

3.1 The school population

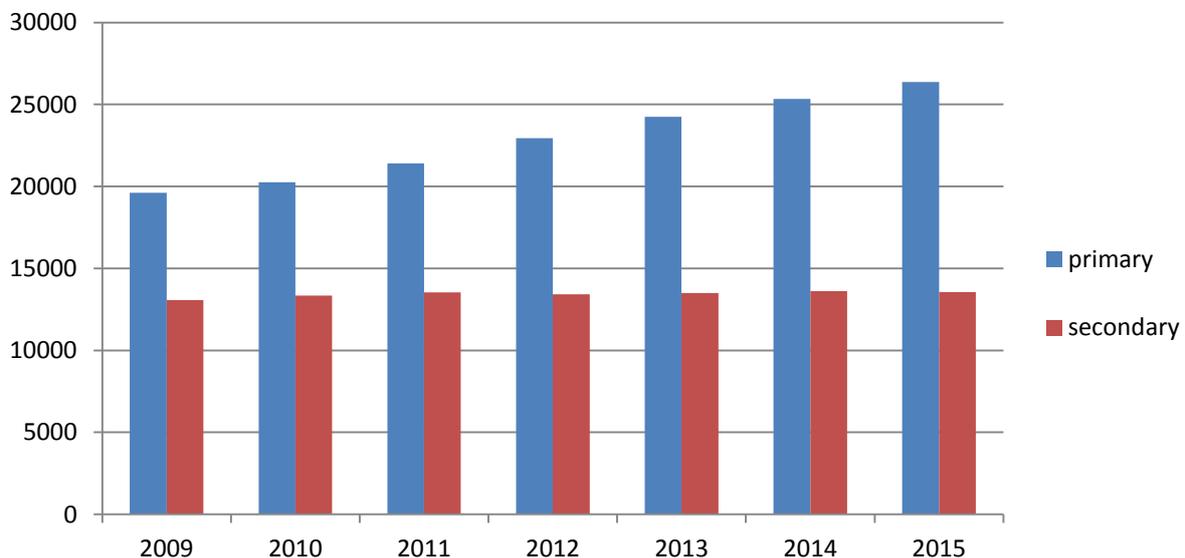
The school census provides accurate data on pupils in education in Barking and Dagenham. The school population is slightly different to the Local Authority resident population, or people registered with General Practice, as some children travel across council boundaries to attend school.

There has been a year on year increase in the number of school age children in Barking and Dagenham since 2008. In January 2015 there were 39,927 pupils in all primary and secondary schools¹, a rise of 870 (2.5%) between 2014 and 2015 which is a smaller increase than the previous year.

The trend of increasing numbers of pupils is reflected nationally, in London and in our statistical neighbours. Nationally, the school population increased by 1% and in London by 2% between 2013 and 2014 (national 2015 data will be made available on 11 June 2015). Our statistical neighbours² increased by 3%.

The number of pupils in secondary schools in Barking and Dagenham fell by 0.5% from 2014 to 2015. In January 2015, there were 13,556 pupils in secondary schools. This is in contrast with the 4.1% increase in our primary school population. The primary sector increase is similar to last year's 4.5%.

Figure 3.1.1: Number of pupils on roll in all primary and secondary schools in Barking and Dagenham, 2009 – 2015.



