Afro-Caribbean Children

in

Local Authority Day Care 0 - 3

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CHAPTER 1

Motherhood and Ideology

In order to understand the system of day care currently in operation in Britain, it is important to obtain an historical perspective on those ideologies and theories that have underpinned policy in this field. The notion of day care for certain categories of child and the professional ideologies of the staff who work within the system, have arisen out of a complex interplay between structural forces in society, political expediency, and medico-scientific theories of pregnancy, childbirth, and motherhood. It is intended in this chapter therefore to critically examine the nature of these forces, particularly in relation to the "medicalization" of pregnancy, childbirth, and motherhood since the early 1900s, and the way in which psychodynamic theories of motherhood have gained dominance within child care policy generally, and policy on day care in particular. This form of provision very clearly reflects the position of women in society and, some would argue, the dominance of patriarchy in public policy. A useful definition of patriarchy in this context is given by Rich (1977):

"Patriarchy is the power of the fathers: a familial-social, ideological, political system in which men - by force, direct pressure, or through ritual, tradition, law and language, customs, etiquette, education and the division of labour, determine what part women shall or shall not play, and in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male."

Although then, much of the following critique derives from feminist theory, it has also been necessary towards the end of this chapter to present and analyze some of the tensions which exist between black women and feminism, and to show the relevance of this to the issue of Afro-Caribbean children in day care. This is an essential part of the
overall critique, since it seeks to draw the distinction between the black experience and that of the white, a distinction that feminism has overall failed to address. In order to provide the necessary balance between the largely feminist analysis of the pregnancy, childbirth and child rearing which appears in the first part of this chapter, and that of the black experience, such a critique is necessary.

Social class and the invention of Motherhood

Until the late 19th Century, the notion of "motherhood" - with an implication of bonding, consistency of care, and so on - was an unfamiliar one. Attitudes towards infant care were determined by social position, and most importantly by the very high levels of infant mortality which prevailed. Unfit babies of the lower classes were often left out in the open to die (Badinter 1981). Those infants who could not be cared for were frequently sent to baby farms - lodgings for unwanted children, invariably situated in rural areas - or foundling hospitals. Babies of the upper classes were equally distanced from their families by the employment of a "wet nurse" who would not only suckle the child but look after it for some years before returning the child to its family (Badinter 1981 op.cit). Poor women sometimes even abandoned their own offspring in order to suckle those of the well-to-do for payment (Sluckin et al 1983).

As with many reforms of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, however, it was the sudden "discovery" by the ruling classes of the poor physical condition of the poor which provided the impetus for action on the whole question of childrearing practice. In this case it was the scandal of the unfitness of thousands of potential recruits for the Boer War and the subsequent Committee on the Physical Deterioration of the Poor (1904) which led amongst other conclusions to concern about "ignorant mothers". Jane Lewis's study "The Politics of Motherhood"
(1980) traces the process whereby women of the working class became the object of a whole variety of actions designed to train them to become fit mothers, the conclusion of the various reports having been that the main cause of infant mortality and poor health amongst children was the ignorance of the mother. Increased training in elementary schools on domestic training for young girls was one proposal. In 1907-9 the first "school for mothers" was founded by Alice Russell and Dora Bunting, and in 1909 King's College London, began to train women as home science and economics teachers. Summing up the attitude of the period, the Chief Medical Officer to the Board of Education, Newman, wrote that:

"The principal operating influence is the ignorance of the mother and the remedy is the education of the mother".

Lewis op cit (1980)

**Women and the Rise of "Medical Jurisdiction"**

Alongside the education of ignorant mothers came a growing increase in "medical jurisdiction" (Hutter and Williams 1981) over women. By the 1920s many guides to mothers' health had appeared which gave the advice:

"not that of letting nature have the upper hand, but of allowing doctors to do so instead".

The main point concerning the early pioneering period in the medicalization of childbirth and childrearing practice is that working-class women were considered to be ignorant and in need of training. Infant hygienists stressed that childrearing in modern society was not the "natural" process it was in primitive cultures. For the very reason that the modern mother was more intelligent she could not rely upon instinct but had to be instructed in scientific methods of child care.

In the area of pregnancy it was during the 1930s that the 'patholo-
'gizing' of childbirth really took hold and became the common point of view. Despite the fact that government reports found that only 3% of deaths in childbirth had resulted from inadequate medical facilities, obstetricians and departmental committees strongly advocated techniques for the management of labour designed for use within hospitals rather than the home. Women, according to research, tended to accept what they were told was best for them by the Ministry of Health: more hospital beds, a doctor as well as a midwife present at birth, and so on. Specialists tended to regard all childbirth as potentially abnormal and concentrated all of their attention on labour. Hospitalization was widely advocated in spite of the evidence that the most likely factor inhibiting infant mortality at birth was that of simply having an attendant at the birth.

The most popular and influential manual of the 1930s was Truby King's "Mothercraft" (1934) and its content reinforced the belief that "doctor knows best":

"As soon as possible after a woman knows she is pregnant, she should always visit a doctor for a complete examination. This should always take place before the third month".

King goes on to advise:

"Be very frank with your doctor and ask him freely about anything which is worrying you or which you do not quite understand".

King also had an obsession with cleanliness and a liking for scientific measurement which became the hallmark of intervention in child care up to the present day. Dally (1982) observed that Truby King:

"turned motherhood into a 'craft' that could be learned and a baby that could be controlled".

She further claims that Truby King was so popular that all members of the British middle classes born between 1913 and 1950 were brought
up by his methods. It is certainly the case that the routine of the
day nurseries even now shows clearly that the strict regulatory
practices he propagated (for example, four-hourly feeds) still have
influence. That King actually devised his programmes through observa-
tion not of humans but of farm animals is sometimes forgotten, however.
It is also very significant that the type of practices King developed
are almost exactly those used by the Nursery Nurse Examination Board
(NNEB) today, as may be seen from the standard training manual (Brain
and Martin 1983).

