than their white counterparts to work full time and in secondary schools, both of which increase their promotion rates. This means that observed characteristics do not seem to explain the gap in promotion rates for middle leaders from Asian backgrounds compared with their white counterparts and even appear to mask a larger gap.

What else might be contributing to the senior leadership promotion gaps we identify? As set out in Section 7, previous research has suggested that teachers from ethnic minorities other than white face particular barriers in advancing their careers, including racial discrimination (Hargreaves, 2011; Haque and Elliott, 2016; Tereshchenko *et al.*, 2020). One of the ways this may operate is through teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds other than white being encouraged or self-selecting into middle leadership roles (such as pastoral responsibility) that have limited opportunities for further progression⁶⁸ (Lander and Zaheerali, 2016; Tereshchenko *et al.*, 2020). Another possibility is that aspiring leaders from diverse ethnic backgrounds lack access to mentors who understand their cultural contexts (Bush *et al.*, 2006; Miller, 2019).

⁶⁸ Middle leadership roles are not recorded in the SWC at the level of detail necessary to explore this possibility in our analysis.

9 Promotion to headship

- The proportion of senior leaders promoted to headship⁶⁹ is larger among senior leaders from white ethnic backgrounds (25 per cent) than for senior leaders from black ethnic backgrounds (20 per cent) or Asian ethnic backgrounds (17 per cent).
- Gaps in headship promotion rates have not changed significantly since 2010/11.
- Differences in headship promotion between ethnic groups are partially driven by differences in region and the diversity of the school intake. Senior leaders from Asian and black ethnic backgrounds tend to be clustered in London and schools with more ethnically diverse intakes, where rates of promotion to headship are lower.
- Accounting for these differences means there is no longer a significant gap in promotion to headship for senior leaders from black ethnic backgrounds compared with senior leaders from white ethnic backgrounds. However, even after accounting for these differences, senior leaders from Asian backgrounds are still significantly less likely to be promoted to headship than their counterparts from white ethnic backgrounds.

9.1 Introduction

As demonstrated in Section 2, headteachers from ethnic backgrounds other than white are substantially under-represented in English schools. In their research, Bush *et al.* (2006) describe headteachers from diverse backgrounds as demonstrating: ‘qualities of determination, resilience and hard work’ in overcoming the barriers they face, leading to the conclusion that they are ‘exceptional people’.

The largest under-representation of people from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds is at headship. Section 3 shows that this is largely the cumulative effect of differences in progression rates in earlier stages of the teaching profession. However, there are still significant differences in the likelihood of senior leaders from black, Asian, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds being promoted to headship.

To provide further context on differences in rates of promotion to headship for senior leaders from different ethnic backgrounds, we explore whether promotion rate gaps have changed over time. We also consider whether gaps are different across individual and course characteristics (such as age, gender, region or subject).

Finally we end by investigating the extent to which key differences in characteristics between senior leaders from different ethnic backgrounds help to explain promotion rate gaps.

9.2 Methodology and limitations

9.2.1 Methodology

The methodology used in this section is similar to that described in Section 8. To estimate promotion rates to headship, we use records of teachers’ posts from the SWC. As with promotion

⁶⁹ By promotion to headship, we mean the proportion of senior leaders who were in the workforce in both 2015/16 and 2020/2, who were promoted to headship during that period.

to middle and senior leadership, due to the relatively small number of role transitions that occur between two consecutive years (particularly when divided into ethnic groups), we look at promotion over five years.

Specifically, we observe all senior leaders recorded in the SWC in 2015/16 and record their role for each year from 2016/17 to 2020/21. If a senior leader was promoted to a headship post in at least one of these years, they were considered to have 'progressed'. Promotion into a headship post is conditional on not having left teaching between 2015/16 and 2020/21, as well as having moved through all of the career stages up to senior leadership. Promotion rate gaps for teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are calculated as the difference in promotion rates relative to senior leaders from white ethnic backgrounds.

As with the previous sections, we analyse whether promotion rate gaps are significantly different across leader and school characteristics. As this section uses the same data source as the sections on retention and promotion into middle/senior leadership, we use the same teacher and school characteristics for this analysis (region, gender, phase, Ofsted rating, and whether the school is an academy). These gaps are calculated independently for teachers in each category and compared against the overall retention rate gap.

We then analyse the extent to which differences in characteristics (the characteristics listed above in addition to age, experience and working pattern) help to explain progression rate gaps, and how much of the gaps are unexplained by these factors.

9.2.2 Limitations

There are two primary limitations to this section. First, the SWC only observes teachers in state-sector schools in England. Therefore, any senior leaders who move into headship positions in an independent school or a school outside of England would appear to have left teaching and are not observed.

Second, the sample size of senior leaders is substantially smaller than in previous career stages. This means that it is not possible to present analyses for the smaller ethnic groups and across many of the key characteristics over which we calculate progression rate gaps. Similarly, in Sections 9.6 and 9.7, we are unable to report any results at all for senior leaders from mixed and other ethnic backgrounds.

9.3 Are there significant differences in rates of promotion to headship for different ethnic groups?

The rate of promotion to headship for senior leaders from white ethnic backgrounds is 25 per cent, or one in four senior leaders in 2015 who were still in the profession in 2020. In comparison, senior leaders from Asian, black and other ethnic groups have lower promotion rates (of 17, 20 and 18 per cent respectively). These gaps are significant for people from Asian and black backgrounds compared to senior leaders from white ethnic groups. Senior leaders from mixed ethnic backgrounds have a slightly higher rate of promotion to headship (26 per cent), which is not significantly different from the promotion rate of their white counterparts.

Table 29: Headship promotion rates are lower for senior leaders from Asian and black ethnic backgrounds, compared with senior leaders from white ethnic backgrounds

Ethnic group	HT promotion rate (%)	White-Group gap	Statistically significant difference?
White	25	-	-
Asian	17	7	Yes
Black	20	4	Yes
Mixed	26	-2	No
Other	18	6	No

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

9.4 Have headship promotion rate gaps changed over time?

Comparing promotion to headship during the period 2010/11 to 2015/16 with the period 2015/16 to 2020/21, we found no evidence of significant changes in promotion rate gaps between senior leaders from Asian, black, mixed or other ethnic groups compared to senior leaders from white ethnic backgrounds (see Appendix B for the full results).

9.5 Are there significant differences in rates of promotion to headship between the smaller ethnic groups?

Promotion rates to headship for senior leaders from each of the smaller (minor) ethnic groups followed similar patterns as the larger (major) groups. That is, promotion rates are lower for senior leaders from each of the ethnic minor groups within the white, Asian and black groups, compared to promotion rates for white British teachers. Similarly, promotion rates are higher for teachers from each of the ethnic minor groups within the mixed group compared to senior leaders from white British backgrounds, except for teachers from other mixed ethnic backgrounds. Promotion rates for each of the ethnic minor groups are shown in Appendix B.

9.6 Variation in headship promotion rates by personal and school characteristics

Promotion rate gaps are generally not statistically significantly different across region, gender, phase, Ofsted rating and school type (LA maintained, single academy or multi-academy trust), although small sample sizes limit the extent to which we can analyse some of these differences, particularly region.

The only statistically significant difference is for senior leaders from Asian backgrounds in the North West, where the gap is smaller than overall. Promotion rate gaps across each of these characteristics are shown in Appendix B.

9.7 How much of the gap in rates of promotion to headship can be explained by differences in personal and school characteristics?

The first row of Table 30 shows that senior leaders from Asian and black ethnic backgrounds are less likely to be promoted to headship than their white counterparts. (The numbers of senior leaders from mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are too small to report for this analysis.)

The second row of Table 30 shows that the gaps in rates of promotion to headship for senior leaders from Asian backgrounds are smaller but still significant after taking account of their personal and school characteristics (such as age and experience, gender, working pattern, school type, region and Ofsted rating – see Appendix B for full details). This suggests that senior leaders from Asian backgrounds tend to have other personal and school characteristics that mean their rate of promotion to headship is likely to be lower than their counterparts from white ethnic backgrounds, but there is still evidence of a gap in promotion rates that their characteristics do not explain.