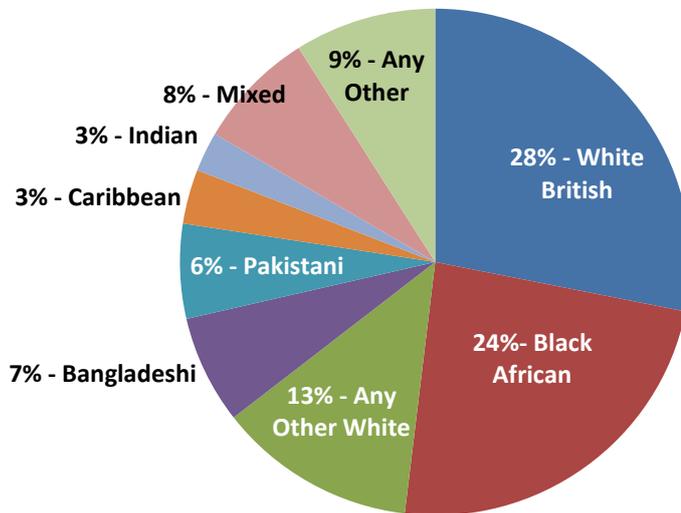
Source: School Census 2009-2015

¹ This number excludes the 178 pupils who are registered at the Pupil Referral Unit but includes pupils at the borough's special school

² Our assigned statistical neighbours for Children's Services are Greenwich, Enfield, Manchester, Birmingham, Luton, Nottingham, Waltham Forest, Slough, Coventry and Newham. However, for the purposes of this document the only two boroughs that we compare LBBB with are Greenwich and Lewisham.

As well as increasing in number, the ethnic mix of the school population is changing. Data from the 2015 School Census shows that the three largest ethnic groups were White British (28%), Black African (24%) and Any Other White (13%) (Figure 3.1.2).

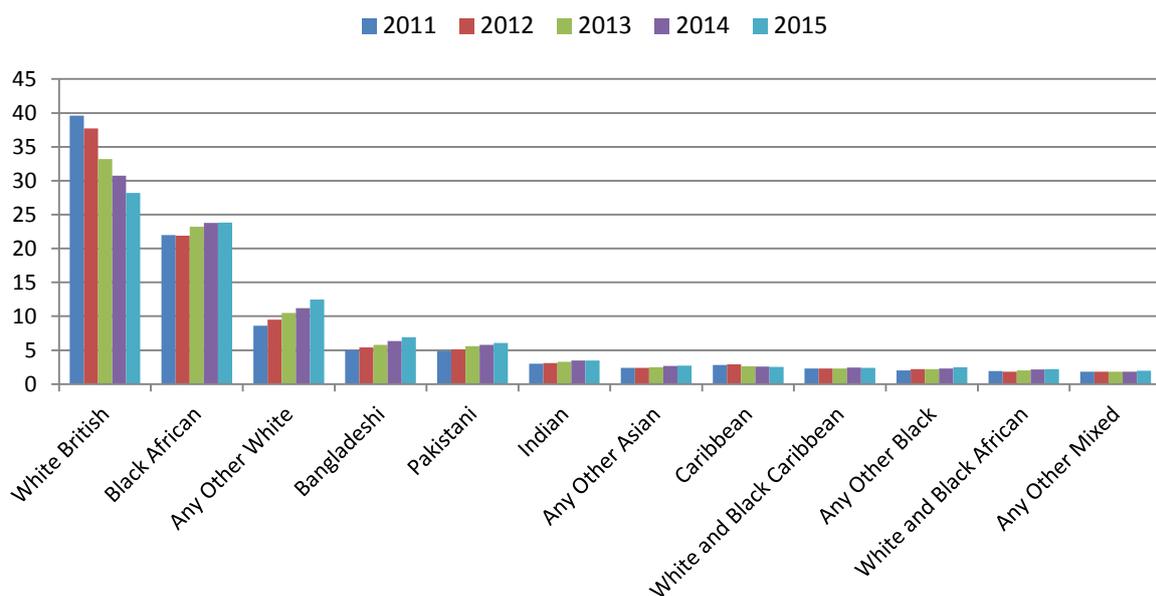
Figure 3.1.2: LBB School Population by Ethnicity, 2015



Source: School Census, 2015

The decrease in the number of White British children has been the most significant ethnic shift since 2012 (38% in 2012 and 28% in 2015). There has been an increase of children whose ethnicity is described as Any Other White from 10% in 2012 to 13% in 2015. Black African school population increased slightly between 2012 and 2015. Please see Figure 3.1.3 below for year on year breakdown of the top 12 ethnicities.