The medicalization of pregnancy, childbirth and childrearing has
continued until the present and has become very much the norm. The
influence of Bowlby et al from the 1940s will be discussed in another
chapter since it fits more readily into the discussion of the influence
of psychodynamic theories. At this point though it is intended to
review some more recent work on the medicalization of women.

The Medicalization of Pregnancy and Childbirth: the feminist
perspective

Oakley (1980) tested the perceptions of women themselves about
their pregnancies: did they regard pregnancy as illness or as a normal
condition? Only two of the sample (who had been ill in any case)
regarded pregnancy as an illness, and yet many of the assumptions of
the medical profession take as given an "illness" model. Oakley
concludes:

"The presumption that child bearing and child
rearing are not necessarily legitimate terrains for
the medical expert underlies the desire many women
express to allow nature to take its course in
determining when and how a baby is born".

Ehrenreich and English (1979) suggest from their feminist perspec-
tive that pregnancy offers doctors a chance for long-term surveillance
of women during a critical period in their lives. They claim that
psychiatrists believe all pregnant women are, to a greater or lesser extent, "neurotic", and quote at length medical literature from the mid to the late 1960s ridiculing women who wished to have natural childbirth, and rationalizing such ridicule by means of psychiatry. In support of their position they quote a Dr. Asch (1965) who offered caution against women who demanded natural childbirth:

"The intensity of her demands and her uncompromising attitude on the subject are danger signals, frequently indicating severe psychopathology ... a patient of this sort is not a candidate for natural childbirth and requires close and constant psychiatric support".

In a sense this kind of statement suggests that certain women are morally unfit to make certain decisions about their own bodies, and thus the psychiatrist's intervention might be considered a moral, rather than a medical one. The two types of intervention appear in fact blurred, as is often the case in psychiatry, although in situations like the one above, the moral opinions the psychiatrist holds of the woman actually prevent her from having her child in the manner she prefers.

The biological urge to become mothers and to nurture children examined in Delamont (1985), is questioned as being more a social construct than biological fact, and a widely held myth which can legitimize a range of other assumptions and prejudices. For example, by denying women career, training, and advanced educational opportunities, or general material advancement in society. Once again, when regarded from a feminist perspective, patriarchy has employed "science" in a way which gives credibility to its oppression of women. Delamont also draws upon Sally MacIntyre's work (1977 etc) which claimed that the medical profession's treatment of biological facts is totally determined by social facts: they believe that the maternal instinct operates only in married women and not in unmarried women, for example,
and define "treatment" accordingly. For a married woman, loss of a baby is considered by doctors an occasion for grief, whereas for unmarried women this is an occasion for relief.

This approach has implications for users of local authority day care, very many of whom are unmarried mothers. If MacIntyre's thesis is correct then the women users of day care must equally become the objects of "sympathy" for having had the misfortune to bear children. In the assessment process prior to referral to a day nursery, it is not impossible that doubts might surround the extent to which unmarried women are assumed to possess a maternal instinct if this argument is developed.

Childbirth involves three stages: pregnancy, labour, and postnatal. It is a process which is usually managed by male professionals and in which the woman is regarded as a patient. The obstetricians are the ones "in charge", therefore, and the women essentially takes the passive role. Many feminist writers have pleaded for a change in this relationship. Suzanne Arms (1975) for example asks for the "re-humanization and re-womanization" of the entire pregnancy, birth and post-partum process. She does not claim that hospital alone is the creator of pain in childbirth, but she does point out that hospitals are associated with "disease and disorder", in an atmosphere of medical emergency which can only increase the tension of the woman in labour.

Dale Spender (1980) claims that society has a legitimated meaning for motherhood which implies feminine fulfilment and which represents something beautiful that leaves women consumed and replete with joy. She suggests that there is therefore a subtle pressure exerted upon women to experience childbirth in this way, even though for many - especially given the nature of hospitals described above - the experience may have been unpleasant or even hellish. If Spender is correct, then for mothers who have negative experiences of childbirth,
there is a tendency to guilt, as if they are somehow to blame for failing to live up to societal expectations.

Katarina Dalton (1980) and others describe at length the various hormonal changes which occur in a woman's body during labour and delivery, and liken the various mood changes which occur during these processes to drug withdrawal. Oakley (1980 op cit) however argues that the hormonal interpretation is attractive because it suggests that normal mothers are basically suspended in their state of normality by nature; that is, most of the time they are happy because their hormones engender natural maternal feelings, but if they are not happy it is because their hormones have let them down. This "unreliable machine" model is the dominant view of women held by modern obstetrics. Not only does it allow obstetricians a free rein in controlling reproduction, but it makes sure that mothers' attitudes and reactions are not seen as having been influenced by the social and economic conditions in which motherhood occurs. Thus unhappiness and discomfort become attributes which are medicalized, and therefore made explicable by a medical model, rather than other possible explanations such as the oppression of women, racism, and so on.

This is not to argue that there is no link between hormones and certain states of mind, although Price (1988) has done so, claiming that there is a lack of hard evidence in the area. Otherwise the existence of premenstrual tension and so on would be questionable. It is merely to say that the "hormonal explanation" has been too often employed whereas there may well be other more valid reasons for certain states of mind. Feminist writers like Ehrenreich and English (1979 op cit) have argued that the "discovery of the hormone" has legitimized still further medical interference in women's bodies by the male medical profession, and created a connection between the two most
oppressive (from their point of view) branches of medicine: gynaecology and psychiatry. Gynaecologists were urged in effect to analyse their women patients for "rejection of femininity":

"Women incorporating the value-system of a modern society may develop personalities with rigid ego-defences against their biological needs. The conflicts which arise from this can be observed clinically not only in the office of the psychiatrist, but also in the office of the gynaecologist and even the endocrinologist".