After controlling for the influence of their personal and school characteristics, the gap for senior leaders from black ethnic backgrounds compared with their white counterparts is not statistically significant, suggesting that their personal and school characteristics explain all of the gap in promotion rates.

Table 30: Observed characteristics account for all of the gap for senior leaders from black backgrounds but only a small proportion of the gap for senior leaders from Asian backgrounds

	Asian	Black
Before controlling for observed characteristics (p.p.)	7	4
After controlling for observed characteristics (p.p.)	5	-2

Notes: Highlighted cells are statistically significant at the five per cent level.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

Differences in region and the diversity of the school intake drive gaps in promotion rates for senior leaders from Asian and black backgrounds in similar ways. Specifically, senior leaders from both Asian and black ethnic backgrounds tend to be more concentrated in London, where the rate of promotion to headship is lower than in other regions of England. They are also more likely than their counterparts from white ethnic backgrounds to be teaching in more ethnically diverse schools, which have lower rates of promotion to headship for senior leaders from all backgrounds.

Overall, the analysis shows that gaps in rates of promotion to headship between senior leaders from Asian ethnic backgrounds and their white counterparts are partly, but not fully explained by differences in age, experience, gender, school type, region, Ofsted rating or diversity of the school. For senior leaders from black ethnic groups, however, differences in their characteristics do account for all of the gap in promotion rates.

Our findings on promotion to headship are similar to those in two government reports. The earlier report (DfE, 2018b), found no evidence of disparity by ethnicity in promotion to leadership roles at

any level (results did suggest that senior leaders from white ethnic backgrounds are more likely to progress to headship than teachers from other ethnic backgrounds, but this difference was not statistically significant). However, more recent analysis (DfE, 2022b) found that full-time senior leaders from white British backgrounds were significantly more likely to progress into headship than senior leaders from black and Asian ethnic backgrounds⁷⁰.

⁷⁰ The different findings in the two DfE reports are largely due to changes in methodology used for the analysis.

10 Conclusions and recommendations

10.1 Conclusions

Our analysis shows that there is significant under-representation of people from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds within the teaching profession, compared to the general population, except for in ITT. Conversely, there is significant over-representation of people from white backgrounds at all stages of the teacher career pipeline, except for ITT. Although ethnic disparities clearly originate in the early career stages, they accumulate across career stages and are most pronounced at senior leadership and headship levels. The overwhelming majority (96 per cent) of headteachers are from white ethnic backgrounds, compared to 83 per cent of people in the wider population. In contrast, ethnic minority groups other than white are under-represented among headteachers by 60 per cent (mixed ethnic group), 75 per cent (black ethnic group), 83 per cent (Asian ethnic group) and 88 per cent (other ethnic group), compared to their proportions in the wider population.

These trends contribute to schools having senior leadership teams that are predominantly white: 86 per cent of publicly-funded schools in England have all-white senior leadership teams. We also find that 60 per cent of schools in England have an all-white teaching staff. Although secondary schools have a more diverse teaching staff than primary schools⁷¹, children entering school today have a high probability of rarely or never being taught by a teacher from an Asian, black, mixed or other ethnic minority group.

Governance volunteers from white backgrounds are slightly over-represented, whereas people from other ethnic backgrounds (particularly Asian, black and other ethnic groups) are under-represented among governance volunteers compared to their proportions in the wider population. This is important for racial equality, given the key influence that governance volunteers have on senior appointments and strategic decision-making in schools.

Overall, we find that people from ethnic minority groups other than white are under-represented at all levels once they enter the profession. The under-representation among senior leaders, headteachers and governance volunteers is a particular concern, given their influence on strategy, decision-making and the cultural values of schools.

However, an analysis of representation at a single point in time only reveals part of the picture. Representation at senior levels reflects the diversity of the workforce from decades before, and the current cohorts of senior leaders are likely to have faced different barriers and contexts to younger cohorts. Assessing ethnic disparities in progression⁷² from one stage of the teacher career to the next using the latest data provides a more complete picture of the current state of racial equality within the teaching profession.

⁷¹ In 2021, 69 per cent of primary schools and 18 per cent of secondary schools in England had an all-white teaching staff.

⁷² Progression means the percentage of people at a given stage of the profession who move on to the next stage within a specific period of time. It does not include people who leave the profession, except when referring to 'retention'. See Section 1.4 for detailed definitions.

Despite the recent progress in improving diversity at the first point of entry into teaching, a combination of significant disparities in progression rates from one stage of the teacher career pipeline to the next remain between trainees and teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds and their white counterparts. Without action to address the causes of these disparities, the under-representation of people from all ethnic minority groups except white is very likely to continue.

The most significant disparities in progression occur during the early career stages, especially in ITT. Compared with their white counterparts, acceptance rates to postgraduate ITT courses are nine percentage points lower for applicants from mixed ethnic backgrounds, 13 percentage points lower for applicants from Asian ethnic backgrounds and 21 percentage points lower for applicants from black and other ethnic backgrounds. There are further disparities in the rates of achieving QTS and entering state-sector teaching affecting trainees from these ethnic groups compared to their white counterparts.

Although teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds are less likely than their white counterparts to stay in teaching, these differences are largely driven by differences in region, age and experience. This is because teachers from white backgrounds are relatively older, more experienced and less concentrated in London; all of which are associated with higher retention rates. Once these differences are taken into account, only teachers from Asian backgrounds are significantly less likely than their white counterparts to stay in teaching.

Teachers from Asian, black and mixed ethnic backgrounds are more likely to be promoted to middle leadership positions than their white counterparts, but looking at the underlying data, this is largely driven by the fact that teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds are more concentrated in London and in secondary schools than their white counterparts, where rates of promotion into middle leadership are higher for teachers from all ethnic groups. Once these differences are taken into account, teachers from Asian, black and other ethnic backgrounds are significantly less likely to be promoted to middle leadership roles than their white counterparts.

Even though they are less pronounced than at early career stages, there are also some significant disparities in rates of promotion to senior leadership roles, particularly for teachers from Asian and black backgrounds compared to their white counterparts. In particular, teachers from Asian backgrounds are one percentage point less likely to stay in teaching⁷³, and middle leaders from Asian and black ethnic backgrounds are three percentage points less likely to be promoted to a senior leadership role than their white counterparts. Senior leaders from Asian backgrounds are also less likely to be promoted to headship than their white counterparts.

Although disparities in progression largely affect all ethnic minority groups at most stages of the teacher career, teachers from mixed ethnic backgrounds are equally as likely to remain in the profession, and achieve promotion to middle leadership, senior leadership and headship as their white counterparts working in similar regions and schools. Differences across regions are a crucial factor for understanding the patterns of ethnic disparities in progression through the teacher career

⁷³ Lower retention rates for teachers from black, mixed and other ethnic minority backgrounds are largely driven by differences in their characteristics, including region, age and experience.

pipeline in greater depth. London is a particular area where some ethnic disparities in the early teacher career stages are less than they are nationally. For example, the gaps between the acceptance rates to postgraduate ITT courses of applicants from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds and their counterparts from white backgrounds are significantly smaller in London than they are nationally. However, the gaps between the rates of promotion to senior leadership of applicants from black ethnic backgrounds and their white counterparts are significantly wider in London than they are nationally. This suggests there is a somewhat mixed picture in London across different stages of the teacher career pipeline and is particularly important because ITT applicants and teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds are concentrated in London (for example, 62 per cent of teachers from black ethnic backgrounds work in London, compared with 11 per cent of teachers from white backgrounds).

There are some areas of the education system where disparities in progression between ethnic groups are smaller. These are potential areas of good practice that could help to inform action to improve racial equality across the sector. They include Teach First, where the gaps between the acceptance rates to postgraduate ITT courses of applicants from black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds and their counterparts from white backgrounds are significantly smaller than they are in other ITT routes.

