



# Accessing special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) provision for Black and mixed Black heritage children:

## Lived experiences from parents and professionals living in South London

**Despite more frequently being identified as having SEND, Black children in England are less likely to receive adequate support for their needs\*.**

At Global Black Maternal Health, we are concerned with:

- How families of Black children with SEND obtain appropriate support for their children, and
- The impact of this experience on Black children and their parents.

Our project, **Black Child SEND**, focused exclusively on the views of parents and professionals in South London who have accessed SEND support for Black or mixed Black heritage children in Key stage 1 and 2.



### Parents:



- Described the SEND process as a fight.
- Felt a disconnect between professional views of their child's needs and their own experiences.
- Felt that religious and cultural views meant that family often don't understand SEND.
- Found the process of accessing SEND support difficult to navigate.
- Felt that communication across services and between professionals was disjointed.
- Had sacrificed a significant amount of time trying to accessing SEND support.

### Professionals:



- Described a lack of understanding about SEND in Black communities.
- Felt that a lack of trust in services influenced parents' attitudes towards SEND.
- Felt some professionals view Black children with SEND as having bad behaviour.
- Reported discriminatory attitudes from other professionals towards Black children with SEND.
- Reported the negative impacts of a lack of funding and resources on accessing and delivering SEND support.
- Described the importance of early intervention for supporting Black children with SEND.

\*Roman-Urrestarazu A, van Kessel R, Allison C, Matthews FE, Brayne C, Baron-Cohen S. Association of Race/Ethnicity and Social Disadvantage With Autism Prevalence in 7 Million School Children in England. 2021.

# Actions for stakeholders

to support access to SEND support for Black and mixed Black heritage children in South London

1



## Cross-agency working

Outline and embed cross-agency working practices for all professionals and services working with children with SEND.

2



## Named point of contact

Provide a named professional for the coordination of support for all children accessing SEND support, whether delivered by their educational setting or formalised in an EHC plan.

3



## Family-centred culture

Establish and embed a child-focussed, family-centred culture across services working with children with SEND and their families.

4



## Financial review

Ongoing review of how financial resources for SEND can best meet the varying needs of families and children with SEND from different ethnic backgrounds.

5



## Inclusive approach

Share with parents and families the opportunities to be involved in regular feedback loops.



6



### Independent support for parents

Raise awareness of and access to independent support, advice and guidance by offering independent advocates to all families of children identified with SEND.

7



### Working together with Black communities

Collaborate with parents and families of Black children with SEND as well as grassroots organisations to raise awareness in communities impacted by insufficient knowledge about SEND.

8



### Knowledge on rights and entitlements

Improve the dissemination of information to families of children with SEND on SEND processes, rights, and entitlements.

9



### Culturally-appropriate training for professionals

- Update the Initial Teacher Training Core Content Framework to address gaps in SEND knowledge and teaching practice.
- Mandate high level teaching on SEND for qualifying teachers.
- Require all current teaching staff to undertake SEND awareness training.

10



### Parent mental health and wellbeing

Develop routes to SEND-specific and culturally appropriate mental health support for parents of children with, deliverable by local, voluntary and charity sector organisations.



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