Women, Childcare, and the Dominance of Psychodynamic Theory

Since Freudian theories and those related theories of his disciples were to dominate child care thinking and social policy from the early 1900s, it is worth giving here an overview of his main ideas in this field. Whilst in some fields these theories may not now be so much in evidence (e.g. in field social work) it is quite significant how much influence they still hold in nursery nurse training, as will be explained in chapter 4, and more importantly how the underlying assumptions of Freud and the neo-Freudians have underpinned social policy on day care to this day ("Bonding theory" for example states that young children should be with their natural mothers at least until the age of three).

The essential point to make at the outset is that Freudian psychoanalytical theory has had the effect of making the mother the centre character of the family. This one "fact" has had tremendous influence upon policy and practice in the field of child care. Linked to this is Freud's notion of women as sexually inferior to men, that women are, in essence, second class men in terms of their sexuality (the theory of penis-envy). These two strands of Freudian thought, as seen from a feminist perspective, have actually legitimized male dominance and upheld an essentially patriarchal system.
From psychoanalytic theory came the notion of the "good" mother, which in the context of Freudian theory does not imply any moral judgement (at least, according to the Freudians) but has the implication of objective, scientific "truth" (Badinter 1981 op cit). Thus the moralizing attitudes identified by Lewis (1980 op cit) were given legitimacy by this new, quasi-scientific, theory.

"The bad mother would therefore no longer be personally morally responsible for her actions but rather the victim of a kind of pathological curse".

Badinter (1981 op.cit)

Moral judgements about women were in this sense translated into pathologizing women by means of Freudian theory, and this position remains true to this day. Alongside the notion of the "good" mother naturally enough came the associated concept of the "bad" or "deviant" mother at whose feet any deviance or disturbance within their children may be laid. "Good" or "normal" mothers are those who correspond, therefore, with the standards laid down by psychoanalysis; they are those who make both their children and their husbands happy.

Enrenreich and English (1979) regard the rise of psychoanalytic theory as highly significant in the history of women. They complain that:

"Psychiatrists, after all, are medical men, trained to search for the pathology - the dark lesions, the hidden microbial spores - which lie under the healthiest exterior. As they peered into the rosy picture of the mother-child relationship with the X-ray vision of psychoanalytic insight, a core of hideous pathology revealed itself and came to dominate mid-twentieth century child-raising theory".

This kind of strong language and criticism of Freudian theory is typical of most feminist writers on the subject and perhaps demonstrates the passions aroused in the counterblast to Freudian theory from the early 1970s onwards.

From the early part of this century Freudian theory became trans-
lated into childcare practice and had in common the belief that maternal separation was deleterious to the child's psychoemotional health. Sir James Spence set up the first mother and baby clinic in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1927, and believed that separation had deep psychological as well as physical effects upon children. Derfee and Wolf (1934) similarly compared care of babies within different settings, and concluded that maternal care was best. Lowrey (1940) investigated a sample of 22 children who had been admitted to an institution before their first birthday and claimed to have found evidence of "severe personality disturbance". Again, the theme of separation from the "natural" mother causing an array of psychological disturbances was taken up by wartime research carried out by Burt, Anna Freud, Burlington, Wolf, Goldfarb, Edelston and Isaacs (1941-4). In a period when there was much separation, these researchers, mostly psychoanalysts, claimed to have found evidence of disturbance and personality disorder among children who had been separated from their mothers.

All of this type of research based on psychoanalytic principles in a sense paved the way for Bowlby's work after the war. Indeed his early work reviewed past research and concluded that on such evidence separation was responsible for much delinquency. This of course legitimized social policy which reduced drastically the provision of nurseries in the immediate postwar period. In 1947 for example it was the government's view that:

"In normal times, the proper place for young children is in the home, and however good a day nursery is, it cannot equal a good home environment".

Bowlby (1947) went on to develop his work and expressed the view, supported by Winnicot (1948) and other post-Freudians, that maternal separation and parental rejection are believed together to account for the majority of "constitutional psychopaths and moral defectives"
A whole group of psychoanalytically-trained researchers from 1945-50 persistently reinforced this view, that "lack of gratification of instinctual drives" i.e. towards the mother, due to her absence, inevitably caused psychological disturbance. (Spitz, Bowley (1947) Winnicott (1948), Erikson (1950) et al).

A mass of similar research and identical conclusions were reached by Bowlby throughout the 1950s and 60s, and by a host of other researchers as well, who all said that delinquency, maladjustment, psychopathology, and so on can all be attributed to maternal deprivation, neglect, separation, or defectiveness of the mother. (Bowlby 1958, 1969; Bowlby and Parkes 1970).

The theories of Bowlby, whilst common currency in government social policy, have not been without critics. Dally (1982) pointed out that Bowlby, the supposed "expert", was not actually studying maternal deprivation at all but institutionalization. Bowlby wrote no manual of child care nor worked with "ordinary" mothers, never talked with them, nor really had anything to do with them. He merely did some work on institutionalized children and on monkeys.

On the other hand Dally, whilst not exactly defending Bowlby, suggests with good evidence that the idealization of motherhood which resulted from it was not his doing, and that his aims - initially at least - were far more limited. The report published in 1951 concentrated solely on institutionalized children and Bowlby explicitly rejected at that time the pursuit of varieties of mother (the unsuitableness of certain types of mother, and so on)(Dally op cit).

The conclusion of many of the early European studies was that, overall, separation from the natural mother during the day did not have the effect of retarding children's development. In fact in the case of
day nursery children - who used the provision because of their previous poor development within the home - the reverse seemed to be true. In a Polish study (Gornicki 1964) a comparison was made between 500 children at home and 400 in day nurseries, and it was found that in terms of physical development, although starting from a "poorer" base, the day nursery children were equal to the home-based children after their nursery experience. Slight differences were detected in psycho-emotional development; more of the home-based children were considered "above average", and differences in "educational" development (coordination and linguistic) were all detected, these gains being attributed to more stimulation within the home-based environment. Although in East Germany (Schmidt-Koller 1964) a similar study was undertaken with comparable results, the points where children in institutions were behind those at home were directly attributable to the poor quality of the institutions rather than the institution per se. Davidson (1964) confirmed this point in a discussion of French research which compared children's development within different nurseries, and found considerable differences in development between them. The conclusion reached was, unsurprisingly perhaps, that it was the quality or otherwise of the nurseries rather than separation from the parent which determined a child's rate of development.