Ethnic disparities in teacher retention rates are also smaller in schools with diverse senior leadership teams (SLTs) and larger in schools with all-white senior leadership teams. Schools with SLT members from more than one ethnic minority group have significantly higher retention rates among teachers from Asian, black and mixed ethnic backgrounds than among white teachers.

The actions of leaders and other key decision-makers such as school governors and trustees are central to understanding why ethnic disparities exist within the system. Decision-makers are therefore also crucial to promoting the action that is required to make progress towards achieving racial equality in the teaching profession.

10.2 Recommendations

Progress in achieving racial equality in teaching requires individuals and organisations across the education sector to recognise racial equality as a priority and take action to address the disparities that are evident in the system. This piece of research alone cannot, and does not claim to provide the solutions, but it does provide a basis for focusing attention on the areas (for example, of the pipeline and of the country) where disparities are greatest and action should be targeted. Identifying and implementing actions to effectively address ethnic disparities within the teacher progression pipeline will require individuals and organisations to engage with range of diverse voices and perspectives to understand the action that is needed.

Our recommendations focus on two broad areas of focus, which our analysis, the previous research literature and our discussions with a diverse range of individuals and organisations in the education sector suggest are most likely to be beneficial for bringing about change: supporting leaders to make equitable workforce decisions and monitoring progress towards equalising opportunities.

1. Support for leaders and decision-makers in ITT providers, schools and trusts to equip them to make equitable workforce decisions

The significant disparities in progression rates between ethnic groups our analysis identifies typically arise from specific processes within organisations, such as recruitment, selection and promotion. More generally, decision-making by leaders can influence ethnic disparities in, for example, rates of retention within ITT and teaching. A critical measure for addressing ethnic disparities would therefore be to support leaders to make equitable workforce decisions and create an environment where teachers from diverse backgrounds are equally able to thrive.

One way to achieve this would be for decision-makers to draw on best practice within education system, and also from industries beyond education, to develop policies and processes that are equitable.

We encourage ITT providers to review their application and selection processes to pinpoint the extent, nature and causes of the lower acceptance rates experienced by applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds and to act to address any inequalities at this crucial first stage of entry into the profession.

More broadly, we encourage leaders of ITT providers, multi-academy trusts and other large educational organisations (such as colleges, recruitment and supply agencies and professional development providers) to commit to publishing institutional data on diversity and acting to address disparities. This is particularly relevant for larger organisations, where there are sufficient numbers to make the data meaningful. Doing so would help to identify gaps in progression, monitor progress and share good practice, benefitting both organisations and the system as a whole.

2. Monitor progress across the system towards equalising the opportunities for progression in teaching for people from all ethnic groups

It will be important to monitor whether progress is being made towards reducing and eliminating ethnic disparities in progression within the teacher career pipeline in England as a whole. This report demonstrates that it is possible to make quantitative assessments of state of racial equality in the teaching profession using census data that is already collected by the Department for Education. We recommend that regular monitoring is conducted to assess where progress in reducing disparities is being made.

Our analysis highlights two particular features that effective on-going data monitoring will need to feature to provide an accurate picture of racial equality. First, the analysis needs to be based on progression from one stage of the teacher career pipeline to the next rather than on representation. While representation is a useful way of looking at the bigger picture, progression analysis is more useful for monitoring because it can identify changes in ethnic disparities far more quickly. Second, the analysis needs to take account of differences in the way ethnic groups are concentrated across regions to provide an accurate picture.

On-going monitoring could be led by government, which has good access to the required data as well as an overarching policy standpoint on the teaching profession. However, the shared responsibility for reducing ethnic disparities across the whole education system means that many individuals and organisations have an interest in assessing system-level progress.

Suggestions for further research

Our research finds that differences in progression rates throughout the early stages of teaching profession explain a significant part of the lack of diversity in the workforce. Analysis of the specific drivers of these gaps, however, is limited by the information contained in the existing datasets. Further quantitative research, therefore, should be used to investigate other possible drivers of progression rate gaps across the profession.

This is particularly true for ITT, where our research finds that gaps in progression rates through ITT are among the largest, but the data sources are the most limited. Further research using richer datasets, including taking account of the qualifications of those applying, is important to deepen our understanding of challenges specific to the sector and what policy options are available to ITT providers and decision-makers to promote diversity.

We also recognise the need for further research into regional disparities in the representation and progression of teachers from different ethnic backgrounds. This is particularly relevant in the context of government policy and funding decisions designed to reduce geographic inequalities and increase 'levelling up'.

Of course, some of the key potential drivers of gaps in progression rates may be very difficult or impossible to research using large-scale census datasets (for example, differences in the number of applications a teacher makes before securing a leadership post). However, there is scope to investigate these through other data collection methods, including surveys and interviews. Indeed, research designs combining existing data with survey, interview, or other secondary data, could be used to assess the effectiveness of specific policy proposals (such as improved access to continuing professional development (CPD), national professional qualifications (NPQs) or mentoring) at increasing diversity in the sector.

Therefore, qualitative and mixed-methods research will have an important role to play in further understanding how to achieve greater diversity in teaching. However, additional qualitative and mixed-methods research should not seek to supplant or simply replicate the extensive body of research in this field. We recommend that future research should build upon the existing literature, with a particular focus on the stages of the workforce with the largest gaps in progression. Further research should help to drive forward work on equality and equity in the teacher workforce. Leaders and decision-makers in the sector should continue leveraging existing research to make progress on equality and refine best practices as new research becomes available.

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Appendix A: Methodological details

Section 1.4 outlines the key definitions and methodological considerations used in the analysis in this report. This appendix adds further details on three key areas of the analysis:

1. Our approach to preparing the data for analysis and how that influenced some of the definitions used
2. Further explanation of how we implemented the age-adjustment in the representation analysis
3. Further discussion of the methodology behind the progression analysis, with a particular focus on the model used to estimate how characteristics helped to explain progression rate gaps.

A.1 Data preparation

A.1.1 UCAS and TF data

The UCAS data (which we use in combination with the TF data to analyse representation and progression in applications to ITT) is observed at the application level. This means that if an applicant applied to multiple ITT programmes in a single year, that applicant is recorded multiple times in the dataset. The personal characteristics of applicants (i.e. age, ethnicity, domicile region and gender) do not vary across an applicant's applications. However, characteristics such as subject and ITT route can differ, where applicants made multiple applications to different subjects or routes. Applications to TF are observed at the applicant level and therefore one application per applicant is observed.

As our analysis is at the applicant level, we therefore select which application among potentially multiple applications in the UCAS data to include in our analysis. Where applicants made only one application to ITT, we use that one application in the analysis.

Where multiple applications were present, at most one of those applications would have been accepted. In the cases where one application was accepted, we used the accepted application in the analysis. Applicants with multiple applications and one acceptance are therefore considered to have been 'accepted to an ITT placement' and their recorded ITT route, subject and phase are that of their accepted application.

In the cases where applicants made multiple applications and none were accepted, that applicant is considered to have 'not been accepted' to an ITT placement. ITT route is recorded as the modal (i.e. the most frequent) route across multiple applications, if a modal route exists. If a modal route does not exist (because routes across multiple applications are equally frequent), then ITT route and subject are recorded as one of the ITT routes and subjects from that applicant's applications, selected at random. Phase is set to 'multiple phases' where it differs across multiple applications.

This same procedure is not necessary for the TF data (which we combined with the UCAS data to observe all applications to ITT) as the TF data consists of one application per applicant. However, as we note in Section 1.4, any applicant who applies to both TF and any other route may appear in the combined dataset twice. While the number of applicants for whom this is true is expected to be small, we are unable to fully account for this since the UCAS and TF data use distinct applicant/application identifiers.

A.1.2 ITT-PP data

The ITT-PP data, which we use to analyse teacher trainees who receive QTS and enter teaching, required relatively little additional preparation for the analysis. The data observes trainees in the final year of their training and, since trainees generally do not participate in more than one training course, there were no duplicate records.

The ITT-PP data, however, does not include provider region in the dataset, which is a key variable for our analysis. We therefore used provider region as observed in the public ITT-PP data files⁷⁴ and matched region into the dataset based on provider identifiers.

