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# Chinese pupils eclipse all other ethnic groups in English tests

Chinese pupils are best-performing ethnic group with 86% passing national curriculum tests

Schoolchildren of Indian origin come second with 85% achieving the



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same standard

But only 80% of white British pupils manage to reach a similar level in the assessment

BY RICHARD GARNER, EDUCATION EDITOR | Friday 16 February 2007



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Children of Chinese origin have outperformed every other British group in English by the age of 11, according to an ethnic breakdown of exam and test results published yesterday.

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They have the best results of all ethnic groups in national curriculum tests at 11 with 86 per cent reaching the required standard - compared with 80 per cent of white British children. And these figures include recent Chinese immigrants who do not have English as a first language.

Their success is carried through to GCSE level where 65.8 per cent of Chinese-origin pupils obtain five A\*- to C-grade passes including maths and English - under the Department for Education and Skills' new measure used to rank schools. Pupils of Indian origin also outperform the white British with a 59.1 per cent pass rate, compared to 44.3 per cent for white British pupils.

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The figures are revealed in an analysis of last year's GCSE and national curriculum test results for pupils aged seven, 11 and 14.

More than 1,000 Chinese-origin pupils sat the English national curriculum test for 11-year-olds last year - while 2,200 sat their GCSEs. Experts say the culture at home for families of Chinese and Indian origin families puts more emphasis on the importance of education.

The figures come amid a wave of angst over British children, prompted by a Unicef report which claimed that the quality of life for children in Britain was poor. Family relationships were cited as one of the main factors blighting childhood.

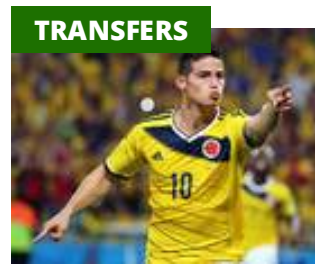
Parents in families of Chinese origin stress the value of homework - and many children attend special Saturday schools to improve their performance.

In A-levels, too, Chinese-origin pupils shine. A recent study by the Royal Society of Chemistry and Institute of Physics revealed that Chinese males were four times as likely (and Indian males three times) to achieve three or more science A-levels. The figures are similar for girls. "Indian and Chinese students show a strong preference for science at A-level compared to other ethnic groups," said the report.

As a result, they are the most likely ethnic groups to choose to study science subjects in higher education.

"Chinese pupils of mixed white and Asian heritage, Irish and Indian pupils consistently achieve above the national average across key stage one [seven to 11-year-olds], key stage two [11 to 14-year-olds]

## of young Churchill's' career so far



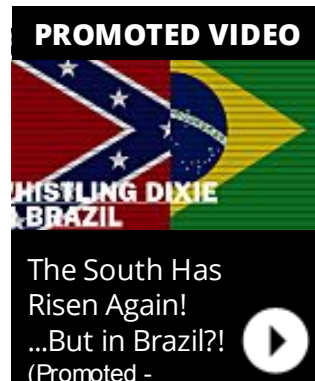
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and key stage three [14 to 16-year-olds]," the analysis concludes.

Yesterday's analysis also shows that girls outperform boys at all levels in almost every exam - although the gap has narrowed slightly. "Overall, the difference in attainment of five or more A\*- to C-grade GCSEs or equivalent by gender has dropped slightly from last year when it was 10.1 percentage points to 9.6 percentage points in 2006," it says.

But the biggest gender gap is between black Afro-Caribbean boys and girls - sparking concerns about the performance of black boys in schools. Fewer than one in four Afro-Caribbean boys (22.7 per cent) achieve five top-grade GCSE passes compared with 36 per cent of boys overall.

The breakdown follows an official report from the DfES, which drew attention to the exclusion rate for black Afro-Caribbean children - they were three times as likely to be excluded from school as white youngsters. Their rate of permanent exclusions was four per 10,000 compared with 1.3 for white pupils. Again, Chinese-origin pupils had the lowest exclusion rate, with 0.2 per cent. The report said: "Black pupils are disproportionately denied mainstream education and the life chances that go with it."

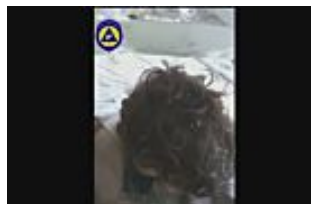
The low performance of black Afro-Caribbean boys has prompted ministers to launch their "Aiming High" project, seeking to improve their performance by providing them with mentors.

The first independent analysis of the programme indicated that they had started to close the gap on their white classmates by doing better than ever in tests for 14-year-olds - traditionally a marker for how well they will perform at GCSE. However, at that stage, they had still

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failed to narrow the gap at GCSE.

Andrew Adonis, the Schools minister, welcomed the findings. "Big improvements are being made," he said. But he acknowledged that there were "challenges ahead" for exclusion rates "and the stereotyping of black children as underachieving, troublesome or both". The scheme operates in 100 secondary schools across 25 local authorities.