Despite this kind of evidence which appeared around the time when Bowlby's ideas were most influential (1950s and 60s), social policy in Britain was still based upon the view that the best place for young children was at home with their mothers, and that separation from the mother of itself caused retardation, and so on. However, studies in this country also began to refute this claim. The point is well made by Rutter (1972, 1982) in his classic text "Maternal Deprivation Re-assessed" in which, although supporting the idea that admissions to residential homes and hospitals did have significantly damaging psycho-
emotional effects upon children, Rutter also stated that:

"... new research has confirmed that, although an important stress, separation is not the crucial factor".

Separation from the parent, according to Rutter, is not damaging of itself and he therefore suggests that Bowlby was in error in assuming that the trauma he observed in institutionalised children was directly attributable to maternal separation rather than the nature of the institutions the children were in. There is a considerable body of work on the nature of residential institutions, and on the particular point that different institutions have differential abilities to produce "disturbed" children, Milham and Bullock (1979) carried out significant research in a variety of Community Homes with Education (the former Approved Schools) and adolescent secure units. They found that, irrespective of the characteristics of the children on admission, institutions varied enormously in terms of outcome; for example the numbers each sent on to more secure accommodation.

This wide variation in practice and quality may have significance for field research in day care, since an enquiry into the quality of what is offered in individual nurseries is important when trying to gauge its effects upon Afro-Caribbean children. Recent research by McGuire and Richman (1988) has suggested that "problem behaviour" by day nursery children has more to do with differences in the day nurseries than the nature of the referrals. They point for example to differences in management "style" - whether the nursery has an "open" or "closed" attitude towards parents, whether routines and activities are flexible or rigid, the attitudes of the staff team towards parents and their problems, and so forth. All of these things affect demonstrations of disturbance within nurseries and the quality of service offered. The overall finding was that the more open and flexible a
nursery was then the less problem behaviour was manifested. The children, in other words, seemed happier. Unfortunately the issue of race was not addressed, although one might be led to conclude that if efforts to communicate in an open way with black mothers were made then the quality of service for black children might improve, according to this theory. The question then is raised concerning whether young white staff feel able and willing to communicate in such a way, and share power with black parents, or indeed with parents generally. This will be addressed within the fieldwork of this present study.

A further criticism of the work of Bowlby emerged very early on. Douglas and Bloomfield (1958) and Rowntree questioned the precise meaning of "deprivation" as used by Bowlby. They concluded that it could mean two different things from which two quite different conclusions might be drawn: a) if deprivation means emotional rejection, then the child should be removed from its family, or b) if deprivation means physical separation, then the child should not be removed.

Eddleston (1952) also believes the whole issue of maternal deprivation to be misleading. Bowlby's theory is global and does not break maternal deprivation down into component parts. Nor does it say what part maternal deprivation plays in psychopathology as compared with other possible factors. Maternal deprivation thus becomes a "catchall" phrase that seeks to explain the inexplicable. A further development of this argument is made by Patrick McEvoy (1974). In an article "Can a man be a Nurse?" he posed the question "is it possible for men to perform caring roles". In Western society, he says, childrearing is based upon two assumptions: every infant needs maternal love, and all females have an inherent need to bear and rear children:

"These assumptions have far-reaching consequences. Little girls are brought up to believe that their only fulfilment lies in marriage and motherhood, and that childrearing is a necessary satisfaction for every female, but not every male. Women who do
not love their children as they should are said to be suffering from a perversion of the "maternal instinct". Men are not expected to love their children: they are merely expected to provide the "bread".

According to this school of thought, a women, married or not, must always put her child first whereas a man in the same position is expected to allow his career to take precedence. Any reversal of those roles means he is less of a man, and she is a heartless freak who does not love the child.

It must be recognized, however, that this view is somewhat dated and more recent research has been carried out in the 1980s with families where the husband is unemployed (Bell and McKee). Nevertheless in terms of social policy, which is perhaps of most relevance here, women are still very much assigned the role of childminder and are discouraged from leaving the home even though in reality large numbers are in employment. It is too easy to fall into the trap of believing that in the late 1980s assumptions about the male and female roles do not exist. Perhaps they do not in such a clearcut stereotyped way suggested by McEvoy, but continuing inequalities in employment, the portrayal of gender-stereotypes in advertising, wage differentials, and so on provide a cautionary note when gauging how much the position of women has actually changed. And of course a central point of this study is that social policy still assumes that young children should be cared for by their mothers.

A further criticism of Bowlby and his followers is that they seriously overstate their case by transferring theories from extreme situations - war orphans, hospitalized children, and evacuated children - into everyday situations within the home. The conclusions of Bowlby, some critics say, imply that the dire consequences of maternal deprivation can occur whenever there is "less than singlehanded, full time provision of maternal attention" (Ehrenreich and English 1979 op cit).
In an analysis of why families fail, Bowlby places "full-time employment of the mother", without qualification, on a par with "imprisonment of parent", "social calamity - war, famine, etc.". Ehrenreich and English then proceed to quote some of Bowlby's followers in the psychiatric profession who have sought

"evidence of all shades of maternal deprivation; setting an unrealistically high expectation of maternal care so that in the logic of the experts, it follows that the mother who failed to meet their exaggerated standards of mother-love might as well be watering their baby's milk."