Our first main outcome in the ITT-PP data is the indicator for whether a trainee achieved QTS, did not achieve QTS or is 'yet to achieve QTS'. 'Yet to achieve' differs from 'did not achieve' in that it implies a trainee has not yet met the requirements to be awarded QTS but is still enrolled in the course. While trainees who are 'yet to achieve QTS' may be awarded it in future, we consider them to have not achieved QTS within that particular year. This is consistent with how the DfE reports QTS achievement rates⁷⁵.

Our second main outcome from the ITT-PP data is an indicator for whether a qualified trainee entered state-sector teaching. This is derived by matching the unique trainee identifier codes in the ITT-PP to teacher identifier codes in the SWC. Qualified trainees who link to the SWC after their final training year are said to have entered teaching.

Training year in the ITT-PP data is the final academic year of a trainee's course (e.g. an observed year of 2019 refers to an applicant who was in the final year of their course in September 2019). The year in which they began their course would therefore differ depending on the route⁷⁶.

Entry into teaching is defined as a qualified trainee who is observed in a state-sector school in the SWC year immediately following their final training year. For example a trainee in their final training year in 2019 is considered to have entered teaching if they are in a state-sector school in 2020. Since the SWC data is collected in November of each year, this effectively implies that a qualified trainee must be observed to be in a state-sector school within a few months of when they receive QTS. Teachers who do not enter teaching by the November following QTS are considered to have not entered teaching, even if they do enter teaching in later years.

Our definition therefore differs slightly from how the DfE reports entry rates into teaching (where they consider entry over the 16 months after QTS), and accordingly our estimated entry rates are lower than those reported by the DfE⁷⁷. However, our definition picks up the majority of qualified

⁷⁴ The public ITT-PP data files can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-teacher-training>.

⁷⁵ See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-teacher-training>.

⁷⁶ Most postgraduate routes are one year so first and final training years are identical; Teach First is a two-year course – the observed final year is the first year of the programme as this is when QTS is awarded; higher-education routes are typically multiple years in duration (three years for undergraduate routes), and so we observe the final year of the course.

⁷⁷ The DfE also applies an 'uplift' to their provisional statistics (statistics for which 16 months of SWC data is not yet available) based on the typical proportion of qualified trainees who enter teaching not by the November immediately following their qualification but within 16 months of qualification. Since this uplift is primarily for aggregate official statistics reporting purposes, we have not done the same for our analysis.

trainees who ever enter state-sector teaching (as nearly 70 per cent of those who ever enter teaching do so in the first year after QTS). Our definition also allows us to analyse entry rates of the most recent cohort of qualified trainees (those who were in their final training year in 2019 and entered teaching in 2020), which would not have been possible if we considered entry over a longer time span.

A.1.3 SWC data

The complexities of the SWC data necessitated slightly more preparation than the other datasets. While the SWC observes a number of school-level variables (such as phase and region), we augment these variables with additional public school-level information (such as Ofsted rating, the proportion of free school meal eligibility of the school population, or whether a school is an academy and/ or part of a multi-academy trust), taken from the DfE's Get Information About Schools (GIAS) public register of school information⁷⁸. The additional variables are matched into the SWC on the basis of the school's Unique Reference Number (URN) and academic year. In the case of schools which have merged, split or changed name over time, we allocated them a new unique identifier to enable us to link their data.

For school-level characteristics, we checked the SWC records against the GIAS records and set them to the value observed in GIAS if the SWC data was obviously incorrect. For teacher-level characteristics (such as ethnicity and qualification date) that varied across multiple records, we set them to their modal value across a teacher's multiple records if a modal value existed. If age was missing or inconsistent with previous information, we used information from previous years to calculate it. Where imputation was not possible (such as if all values were missing, a modal value did not exist or a teacher only had one record in the SWC), values were set to missing.

An additional error that could arise in the SWC is that teachers were not recorded in the data in a particular year even though they were teaching in a state-sector school. This could occur because of errors in data entry or schools which did not respond to the SWC data collection. This would lead to qualified trainees being considered to have not entered teaching, or teachers having left teaching, when that may not in fact be the case.

While it is not possible to perfectly account for every instance of these data errors, we impute records in the cases where errors are very likely. For example, if the start date of a teacher's contract in a particular school is in the 2010 academic year and that teacher is observed in the same school with the same start date in 2012 and 2013 but not 2011, we insert a record corresponding to the missing record for 2011. Personal and school characteristics for this inserted year are imputed accordingly (characteristics of the school are observed for that school in the imputed year, and personal characteristics are set based on modal characteristics for the other years that teacher is in the SWC).

All of the entry into teaching and retention outcomes in this analysis are based on the imputed SWC dataset in order to minimise the effect of likely data entry errors on our estimates of entry into teaching and retention rates.

⁷⁸ <https://www.get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/about>

A.2 Detailed methodology for the representation and progression analysis

A.2.1 Representation analysis

In Section 2 of the report, we analyse how representative each stage of the teacher workforce is, relative to the overall population. This analysis uses data from each of the main data sources⁷⁹ to determine what proportion of people in each stage of the workforce are from different ethnic groups. We then compare this to a ‘comparator’ proportion of the population of England that is made up of people from the same ethnic background to determine whether people from a particular ethnic group are over-represented (i.e. they make up a larger proportion of a stage of the teacher workforce than in the overall population) or under-represented (vice-versa).

Our ‘comparator’ proportion is derived from the 2011 Census data, but is projected forward to 2021. Younger age cohorts tend to be more diverse than older age cohorts and so projecting the census data forwards by ten years is done to reflect changes in the diversity of the population as people in younger, more-diverse age cohorts age.

The projection process is outlined in Section 1.4 but, as a brief example, we consider people in the 20-25 age category in the 2011 census data to be in the 30-35 age category by 2021. This evidently introduces some potential bias into the estimates as it implicitly assumes that flows into and out of the population of people from each ethnic group (immigration, emigration, death rates, etc.) are the same. However, since the adjustment process captures the demographic changes that occurred between 2011 and 2021, it is likely to serve as a better ‘approximation’ of the picture in 2021, even if small potential biases are present.

We also adjusted the comparator proportion to reflect the age distribution of those in each workforce stage. Those in senior roles in the teaching profession like senior leader and headteacher are on average older than those training to be teachers or who just entered the profession. However, due to gradual demographic changes, diversity also tends to be lower in older age groups than in younger age groups. Therefore, we adjust the comparator proportion such that we can compare the diversity of, for example, senior leaders, with the overall population diversity of similar-age people.

Age categories in the census data are observed in five-year intervals from age zero to age 85 and over. Since people working in the teacher workforce are of working age, we use the census age categories primarily from 20-24 up to 65-69 (though this differs depending on the workforce stage – there are not enough ITT applicants in the 65-69 age category to include in the analysis for example).

We age-adjust our comparator proportions by taking the average proportion of people in each ethnic group across age categories, weighted by the proportion of people in each age category in that workforce stage. If people in that workforce stage are younger (as in ITT for example), then more weight is put on the younger age categories. If people in that workforce stage are older (as

⁷⁹ UCAS/TF for ITT application, ITT-PP for QTS achievement and entry into teaching, SWC for retention in teaching and promotion to middle/senior leadership and headship and the NGA survey for school governors.

for senior leadership or headship), then more weight is put on the older age categories. An example using the UCAS/TF data is given below

Table 31: Age-adjusting the census data yields a weighted average comparator proportion that reflects the age distribution of the workforce stage

Age group	Population by ethnicity and age group, from census data (%)					ITT applicants by age group (%)
	White	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other	
Age 20 to 24	80.4	9.3	4.7	4.5	1.1	48.1
Age 25 to 29	81.7	9.0	4.3	3.8	1.1	22.9
Age 30 to 34	80.4	11.2	3.8	3.1	1.4	9.2
Age 35 to 39	79.5	12.1	4.0	2.6	1.7	7.1
Age 40 to 44	78.9	12.6	4.5	2.2	1.8	6.5
Age 45 to 49	82.0	10.5	4.3	1.7	1.5	3.5
Age 50 to 54	85.6	7.5	4.3	1.5	1.1	1.8
Age 55 to 59	88.2	5.6	4.1	1.3	0.8	0.8
Age 60 to 64	89.6	5.7	3.1	0.9	0.7	0.2
Unweighted average	82.9	9.3	4.1	2.4	1.3	-
Weighted average	80.8	9.8	4.4	3.7	1.2	-

Source: NFER analysis of UCAS/TF from 2019/20 and 2011 census data, projected forward to 2021.