Figure 3.1.3: LBB School Population Ethnicity Breakdown, 2011-2015



Source: School Census, 2011-2015

The changes have a specific impact on some health outcomes where the prevalence of particular conditions is higher in some ethnic groups. These conditions include both those traditionally associated with certain ethnic groups such as sickle cell disease as well as more recently emerging conditions - for example The Foresight Report³ suggests that, at a national level, Black African children are known to have a higher prevalence of obesity than White children of the same age.

The changes may also lead to some improvements in the rates of teenage pregnancy and exclusions, which are typically higher in the White British community.

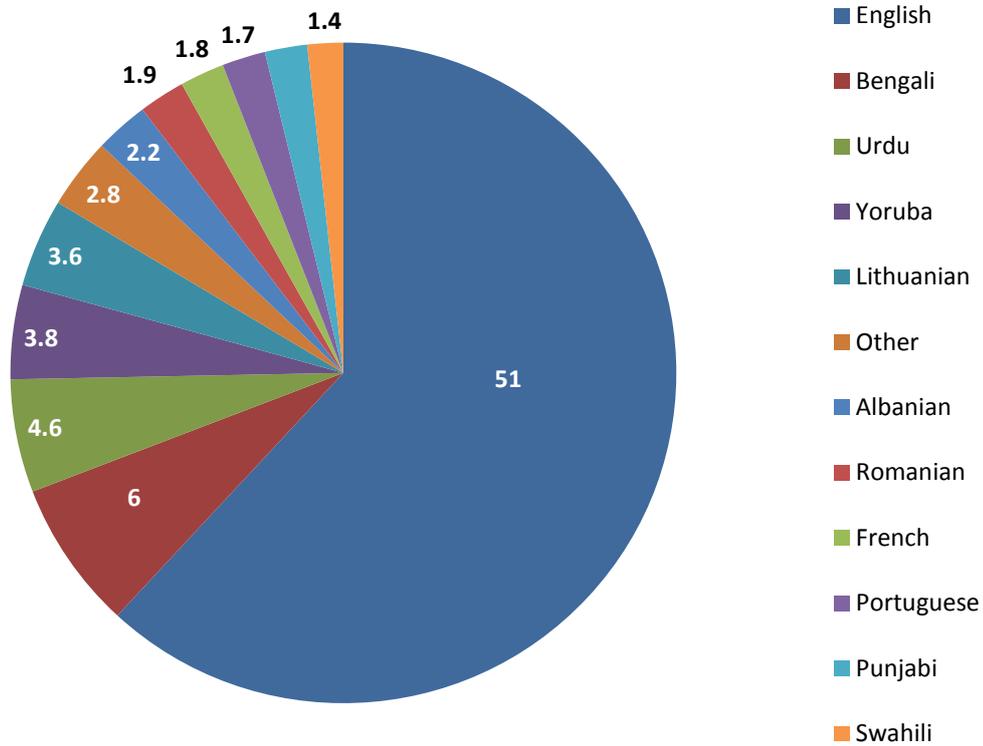
Services in school settings are provided to all those on the school roll, regardless of their borough of residence and provision. The increase in the number of school children results in an increase in the need for both core universal services (such as school nursing) and also for services needed to provide targeted intervention for children with statements of educational need (such as speech and language support). In addition the evidence of increasingly complex social and medical needs being identified through the common assessment framework will be reflected in an increased demand on specialist services working through educational settings.

The growth in ethnic diversity in schools also has implications for staff training and awareness. For example, the increase in the number of Black African children – and the consequent increase in the number of children and young people living with sickle cell disease and sickle cell trait – attending school in the borough means that both education and health staff need to understand the condition, and its impact on the lives of these young people, to be able to meet their needs.

As well as recognising diversity in ethnicity, diversity in language is important, with a range of languages spoken within ethnic groups. Figure 3.3.4 lists the top twelve languages spoken by children in schools in Barking and Dagenham. The top three languages are English, Bengali and Urdu. Three of the twelve are African languages, as well as French and Portuguese which are spoken in several African countries; three of the twelve are eastern European languages and three are spoken predominantly by Indian and Pakistani children. Please note that nationally, over 80% of children have English as their first language, whilst in Barking and Dagenham the figure is 51%.