Policy and Practice in Child Care and Medicine: a feminist critique

These ideas which have underpinned social policy and medical practice in relation to women and children were those of the society into which the Afro-Caribbean immigrants came from the mid-1950s. Before commenting on this racial dimension (which will be examined in another chapter) it is intended here to offer a critique based on feminist theory which will demonstrate the relationship between the above survey of past theory and practice in this field and this present research.

From the above, several key issues emerge. Firstly, "scientific" theories have been used to underline the position of women in relation to male power (patriarchy) and to give this legitimacy. The influence of Freud and the neo-Freudians has provided by far the most powerful theoretical base for this process and have had a profound effect upon social policy in the field of childrearing. The effect of this has been to produce in women a sense of guilt; when children are regarded as maladjusted, the theories cited above invariably blame the mother. Winnicott (1964) for example produced the concept of the "good-enough mother". Where she falls short of an arbitrary ideal it is likely, according to this theory, that the child will be emotionally impaired.
In this context, Bowlby (1953) in a similar fashion tends to induce guilt in women by suggesting that delinquency is caused by maternal neglect. Neo-Freudian ideas (e.g. Klein 1945) have uniformly reinforced the position that the failure to resolve early psycho-emotional conflicts can be firmly laid at the door of the mother. Again, much of the work with delinquents and "maladjusted" children in what were considered "progressive" residential institutions, was again based upon Freudian/Kleinian theory and the work of Winnicott (Dockard-Drysdale, Balberniece).

The host of child care manuals which emerged during the period reviewed above (e.g. Truby King 1934 op cit) reinforced a stereotype which permanently locks women into a child care role at the expense of other ambitions they may have outside of the home. Because men were thus absolved of any responsibility in this area, they could therefore not be "blamed" when children behave badly.

Feminists, however, also recognize that patriarchy, because it is a source of power in society, is able to do "intellectual somersaults" when convenient or necessary for its purposes. In wartime, women were encouraged to go out of the home to work, and the wherewithal (in the form of state provision of nursery care) was forthcoming to serve this purpose. When men required the jobs, however, state provision was withdrawn; a decision backed by the "scientific evidence" provided by Bowlby et al. There is a close parallel today. Whilst for many years, during the first and second Conservative administration from 1979, women were discouraged from working on the grounds that this was a threat to "family values", from 1989 this policy has begun to be revised. For demographic reasons there is likely to be a severe labour shortage in the next decade, and therefore women will prove once again to be a vital "reserve army" of labour in the 1990s. Whilst no commitment has been given to increasing state provision, the present adminis-
tration has declared its intention to "encourage" workplace creches via tax incentives to those companies who provide them. What this does show is that women are, to a far greater extent than are men, at the mercy of the labour market.

At the moment, though, local authority day nurseries are not designed for working mothers. The admission criteria are firmly rooted in the kind of theories reviewed above and is a policy aimed at mothers considered in some way "inadequate". The precise meaning of the term is often couched in Freudian language such as "bonding failure", and evidence in support of this is neglect of the child, failure to play with the child, and so on. Conversely, "overprotective" mothers are also condemned as inadequate, and so it seems women can be damned from both ends! (Ehrenreich and English 1979).

The important point which emerges from all of the theories reviewed, whether one takes a feminist perspective or not, is that they explicitly omit structural explanations for the problem encountered by women and children, and individualize these problems, thereby apportioning blame. No account was taken in these theories of structural inequalities between rich and poor, or between men and women, black and white. Social, economic and historical perspectives have been almost totally absent from the theories.

The issue of pregnancy and childbirth, when viewed from the feminist perspective, follow a similar pattern. Pregnancy itself has been medicalized and is an example of the way that women's bodies have become controlled by patriarchy by means of an exclusively medical model. The whole question of social welfare and the position of women has been discussed by Oakley (1987) who argues that the only real beneficiaries of health policy are the professionals themselves. As a consequence of the rise of the maternal and child welfare movements a
host of new professions have been created: psychologists "expert" in the field of child rearing, obstetricians, and paediatricians, for example, in whose interests it has been to remove pregnancy, childbirth and child rearing from the control of women. Similarly what Oakley has called "the medicalizing of unhappiness" has taken place by calling it depression and by prescribing twice as many anti-depressants to women than to men. Thus the unhappiness of women can be seen to benefit the drugs companies as well.

In a seminal article, Juliet Mitchell (1966) encapsulated much of the critique of the medicalization of childbirth from a Marxist perspective:

"At present, reproduction in our society is often a kind of sad mimicry of production. Work in a capitalist society is an alienation of labour in the making of a social product which is confiscated by capital .... Maternity is often a caricature of this. The biological product - the child - is treated as if it were a solid product. Parenthood becomes a kind of substitute for work, an activity in which the child is seen as an agent created by the mother, in the same way as commodity is created by a worker ... the mother's alienation can be much worse than that of the worker whose product is appropriated by the boss."

In the sense that the needs of the economy have always taken precedence over the rights of women, the analogy offered by Mitchell (unfashionable though it might appear now) is exact. When women are required in the labour force, nursery care is offered on a universal basis. When not, the facility is withdrawn. So to this extent the view that the treatment of the products of women, the children, is determined by the demands of the labour market rather than any altruistic feelings for their welfare, seems to be very much the case. In terms of local authority day care, where the "producer" has somehow failed, the state feels obliged to provide a system of last resort in the way that minimal welfare benefits do for the unemployed, or the workhouse did in earlier times.
In 1979 the then Social Services secretary said:

"I do not believe that mothers have the same right
to go out to work as fathers do. If the good Lord
had intended us to have equal rights to go out to
work, he wouldn't have created men and women".

Ehrenreich and English (1979 op cit) also argue clear distinctions
between the perceptions of the medical profession and those of radical
women:

"Where sociologists saw "roles" and "institutions",
psychiatrists saw "feminine adjustment", and the
medical authorities saw "biological destiny",
feminists saw OPPRESSION".