In this case, our estimates suggest that in 2021, about 83 per cent of the population aged 20-64 was from a white ethnic background. However, the proportion of people from white ethnic backgrounds in older age groups (particularly those aged 60-64) is considerably higher than in the youngest age group.

When we put more weight on the younger age groups (since nearly three-quarters of ITT applicants are younger than 30), we find that the weighted average proportion of the population from white ethnic backgrounds is about 81 per cent. Similarly, the proportion of the population from Asian, black and mixed ethnic backgrounds is higher with the weighting than without. We use the weighted average throughout the representation analysis as it allows us to compare the representation of each ethnic group within teaching to the diversity of a group of people drawn from the population with a similar age profile.

A.2.2 Progression analysis

Section 1.4 outlines the main methodological considerations for the progression analysis common to the whole report (including definitions of progression for each of the workforce stages). In brief, we estimate the rate of progression from each stage of the workforce to the next (for example, the proportion of ITT trainees who receive QTS or the proportion of classroom teachers who progress to middle leadership) for people from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds, compared

to their white counterparts. Statistical significance at the five per cent level of any gaps in progression rates between people from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds compared with their white counterparts is assessed using a z-test of equality of progression rates.

In Section 3, we compare gaps in progression rates for people from each ethnic background across the workforce. In doing so, we report our estimates in terms of odds ratios rather than percentage points. This is done to ensure that estimates are proportionally comparable across each workforce stage (for example, a gap of two percentage points is larger relative to a base rate of ten per cent compared with a base rate of 80 per cent). Odds ratios can be calculated as the ratio of two events occurring versus not occurring:

$$\text{Odds ratio} = \frac{P1/(1 - P1)}{P2/(1 - P2)}$$

We also analyse whether gaps are different across teacher and school characteristics by estimating gaps separately for different teachers and types of schools. Statistical significance of the difference between these gaps and the overall gap is assessed at the five per cent level by way of a z-test of equality of progression rate gaps.

A.2.3 Analysis of how characteristics explain progression rate gaps

The progression analysis also considers the extent to which differences in personal and school characteristics help to explain gaps in progression rates (for example, the fact that teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are more likely than teachers from white backgrounds to be teaching in London compared to other regions of the country, where retention and progression rates may be different for all teachers, regardless of ethnicity).

We use a statistical technique in this part of the analysis called the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition (Oaxaca, 1973; Blinder, 1973), which is a technique that has been used extensively in academic studies of gender wage gaps and discrimination. For reviews of the literature using this tool, see Stanley and Jarrell (1998) or Weichselbaumer and Winter-Ebmer (2005).

The Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition decomposes unconditional differences in progression rates into the component which is explained by differences in observed characteristics (the ‘explained’ component) and the part that remains after accounting for the effect of all observed characteristics (the ‘unexplained’ component).⁸⁰ In the literature, the ‘unexplained’ component is usually attributed to a ‘discrimination’ effect, but it could also be reflective of differences in other key characteristics that are not observed in the data. We discuss the extent to which our estimates of the unexplained component may be reflective of discrimination in more detail in Section 1.4

Similar analysis could be performed with simple regression modelling. In the context of (for example) a regression of retention on ethnicity and region, ‘controlling for’ region means that we are able to use the regression output to interpret the effect of ethnicity independently of region. However, it tells us little about how region and ethnicity may be linked. The Oaxaca-Blinder

⁸⁰ This is known as the two-way decomposition. A three-way decomposition is also possible which further splits out the ‘explained’ component. However, the broader two-way split of the gap into explained and unexplained components is what was most relevant for this research.

decomposition is advantageous in this case as retention and progression are likely to be mediated by key observed independent variables, and this is an output of interest for the analysis.

As our outcome variable in all of the progression analysis is categorical (i.e. an individual either progresses in their career or they do not), we use the straightforward extension of the model to categorical outcomes (Jann, 2008). Additionally, as all of our independent variables are also categorical, the model could potentially be influenced by the ‘identification’ problem, wherein estimates are not invariant to the choice of base category. We therefore follow Yun (2005), who suggests normalising the binary independent variables. The significance of the extent to which gaps are explained by observed characteristics is assessed at the five per cent level with a z-test.

In order to simplify the presentation of the results in Sections 4 - 9, we outline what the overall unconditional gap in progression rates and then present it again after controlling for observed characteristics (this is reflective of the ‘unexplained’ component of the gap – see Sections 1.4 and 4 – 9 for examples and a more detailed discussion). In Appendix B, we also show how much of the gap is driven by each observed characteristic independently. Some of these effects are negative, which suggests that differences in that particular characteristic tend to decrease progression rate gaps. An example of this is the effect of region on promotion to middle leadership in Section 7 – teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are more likely than teachers from white backgrounds to be teaching in London than in other regions of the country. However, promotion rates to middle leadership tend to be higher in London than other regions, so comparing promotion rates between teachers from different ethnic groups can confound the effect of region. See Appendix B and Sections 4 – 9 for a more detailed discussion and examples.

Appendix B: Additional analysis tables

This appendix is intended to present the tables of analysis results that were not included in the main body of the report, either for space or because the results were broadly non-significant. The tables are presented in several sections. The first corresponds to tables outlining the overall breakdowns in characteristics such as region and age that are of particular relevance to the progression analysis in Sections 2 and 4 – 9. The remaining sections contain tables specific to each report section that were omitted from the main body of the text.

B.1 Overall characteristic breakdowns

As we note in the report, ITT applicants and teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are much more likely than applicants and teachers from white backgrounds to be in London, compared to other regions.

Table 32: ITT applicants from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds are much more likely than their white counterparts to live in London than in other regions

Domicile region	Proportion of ITT applicants by domicile region (%)				
	White	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
East of England	10	6	6	8	6
East Midlands	8	6	5	6	4
West Midlands	9	19	11	11	10
London	12	36	58	34	52
North East	6	2	1	2	2
North West	14	11	6	10	9
South East	15	7	7	12	9
South West	10	2	2	7	3
Yorkshire and the Humber	10	11	3	7	5
Other UK and International	6	1	1	3	2

Source: NFER analysis of UCAS/TF data for 2019/20.

We also note in the progression analysis that teachers from Asian, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds tend to be generally younger than teachers from white backgrounds. Meanwhile, teachers from black backgrounds tend to be older than teachers from white backgrounds.

Table 33: Teachers from Asian, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds tend to be younger than their white counterparts, whereas teachers from black ethnic backgrounds tend to be older

Age categories	Proportion in each age category (%)				
	White	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Age under 25	8	10	6	10	7
Between 25 and 29	20	25	18	29	20
Between 30 and 39	32	35	27	36	35
Between 40 and 49	23	20	25	16	23
Between 50 and 59	14	8	21	8	12
60 and over	3	1	4	1	3

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2020/21.

B.2 Tables for Section 4 – application to ITT

Analysis of UCAS data for 2021 suggests that the ratio of acceptances and applications to undergraduate ITT courses is highest for applicants from white ethnic backgrounds.

Table 34: Number of applications and acceptances for applicants from different ethnic backgrounds to undergraduate ITT courses

Ethnic group	Applications	Acceptances	Acceptance: application ratio (%)
White	41,090	8,045	20
Asian	3,285	640	19
Black	750	135	18
Mixed	905	170	19
Other	405	75	19
Overall	46,435	9,065	20

Note: Candidates can apply to more than one course.

Source: NFER analysis of 2020 UCAS data <https://www.ucas.com/data-and-analysis/undergraduate-statistics-and-reports/ucas-undergraduate-sector-level-end-cycle-data-resources-2021>.