The worst performance by an ethnic group came from Gypsy/Roma pupils, where only 3.9 per cent obtained five top-grade GCSE passes with maths and English, and travellers of Irish heritage, where the figure was 11.1 per cent.

The analysis also showed that children from better-off homes outperformed those pupils who received free school meals: 61 per cent of those youngsters not in receipt of free school meals obtained five A\*- to C-grade GCSE passes compared with 33 per cent of those from deprived backgrounds.

Ministers insist that poverty should be no excuse for poor performance - and point to the success of some inner-city schools serving deprived communities.

## From Beijing to Oxford via Brent

Yinan Wang is an example of the Chinese success story - winning a place to read material sciences at Corpus Christi College at Oxford aged just 14.

He won his place just two years after arriving in the UK, barely able to speak a word of English. He went to one of the UK's largest comprehensives, Copland Community College in Brent, north-west

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London, where he was given English classes.

He was singled out as a specially talented pupil and soon became fluent in English. Yinan also completed an Open University degree in maths while at school.

In his A-levels he obtained As in maths, physics and chemistry.

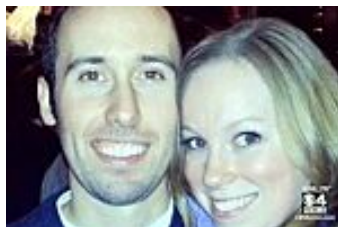
Before attending his comprehensive, he was a pupil at the Number Eight middle school in Beijing which, according to his former teacher Andrew Jones - head of chemistry at Copland - is "a mixture of the Chinese Eton and a top French lycée".



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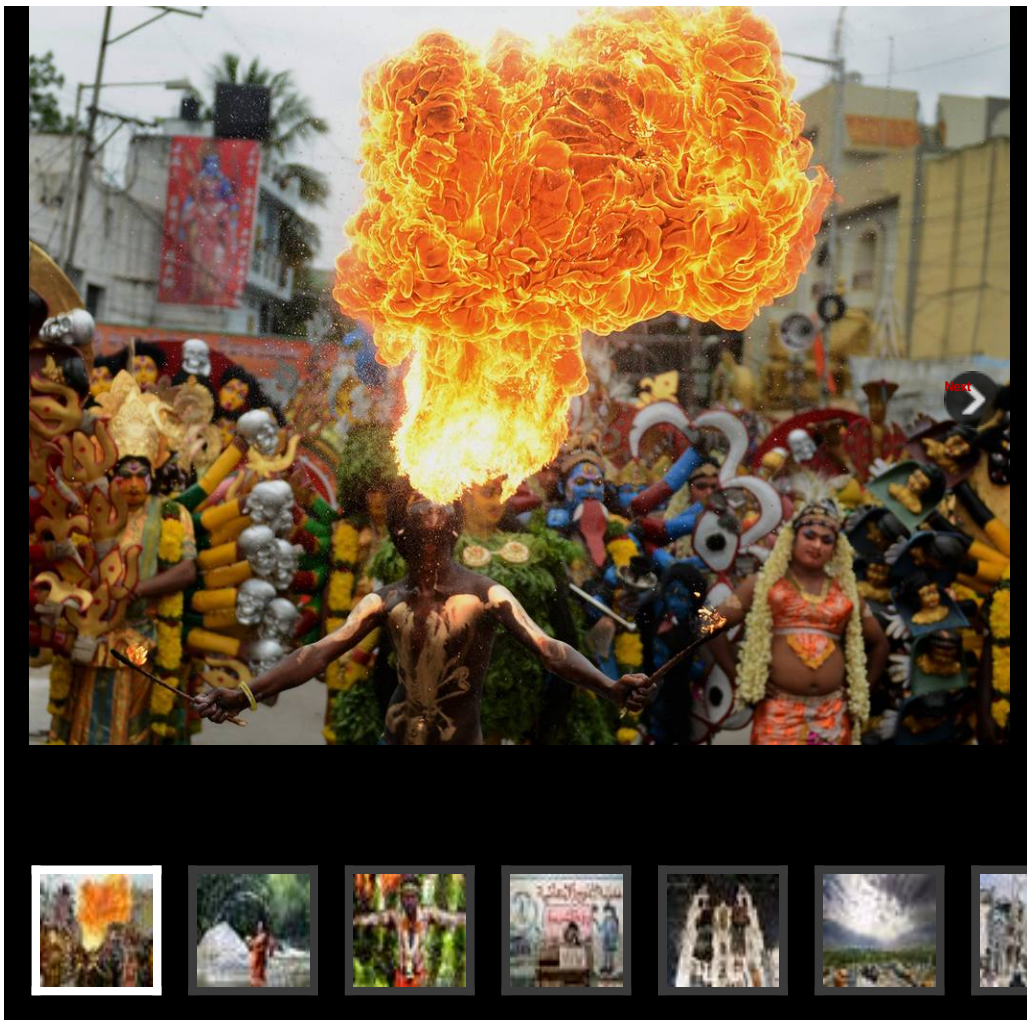
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