The authors go on to lambast the male medical professions by
exposing their professional integrity as being what they regard as a
sham by declaring that the hazards of the Pill, intra-uterine devices,
and hormonal treatments for menopausal women raised serious doubts
about the integrity of the medical profession as well as basic
competence:

"Doctors were found to be cutting into the female
body with something of the same abandon which had
characterized nineteenth century gynaecology (half
of the hysterectomies performed each year in the US
are estimated to be medically unnecessary)... the
routine used of anaesthesia, and common resort to
forceps, chemical induction of labour, and
caesarean sections turned out to be hazardous for
mother and child, though convenient and probably
gratifying to the physician. "Scientific" child­
birth, for the sake of which the midwives had been
outlawed, was revealed by the feminist critics as a
drama of mysogyny and greed".

Whilst it is recognized that such vociferous opinions of the
medical profession might appear extreme, coming as they do from radical
feminist writers, they do have support in well-documented cases in this
country as well as in the United States. Where challenges to conven­
tional practices are mounted from within the profession itself, there
is a tendency by those who hold most power in the profession (male
consultants and professors) to close ranks, as occurred in the Wendy
Savage case. Savage was suspended for alleged incompetence for her refusal to carry out caesarean sections to the extent apparently demanded by the status quo within the hospitals. Although she was found not guilty by the tribunal, she was nevertheless regarded as something of a 'leper' by her colleagues. The case had become a "cause celebre" for many local women, who had supported Savage throughout, and the issues which arose from it continue to have great influence on women's attitudes nationally.

In her account of the affair, Savage raises issues surrounding the medicalization of childbirth, many features of which clearly disturb her:

"There are two reasons why this debate is particularly contentious in obstetrics and gynaecology. Firstly, the majority of consultants are men, whereas the consumers are all women. Secondly, many of the women are not ill, they are seeking help and advice about how to avoid pregnancy, or how to get pregnant, how to obtain an abortion or what is best for themselves and the baby if they decide to embark on a pregnancy. Pregnancy is not an illness; it is a very important part of a couple's life together or a woman's life if she decides to go it alone. Women need help to achieve the kind of birth they want - about which many of them, even young women or those with little formal education, often have strong views. The role of the doctor is that of a counsellor rather than that of an authoritarian, trained professional, and this is very hard for some doctors to accept - especially the majority of male obstetricians."

Savage (1986)

Black Women and Feminism

Although the feminist critique presented above provides a useful explanation for the manner in which policies in medicine and child care have evolved, considerable tensions have existed between the feminist movement and many black women. The following is an attempt to examine the nature of those tensions, and to relate this to the central issue of Afro-Caribbean children in local authority day care. This however
is not to negate the important insights offered by the feminist analysis, but rather to point out those areas of difference that are most relevant in providing the background to the central issue of Afro-Caribbean children in local authority day care. In highlighting the areas of tensions between black women and the feminist movements, it is also intended to define some of the disadvantages experienced by black women as compared with their white counterparts.

Much of the organized demand for increasing day care provision has come from feminist groups and, as can be seen from the above, the critiques of the medical profession and so on owe much to feminist thought. However, increasingly, tensions have appeared between black women and white feminists. Black women have felt marginalized, misunderstood and generally excluded from the mainstream of feminism and have articulated serious misgivings about the thrust of white feminist ideas which they regard has having ignored important racial dimensions. Since this research seeks to address the issue of day care, then it is very important to air some of the very real differences which have emerged. For example the white feminist demands for day care for all who want it is very relevant here. Oakley (1986 op cit) points out that feminists during the 1980s demanded 24 hour child care as part of a wider rejection of their enforced roles as mothers imposed by male patriarchy. However they did not go further to ask questions concerning the needs of black users of such child care provision, and whether these can ever be met within the present, ethnocentric models of child care as practised within state day nurseries. They also fail to appreciate that the nature of the oppression of Afro-Caribbean women is both qualitatively and quantitatively greater than that of their white counterparts, due to the added dimension of white racism. These points will be examined further in another chapter, although the general points will be highlighted here to make the important point that
there are very real differences between the black woman's role within the family and in the job market which render some of the generalizations of feminism somewhat irrelevant.

Bryan, Dadzie and Scarfe (1986) documented the strength of feeling voiced by many black women about the failure of feminism to address racial issues, and it is worth noting some of these concerns from the outset. The Organization for Women of African and Asian Descent (OWAAD) was established in response to this exclusion, and one member (echoed by too many to quote here) said:

"We're not feminists - we reject the label because we feel that it represents a white ideology. In our culture the term is associated with being anti-men. Our group is not anti-men at all. We have what I'd describe as a "controlled" relationship with them. When we have study sessions on black history and culture, men come along ... when we discuss, organize, campaign on that basis we are placing our oppression in the context of racism. We're not just addressing women or black women. We recognize that as black people we have a collective responsibility for each other ... The reality is that it's not a black man's struggle or a black woman's struggle, but a black people's struggle."

The above encapsulates neatly one important element of the tensions between black women and the feminist movement. That is, by focussing upon male oppression, the feminist movement is actually divisive to the black community at a time when it feels it has to stand together in unity to combat white racism. A further, though connected tension is the feeling amongst black women that much feminist thought seems to centre around "luxury": issues whereas for black women their concerns are about issues of survival:

"What Samora Machel had to say about women's emancipation made a lot more sense to us than what Germaine Greer and other feminists were saying. It just didn't make sense for us to be talking about changing lifestyles and attitudes, when we were dealing with issues of survival like housing, education, and police brutality."

What groups such as these have pointed out is that for black people
in Britain these issues of survival are those upon which racism impinges most heavily and which therefore must be addressed before sexual politics. It is not that black women necessarily reject outright feminist ideology, this seems far from being the case, but rather that feminist priorities appear wrong-headed and insensitive towards black women. Black women seem to accept that men do not offer them support in child care, as evidenced by the predominance of Afro-Caribbean women as "heads of household" and main or sole breadwinner. Thus issues such as state provision of child care are taken on as a problem for them, not for men. However, they seem also to be saying that this lack of involvement by men should not at this stage in black history be allowed to detract from the political unity which is necessary for the wider struggle.