Table 35 shows how much of the overall gap in postgraduate ITT acceptance rates (the first row of the table) is due to differences in each of the listed factors between applicants from each ethnic group. The gap estimates for each factor reflect the estimated gap in acceptance rates associated with that factor (for example, the fact that applicants from black ethnic backgrounds tend to be older than other applicants is associated with a three percentage point gap in acceptance rates). The total gap in acceptance rates that is driven by characteristics, and then the total gap in

acceptance rates that is not explained by characteristics are shown in the last two rows of the table. As discussed in Section 2, statistically significant differences in acceptance rates after controlling for observed characteristics could be indicative of differences in other unobserved characteristics as well as indicative of discrimination. Further discussion of how observed characteristics are likely to affect acceptance rates is in Section 4.

Table 35: Gaps in acceptance rates for ITT applicants from different ethnic groups are partially explained by observed characteristics

	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Observed acceptance rate gap (p.p.)	13	21	9	21
Acceptance rate gap due to individual observed factors (p.p.)				
Age	< 1	3	< 1	3
Gender	0	< 1	0	0
Region	0	1	0	1
Phase	< 1	1	1	1
Route	2	1	2	1
Total gap due to observed characteristics (p.p.)	2	6	3	5
After controlling for characteristics (p.p.)	10	15	6	16

Note: Highlighted cells are statistically significant at the five per cent level. Total gaps due to observed and unobserved factors may not sum to the overall observed gap due to rounding.

Source: NFER analysis of UCAS/TF data for 2020/21.

B.3 Tables for Section 5 – award of QTS

Full analysis of differences in QTS achievement rates across different teacher and ITT provider characteristics is provided in Table 36.

Table 36: There are differences in QTS achievement rate gaps for degree class, subject and region

		QTS achievement rate gaps (p.p.)			
		Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Overall		4	5	2	4
Age category	Age <= 25	3	4	1	2
	Between 25 and 30	5	3	3	4
	Between 30 and 40	4	5	1	1
	Age 40+	7	7	7	8
Gender	Female	4	5	1	3
	Male	4	7	3	6
ITT route	Higher education	3	6	2	4
	Undergraduate	2	3	1	-
	SCITT	5	8	3	-
	School direct - fee	2	3	1	2
	School direct - salary	5	5	2	6
	Teach First	4	6	2	< 1
Degree class	First	2	1	3	9
	Lower second	2	5	3	2
	Other	5	8	1	-
	Upper second	4	3	1	4
Subject	General primary	5	6	2	4
	Sciences	4	6	1	3
	Mathematics	3	9	4	5
	English	1	1	2	4
	Modern Foreign Languages	-1	5	0	3
	History	-	8	2	-
	Geography	4	12	-	-
	Art, design, music and drama	3	-	2	-
	Design and technology	12	7	-	-
	Physical education	7	5	5	-
	Computing	1	9	-	-
	Other subjects	1	1	-1	-

		QTS achievement rate gaps (p.p.)			
		Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Region	East of England	3	6	3	-
	East Midlands	4	13	0	-
	West Midlands	4	6	2	4
	London	3	4	2	2
	North East	9	-	-	-
	North West	4	5	3	6
	South East	6	13	3	6
	South West	5	9	7	-
	Yorkshire and the Humber	4	11	0	12

Notes: QTS achievement rate gaps in cells highlighted in green are statistically significantly smaller than the overall average, and larger in red-highlighted cells. Cells marked with '-' indicates cell sizes that are too small to report.

Source: NFER analysis of ITT-PP data for 2017/18 – 2019/20.

Table 37 shows the gap in QTS achievement rates due to differences in trainee characteristics. Further discussion of how each of these factors are likely to affect QTS achievement is provided in Section 5.

Table 37: Gaps in QTS achievement rates for ITT trainees from different ethnic groups are partially explained by observed characteristics

	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Observed QTS achievement rate gap (p.p.)	4	5	2	4
QTS achievement rate gap due to individual observed factors (p.p.)				
Age	0	1	0	1
Gender	< 1	< 1	< 1	< 1
Route	1	1	< 1	1
Degree class	0	1	0	0
Subject	< 1	< 1	< 1	< 1
Provider type	0	0	0	0
Region	< 1	-1	< 1	< 1
Total gap due to observed factors (p.p.)	1	1	0	1
After controlling for characteristics (p.p.)	3	4	2	3

Note: Highlighted cells are statistically significant at the five per cent level. Total gaps due to observed and unobserved factors may not sum to the overall observed gap due to rounding.

Source: NFER analysis of ITT-PP data for 2017/18-2019/20.

B.4 Tables for Section 5 – entry into teaching

Additional analysis of differences in the rate of entry into teaching across different teacher and ITT provider characteristics is provided in Table 38.

Table 38: There are differences in the rate of entry into teaching related to age, route, degree classification, subject and region

		Entry into teaching rate gaps (p.p.)			
		Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Overall		7	1	-1	4
Age	Age <= 25	9	-4	-2	0
	Between 25 and 30	9	1	-2	8
	Between 30 and 40	3	3	0	1
	Age 40+	4	10	11	13
Gender	Female	8	1	-2	4
	Male	5	1	0	6
Route	Higher education	4	1	-5	2
	Undergraduate	15	1	-1	-8
	SCITT	12	9	2	5
	School Direct - fee	7	1	4	13
	School Direct - salary	4	1	-1	2
	Teach First	-1	-1	2	-
Degree class	First	5	1	0	9
	Upper second	6	0	-7	-3
	Lower second	1	8	2	13
	Other	8	-2	-1	6
Subject	General primary	11	-1	-2	0
	Sciences	3	3	1	4
	Mathematics	2	6	4	13
	English	5	6	1	0
	MFL	5	6	9	9
	History	3	-14	-6	-
	Geography	-2	1	-3	-
	Art, design, music and drama	-5	4	2	9
	Design and technology	-1	4	1	-
	Physical education	6	-7	-12	-
	Computing	5	3	-2	10

		Entry into teaching rate gaps (p.p.)			
		Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
	Other subjects	6	-6	1	-6
Region	East of England	9	6	12	7
	East Midlands	13	10	-2	-
	West Midlands	15	10	3	17
	London	4	6	0	7
	North East	16	-	18	-
	North West	12	6	-1	7
	South East	4	5	0	12
	South West	16	8	7	4
	Yorkshire and the Humber	19	20	3	14

Notes: Entry rate gaps in cells highlighted in green are statistically significantly smaller than the overall average, and larger in red-highlighted cells. Cells marked with ‘-’ indicate cell sizes that were too small to report.

Source: NFER analysis of ITT-PP data for 2018/19 and 2019/20.

Table 39 shows the gap in entry into teaching rates due to differences in characteristics. Further discussion of how these factors are likely to affect entry into teaching is provided in Section 5.

Table 39: Entry rate gaps would be larger if qualified trainees from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds had the same characteristics as their white counterparts

	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Observed entry into teaching rate gap (p.p.)	7	1	-1	4
Entry into teaching rate gap due to individual observed factors (p.p.)				
Age	0	1	0	1
Gender	< 1	< 1	< 1	< 1
Route	2	1	< 1	3
Degree class	0	< 1	0	0
Subject	-1	-1	< 1	-2
Provider type	0	0	0	0
Region	-3	-5	-2	-4
Total gap due to observed factors (p.p.)	-2	-4	-3	-2
After controlling for characteristics (p.p.)	10	5	1	6

Note: Highlighted cells are statistically significant at the five per cent level. Total gaps due to observed and unobserved factors may not sum to the overall observed gap due to rounding.

Source: NFER analysis of ITT-PP and SWC data for 2017/18-2019/20.

B.5 Tables for Section 6 – retention in teaching

Additional analysis of differences in retention rate gaps across different teacher and ITT provider characteristics is provided in Table 40.