³ <http://www.bis.gov.uk/foresight>

Table 3.1.4: Top twelve most spoken languages by school age children in LBB, 2015

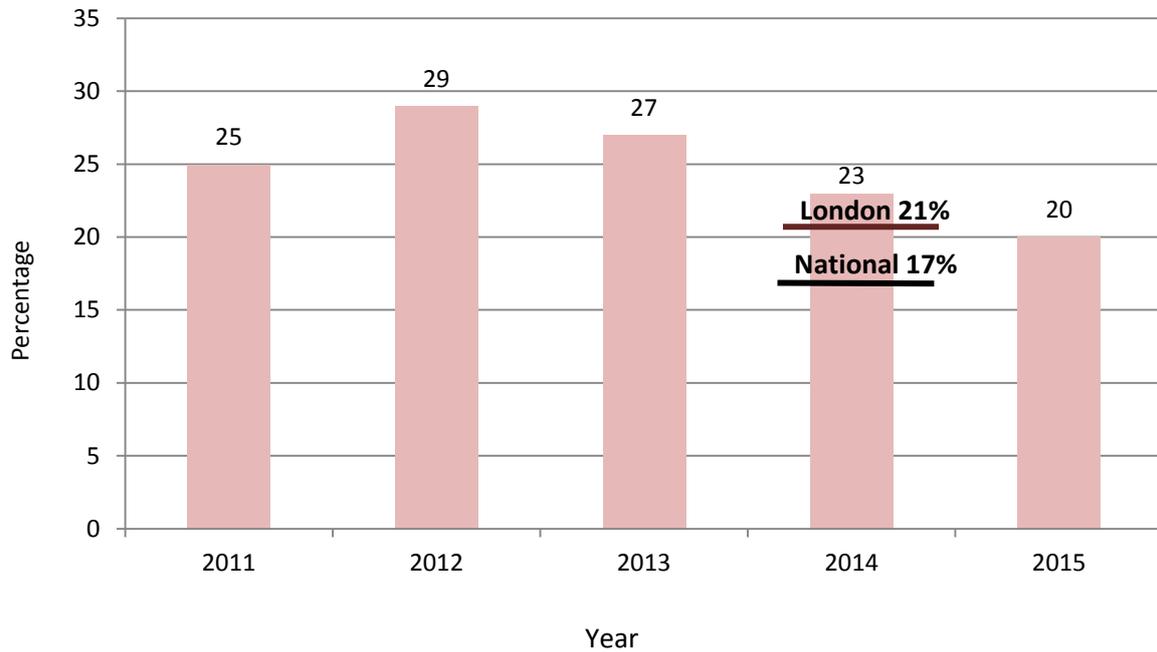


Source: School Census, 2015

Language is an important factor to consider when providing services, as the primary language used by the child is most likely to be the primary language used in the family home. This needs to be taken into account when providing information and communications to parents.

The number of pupils who are entitled to Free School Meals (FSM) can be used as a proxy for the level of deprivation, as it is linked to parental income. The percentage of school children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) has continued to drop. In the 2015 School Census, 20% of our pupils were reported as being entitled to FSM compared to 23% in 2014. The decrease could partially be attributed to the introduction of Universal Free Meals for children in the Infant phase and subsequent difficulties to get parents to make a claim. Despite this, our FSM proportion was still above national (17% in 2014) but was lower than last year's London average of 21%.

Figure 3.1.5: Percentage of all pupils on roll in Barking and Dagenham entitled to free school meals, 2011-2015



Source: School Census, 2011-2015

Recommendations for Commissioners

Partners to ensure that health and care services for school children take account of the increasing number of children and the increasing ethnic and language diversity, and ensure services such as school nursing are able to respond to changing demand.