Some of these issues will be expanded upon in the chapter dealing specifically with racism, but as it relates to this particular area Cook and Watt (1987) address the important issues of racism, women and poverty which are relevant here. They make the point that in certain specific areas white feminism has failed to address the particular problems of black women:

"Black, and white women in British society, therefore, do share some common experiences but they are also divided by racism. For example, although the women in Westwood's study fought together for higher wages, the black women experienced racism from their white co-workers at work. The racism that divides families and communities outside the workplace also meant that the women did not on the whole socialize outside working hours."

The issue of day care also, it is suggested, takes on quite a different meaning for black women than for white feminists. Whilst for feminism, day care facilities are part of the campaign for emancipation from the roles imposed upon them by male patriarchy, for black women it is an essential prerequisite for them to improve their socioeconomic
There are great inequalities in the job market between white and black women, resulting in a six per cent difference in unemployment rates, as well as a high concentration of black women in low-paid, menial jobs working unsocial hours in poorer conditions on average than those of their white counterparts (Brown 1984; Bryan et al (1986 op cit). Afro-Caribbean women are six times more likely to be heads of households than white women, and 31 per cent of Afro-Caribbean households are single parent, overwhelmingly women, as against only ten per cent in the white population (Brown 1984 op cit). Thus for purely "survival" reasons it seems likely that many black women have to place their children in full-time state day care. Whether this is the primary reason for Afro-Caribbean use of local authority day care is a possibility which will be addressed in the fieldwork of this present research. This will be considered in more depth in another chapter of this study but it is relevant here to pinpoint very real differences between feminist demands for day care and the reality of day care for Afro-Caribbean people. As Parmar (1982) has suggested, the notion of "racially constructed gender roles" needs to be understood in order to differentiate, where necessary, the experiences of black and white women and their roles within the family and in work. The assumptions that women are the economic dependents of men cannot be applied to black women in Britain. Nor is this the case in much of the Third World, research having demonstrated that black women have always made significant contributions to the economic well-being of their families and communities, and to their societies in general (Carby 1982; Parmar 1982 op cit).

The problem for black women, as will also be explained in detail in another chapter, is compounded by unequal access to all other forms of childcare (such as childminders, nursery schools, private day nurseries etc) (CRC 1975; Cohen 1988) which leaves only the local authority day...
nurseries, where Afro-Caribbean children are heavily over-represented.

In sum, the differences to be recognized in the black female experience were encapsulated by Cook and Watt (1987 op cit)

"Black women in Britain have to face ... the dual oppressions of racism and sexism which impinge negatively on their opportunities and consign them to low-paid and low-status jobs".

The ignorance of the recent history of black women which many black women feel feminists harbour, provides a further point of tension. For example, while feminist writers complain that in the early 1960s it was government policy to keep women in the home rather than go out to work, this was the very period when Afro-Caribbean women were being used to do the least desirable and worst-paid jobs in British society, and without the benefit of state child care:

"In the early 1960s the state was still busy trying to encourage (white) women to stay home and embrace consumerism. It wasn't prepared to offer any child care support to black women who had to work. In such a climate, we were compelled to develop other strategies. Those with their own homes, bought as a means of escaping the often desperate conditions in rented accommodation, or because racism conditions of eligibility denied us access to council homes, were able to take in children, particularly black women who had children themselves. Others had to rely on fostering arrangements. Coming from a culture which had always encouraged trust between women in sharing childcare, we were sometimes too ready to place our children with a foster mother. But this arrangement could not compare with the care of our mothers and grandmothers at home. Often it meant lengthy separation from our children, and traumatic effects on the children themselves."

Bryan et al (1986 op cit)

It is a source of resentment then that white feminists have tended to draw conclusions based only upon their own experiences. Assumptions made about the family and about male patriarchy made by white, often middle-class, feminists, have led to consternation among some black women writers who point to statistical evidence to show that the image
of the two-parent household in which the male is the breadwinner, so often used as the "bete noir" of the feminist canon, does not conform to the reality of many black women, as for example described by Brown (1984 op cit). Bhat, Carr-Hill and Ohri (1988) write:

"Thus the male family wage system which has been the object of feminist analysis, has been based upon assumptions which do not necessarily apply to Afro-Caribbean women. The responsibilities of many West Indian women far exceeds that of their white counterparts and as such their concerns are going to be directed less towards the assertion of an equal or dominant role within the family - for many hold such a position anyway, or else as lone parents the issue does not arise - and more towards issues of how to look after their children in a society where access to jobs, decent housing, education, and so on is so clearly biased against black women."

In terms of feminist models of patriarchy itself, again from an historical perspective this ignores the history of black people wherein white women in fact held dominance over black men, and a variety of laws were designed to keep this in place. Some writers have pointed out the confusion such issues have aroused for white feminists, for example in the American South where black men have often been falsely accused of sexually assaulting white women (Barret and McIntosh 1985).

It is such historical dimensions which black women have accused feminism of ignoring or misinterpreting for their own ends. Carby (1982 op cit) makes the point that racism divides feminists not because feminist attitudes, statistics, or concepts need correcting, though they may do, but because black women have real political interests in common with black men. The question is begged as to whether the conflicts of the early 1980s in Brixton and Toxteth were any less relevant to black women because they involved mostly black men. Black women might argue that such struggles based upon issues of survival documented above - of equality of opportunity and of having a real stake in society - are more relevant to them than many of the issues which
feminism has taken up "on their behalf". A further area of major criticism of feminism held by black women, and one which is relevant to the previous discussion of the medicalization of childbirth, is that in the various campaigns around abortion on demand and contraception, the women's movement has appeared insensitive to the experiences of black women. According to the evidence cited in Bryant et al (1986 op cit) black women are offered abortions far more readily than are whites. Contraceptives are a similar issue, depo provera (a contraceptive drug administered by injection) has been widely tested on black African women before reaching Europe, and, once in Britain, black women were used as guinea-pigs for this highly dangerous and now-banned drug.