Table 40: Retention rate gaps differ in London and Yorkshire and the Humber, and are generally smaller in schools with diverse senior leadership teams

		Retention rate gaps (p.p.)			
		Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Overall		1	2	2	4
Region	East of England	1	2	2	5
	East Midlands	2	6	4	-
	West Midlands	2	2	0	9
	London	-1	1	0	2
	North East	6	-	-	-
	North West	3	0	1	-
	South East	1	2	1	4
	South West	1	5	8	-
	Yorkshire and the Humber	4	10	-1	-
Gender	Female	1	2	2	4
	Male	2	2	1	4
Phase	Nursery or primary	1	2	2	3
	Secondary or 16 plus	1	2	1	3
	Special	0	3	-2	7
Ofsted	Outstanding	1	2	0	3
	Good	1	2	2	4
	Requires improvement	2	4	2	1
	Inadequate	-1	2	2	14
School type	LA maintained	1	3	2	3
	Single academy	1	3	0	2
	Multi-academy trust	2	1	2	4
Diversity of the SLT	All white SLT	2	3	2	5
	At least one Asian SLT member	0	0	0	3
	At least one black SLT member	1	2	0	1
	At least one mixed ethnicity SLT member	0	1	4	-

		Retention rate gaps (p.p.)			
		Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
	At least one other ethnicity SLT member	-3	1	-	-
	Multiple ethnic minority groups in SLT	-2	-1	-4	0

Notes: Retention rate gaps in cells highlighted in green are statistically significantly smaller than the overall average, and larger in red-highlighted cells. Cells marked with '-' indicate cell sizes that are too small to report.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 20219/20.

Table 41 shows the gap in retention rates due to differences in characteristics. Further discussion of how each of these factors are likely to affect retention is in Section 6.

Table 41: Retention rate gaps are partially explained by observed characteristics of teachers from different ethnic backgrounds

	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Observed retention rate gap (p.p.)	1	2	2	4
Retention rate gap due to individual observed factors (p.p.)				
Age and experience	< 1	2	< 1	0
Working pattern	< 1	-1	< 1	< 1
Gender	< 1	< 1	0	0
Phase	0	0	0	0
School type (LA-maintained, single academy, multi-academy trust)	< 1	< 1	0	< 1
Region	< 1	< 1	< 1	1
School deprivation	< 1	< 1	< 1	< 1
School diversity	0	< 1	0	< 1
Ofsted rating	0	0	< 1	< 1
SLT diversity	< 1	< 1	< 1	< 1
Total gap due to observed factors (p.p.)	< 1	2	< 1	2
After controlling for characteristics (p.p.)	1	0	1	2

Note: Highlighted cells are statistically significant at the five per cent level. Total gaps due to observed and unobserved factors may not sum to the overall observed gap due to rounding.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2018/19-2020/21.

B.6 Tables for Section 7 – promotion to middle leadership

Analysis of gaps in the rate of promotion to middle leadership for the smaller ethnic groups is in Table 42. Most of the gaps for the smaller groups generally follow the patterns for the larger groups (see Section 7). However, the gap for teachers from white Irish backgrounds is considerably larger

than the other white groups, the gap for teachers from Pakistani backgrounds is smaller than other Asian groups, and the gap for teachers from Chinese backgrounds is larger than other Asian groups.

Table 42: Gaps in promotion rates for the smaller ethnic groups are generally similar to gaps for the larger ethnic groups

Major ethnic group	Minor ethnic group	ML promotion rate (%)	White British - group gap (p.p.)	Statistically significant difference?
White	White British	39	-	-
	White Irish	48	-10	Yes
	Any other white background	38	1	Yes
Asian	Indian	43	-4	Yes
	Pakistani	39	0	Yes
	Bangladeshi	44	-6	No
	Chinese	33	6	Yes
	Any other Asian background	41	-2	No
Black	Black African	47	-8	Yes
	Black Caribbean	48	-9	No
	Any other black background	40	-2	Yes
Mixed	White and black Caribbean	48	-9	Yes
	White and Asian	42	-3	No
	White and black African	41	-2	No
	Any other mixed background	46	-8	Yes
Other	Any other ethnic group	40	-2	Yes

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

Additional analysis of differences in gaps in promotion to middle leadership across different teacher and ITT provider characteristics is provided in Table 43.

Table 43: Gaps in middle leadership promotion rates vary substantially by region, phase and SLT diversity

		Promotion rate gaps (p.p.)			
		Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Overall		-2	-8	-6	-1
Region	East of England	4	-2	-6	9
	East Midlands	6	-1	-3	-
	West Midlands	-3	-2	-9	0
	London	2	< 1	-1	4
	North East	14	-	1	-
	North West	3	-3	-1	4
	South East	2	1	0	-2
	South West	5	-3	3	-
	Yorkshire and the Humber	5	11	-9	-
Gender	Female	-3	-10	-6	-2
	Male	1	2	-4	1
Phase	Nursery or primary	-3	-10	-6	-1
	Secondary or 16 plus	3	< 1	-5	5
	Special	-5	2	-4	-8
Ofsted	Outstanding	-3	-7	-6	-2
	Good	-3	-7	-6	-2
	Requires improvement	0	-10	-6	-1
	Inadequate	4	-7	-9	-
School type	LA-maintained	-3	-10	-5	-4
	Single academy	-3	-1	-6	8
	Multi-academy trust	2	-5	-9	-1
Diversity of the SLT	All white SLT	0	-6	-4	0
	At least one Asian SLT member	5	4	-5	9
	At least one black SLT member	2	< 1	7	2
	At least one mixed ethnic SLT member	-5	-1	-14	-1
	At least one other ethnic SLT member	3	10	-	-
	Multiple ethnic minority groups in SLT	13	2	-6	6

Notes: Promotion rate gaps in cells highlighted in green are statistically significantly smaller than the overall average, and larger in red-highlighted cells. Cells marked with ‘-’ indicate cell sizes that are too small to report.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

Table 44 shows the gap in promotion rates to middle leadership due to differences in characteristics. These results largely suggest that if the personal and school characteristics of teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds were the same as teachers from white backgrounds, promotion rates for teachers from these groups would be lower than their counterparts from white backgrounds. Further discussion of how each of these factors are likely to affect promotion to middle leadership is provided in Section 7.

Table 44: Gaps in promotion rates to middle leadership would be larger if teachers from Asian, black, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds had the same personal and school characteristics as their white counterparts

	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Observed promotion rate gap (p.p.)	-2	-8	-6	-1
Promotion rate gap due to individual observed factors (p.p.)				
Age and experience	-1	2	-1	1
Working pattern	-1	-3	-1	-1
Gender	< 1	< 1	0	0
Phase	-2	-4	-1	-2
School type (LA-maintained, single academy, multi-academy trust)	< 1	< 1	0	< 1
Region	-3	-6	-3	-3
School deprivation	-1	-1	< 1	< 1
School diversity	-2	-2	-1	-1
Ofsted rating	0	0	< 1	< 1
SLT diversity	< 1	< 1	< 1	< 1
Total gap due to observed factors (p.p.)	-10	-12	-8	-6
After controlling for characteristics (p.p.)	8	5	1	4

Note: Highlighted cells are statistically significant at the five per cent level. Total gaps due to observed and unobserved factors may not sum to the overall observed gap due to rounding.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

B.7 Tables for Section 8 – promotion to senior leadership

Analysis of gaps in promotion to senior leadership suggest that the gaps have not significantly changed over time.

Table 45: Gaps in promotion rates to senior leadership have not changed significantly over time

Ethnic group	White – group gap (p.p.)		2015/16 vs. 2010/11 change (p.p.)	Statistically significant change?
	2010/11	2015/16		
Asian	3	3	0	No
Black	4	4	0	No
Mixed	-1	-4	-2	No
Other	5	3	-2	No

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2010/11 – 2020/21.

Analysis of gaps in the rate of promotion to senior leadership for the smaller ethnic groups is in Table 46. Most of the gaps for the smaller groups generally follow the patterns for the larger groups (see Section 8). Among Asian backgrounds, gaps are largest for middle leaders from Chinese backgrounds, and for middle leaders from black African backgrounds among all black backgrounds.

Table 46: Gaps in senior leadership promotion rates for the smaller ethnic groups are generally similar to the larger ethnic groups

Major ethnic group	Minor ethnic group	SL promotion rate (%)	White British – group gap (p.p.)	Statistically significant difference?
White	White British	18	-	-
	White Irish	18	< 1	Yes
	Other white	14	4	Yes
Asian	Indian	15	3	Yes
	Pakistani	16	2	Yes
	Bangladeshi	16	2	No
	Chinese	11	7	Yes
	Any other Asian background	12	6	No
Black	Black African	11	7	Yes
	Black Caribbean	17	1	No
	Other black background	12	6	Yes
Mixed	White and black Caribbean	26	-8	Yes
	White and Asian	21	-3	No
	White and black African	21	-3	No
	Any other mixed background	18	< 1	Yes
Other	Any other ethnic group	15	3	Yes

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015 and 2020.

Additional analysis of differences in gaps in promotion to senior leadership across different teacher and ITT provider characteristics is provided in Table 47.

Table 47: The gaps in senior leadership promotion rates between middle leaders from each ethnic group compared to their white counterparts are fairly similar across observed characteristics

		Promotion rate gaps (p.p.)			
		Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Overall		3	4	-4	3
Region	East of England	0	5	0	-
	East Midlands	-1	-	-18	-
	West Midlands	4	10	0	-
	London	7	5	0	6
	North East	-	-	-	-
	North West	1	-	-4	-
	South East	5	6	-12	-
	South West	-	-	-	-
	Yorkshire and the Humber	-1	-	-1	-
Gender	Female	3	3	-4	2
	Male	4	6	-2	5
Phase	Nursery or primary	5	6	-7	1
	Secondary or 16 plus	1	1	-2	2
	Special	7	-	-	-
Ofsted	Outstanding	3	4	-1	6
	Good	3	3	-6	2
	Requires improvement	3	5	1	-
	Inadequate	-1	-1	-	-
School type	LA-maintained	4	6	-2	3
	Single academy	2	2	-1	-
	Multi-academy trust	1	0	-7	3
Diversity of the SLT	All white SLT	3	3	-6	2
	At least one Asian SLT member	2	6	2	-2
	At least one black SLT member	5	5	-4	-
	At least one mixed ethnicity SLT member	1	-	-	-
	At least one other ethnicity SLT member	-	-	-	-
	Multiple ethnic minority groups in SLT	3	2	5	-

Notes: Promotion rate gaps in cells highlighted in green are statistically significantly smaller than the overall average, and larger in red-highlighted cells. Cells marked with '-' indicate cell sizes that are too small to report.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

Table 48 shows the gap in promotion rates to senior leadership due to differences in characteristics. Negative estimates suggest that differences in observed characteristics are associated with a smaller gap in promotion rates. Further discussion of how each of these factors are likely to affect promotion to senior leadership is in Section 6.

Table 48: Senior leadership promotion rate gaps are partially explained by observed characteristics of teachers from different ethnic backgrounds; promotion rate gaps are larger for middle leaders from Asian backgrounds after accounting for characteristics

	Asian	Black	Mixed
Observed promotion rate gap (p.p.)	3	4	-4
Promotion rate gap due to individual observed factors (p.p.)			
Age and experience	-1	4	-1
Working pattern	< 1	-1	< 1
Gender	< 1	0	< 1
Phase	< 1	2	< 1
School type (LA-maintained, single academy, multi-academy trust)	0	0	0
Region	-1	-2	< 1
School deprivation	-1	-3	< 1
School diversity	0	1	0
Ofsted rating	< 1	0	0
SLT diversity	< 1	-1	0
Total gap due to observed factors (p.p.)	-2	1	-2
After controlling for characteristics (p.p.)	5	3	-2

Note: Highlighted cells are statistically significant at the five per cent level. Total gaps due to observed and unobserved factors may not sum to the overall observed gap due to rounding. The group of middle leaders from other ethnic backgrounds was too small to report and so is omitted.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

B.8 Tables for Section 9 – promotion to headship

Analysis of gaps in promotion to headship suggest that the gaps have not significantly changed over time.

Table 49: Gaps in promotion rates to headship have not changed significantly over time

Ethnic group	White – group gap (p.p.)		2015/16 – 2020/21 vs. 2010/11 – 2015/16 change (p.p.)	Statistically significant change?
	2010/11 – 2015/16	2015/16 – 2020/21		
Asian	5	7	2	No
Black	2	4	2	No
Mixed	-4	-2	2	No
Other	5	6	1	No

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2010/11 – 2020/21.

Analysis of gaps in the rate of promotion to headship for the smaller ethnic groups is in Table 50. Most of the gaps for the smaller groups generally follow the patterns for the larger groups (see Section 8).

Table 50: Headship promotion rates in the smaller ethnic groups broadly follow the same pattern as the larger ethnic groups

Major ethnic group	Minor ethnic group	HT promotion rate (%)	White British – group gap (p.p.)	Statistically significant difference?
White	White British	25	-	-
	White Irish	23	2	Yes
	Other white	21	4	Yes
Asian	Indian	18	7	Yes
	Pakistani	18	7	Yes
	Bangladeshi	-	-	-
	Chinese	-	-	-
	Any other Asian background	17	8	No
Black	Black African	20	4	Yes
	Black Caribbean	20	5	No
	Other black background	-	-	-
Mixed	White and black Caribbean	31	-6	Yes
	White and Asian	28	-3	No
	White and black African	-	-	-
	Any other mixed background	21	4	Yes
Other	Any other ethnic group	18	6	Yes

Note: Gaps for ethnicities marked with '-' indicate sample sizes which are too small to report.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

Additional analysis of differences in gaps in promotion to headship across different teacher and ITT provider characteristics is provided in Table 51.

Table 51: The gaps in headship promotion rates between people from each ethnic group compared to their white counterparts are fairly similar across observed characteristics

		Promotion rate gap (p.p.)			
		Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
Overall		7	4	-2	6
Region	East of England	-	-	-	-
	East Midlands	-	-	-	-
	West Midlands	7	-	-	-
	London	7	2	5	-
	North East	-	-	-	-
	North West	-6	-	-	-
	South East	3	-	-	-
	South West	-	-	-	-
	Yorkshire and the Humber	6	-	-	-
Gender	Female	7	7	0	3
	Male	9	-2	-5	-
Phase	Nursery or primary	10	6	-3	3
	Secondary or 16 plus	3	1	0	-
	Special	-	-	-	-
Ofsted	Outstanding	7	3	4	-
	Good	8	5	-2	7
	Requires improvement	-	-	-	-
	Inadequate	-	-	-	-
School type	LA maintained	8	4	0	7
	Single academy	4	-	-	-
	Multi-academy trust	8	8	-6	-

Notes: Promotion rate gaps in cells highlighted in green are statistically significantly lower than the overall average, and higher in red-highlighted cells. Cells marked with '-' indicate sample sizes were too small to report.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

Table 52 shows the gaps in promotion rates to headship due to differences in characteristics. Further discussion of how each of these factors are likely to affect promotion into headship is provided in Section 9.

Table 52: Promotion rate gaps are partially explained by observed characteristics of teachers from different ethnic backgrounds

	Asian	Black
Observed promotion rate gap (p.p.)	7	4
Promotion rate gap due to individual observed factors (p.p.)		
Age and experience	1	1
Working pattern	0	1
Gender	< 1	-1
Phase	0	-2
School type (LA-maintained, single academy, multi-academy trust)	< 1	-1
Region	-1	-2
School deprivation	0	0
School diversity	-2	-3
Ofsted rating	< 1	0
Total gap due to observed factors (p.p.)	-2	-6
After controlling for characteristics (p.p.)	5	-2

Note: Highlighted cells are statistically significant at the five per cent level. Total gaps due to observed and unobserved factors may not sum to the overall observed gap due to rounding. The groups of senior leaders from mixed and other ethnic backgrounds were too small to report and so are omitted.

Source: NFER analysis of SWC data for 2015/16 – 2020/21.

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