It was intended in the fieldwork of this research to interview black women on such issues - for example to what extent they had been offered abortions - but due to the initial denial of access to users of day care by the local authority this has not been possible. Nevertheless, earlier research undertaken by the present writer (Asrat-Girma 1983) does indeed show from interviews that many young black pregnant women are offered abortions very often at an early stage of their medical consultations. The point made earlier that "single" women are not regarded as having the same maternal instincts as married women is relevant here, particularly since there is an added racial dimension that has created the cultural stereotype of "black single parent".

The point at issue here is that black women regard the demands of feminists as taking insufficient account not only of their negative experiences in hospitals, family planning clinics, and so on, but also of the insecurities they feel in relation to their presence in this country. Following Enoch Powell's infamous "Rivers of Blood" speech in 1968, the atmosphere of near-hysteria which was whipped up by the mass media and politicians concerning a supposed "takeover" of Britain by
blacks created insecurity for black people which cannot have been alleviated by the coincident feminist demands for abortion and contraception. If you are black and live in a country obsessed with limiting your numbers, and which controls the means and has the political backing to do it, it comes as no surprise to find black women shocked by white feminist demands of this kind, albeit for quite different motives of course.

Although the United States experience cannot always be transferred to the British situation, in this particular area there are parallels. For many years, fears were expressed by influential sections of white American society about the birth rate of black people, and pseudoscientific theories of social Darwinism and eugenics were employed to justify actions such as enforced sterilization in certain states. Thus black activists such as Angela Davis castigated white feminists for their insensitivity towards these facts of their history:

"The abortion rights activists of the early 1970s should have examined the history of their movement. Had they done so, they might have understood why so many of their black sisters adopted a posture of suspicion towards their cause. They might have understood how important it was to undo the racist deeds of their predecessors, who have advocated birth control as well as compulsory sterilization as a means of eliminating "unfit" members of the population. Consequently, the young white feminists might have been more receptive to the suggestion that their campaign for abortion rights include a vigorous condemnation of sterilization abuse, which has become more widespread than ever."

Davis 1981

This lack of any historical perspective and a seeming lack of awareness of the black position in white society, then, has caused considerable resentment by black women towards white feminists and have compounded the suspicion that, as with the earlier women's movements, white women are, as it were, "white first, women second" when it comes to issues of race. Hooks (1981) documents the discrimination against
black women in the early feminist movements and draws parallels with the present unhappy position. Writing of the modern women's movement in the U.S. she says:

"Initially, black feminists approached the women's movement white women had organized eager to join the struggle to end sexist oppression. We were disappointed and disillusioned when we discovered that white women in the movement had little knowledge of or concern for the problems of lower-class and poor women or the particular problems of non-white women of all classes. Those of us who were active in women's groups found that white feminists lamented the absence of large numbers of non-white participants but were unwilling to change the movement's focus so that it would better address the needs of women from all classes and races ... some white women even argued that groups not represented by a numerical majority could not expect their concerns to be given attention."

If this exclusion is true within American feminism then it is likely to be more so in Britain, given the smaller numbers of black women in this country who are more marginalized and still more economically and socially disadvantaged.

Experiences of the white feminist movement by black women, described above with reference to the OWAAD conferences, suggest that the experiences of black women in Britain and the USA are not dissimilar: both imply that deep racial divisions exist on a range of issues. This reality should therefore be taken on board in any analysis of Afro-Caribbean children in local authority day care. It is recognized that the precise nature of the divisions between black women and the feminist movement has not been explored to the extent where a more informed critique can be presented. It will be the intention however of this present research to attempt to remedy this by means of fieldwork interviews with black women.

This chapter has attempted to define the ideologies and perspectives that have shaped women's experiences of pregnancy, childbirth and childrearing. A feminist perspective was adopted, and the nature of
patriarchy in various branches of the medical profession explored. In recognition of the different experiences of black women, an account was given of the tensions which appear to exist between black women and the feminist movement. In doing so, some of the disadvantages experienced by black women as compared with their white counterparts were highlighted.
The issue of Afro-Caribbean in local authority day nurseries cannot be separated from a wider consideration of racism in Britain. In the review of day nursery and related research in the previous Chapter I suggested that the subject of racism and its consequences was not regarded by researchers as a central topic. Since Afro-Caribbean use of the day care system is the focus of this present research, it must be examined. Given that it represents a crucial element in the black experience, I want to explore the following question: what is the nature of the relationship between the inequalities experienced by Afro-Caribbean people and the over-representation of Afro-Caribbean children in local authority day nurseries? This is a difficult and subtle issue: it could be said that since day care is a resource which should be available to all, the fact that Afro-Caribbeans do have access to it is a sign that they are in fact sharing equitably in society's resources. However, there are some qualifications to be made. Pre-school day care in this country, it must be stressed, is for the most part delivered on a highly discretionary basis, in order to effect the rationing necessitated by the extent to which the supply is inadequate. Gatekeeping mechanisms involve a variety of value judgements about the circumstances of children and their parents, and judgements made in relation to black families, some researchers have suggested, have been particularly ill-conceived. Macdonald (1991) for example suggests that black families are:

"pre-judged because of their skin colour, their poverty or some other aspect of their identity or lifestyle. Misunderstandings which subsequently occur can have severely damaging effects."

MacDonald, S. (1991)
In practice, in many areas only the most deprived, or those considered most "deficient", "at risk", and generally most "in need" presently have access to state day nurseries. Peter Moss's contention that "there is virtually no State childcare provision" (in Britain) is difficult to argue with, given that there are only 6000 places nationally for under two's in such provision (Moss, P. 1986). Similarly, in this and another study, Moss demonstrates that non-State day nurseries are used almost exclusively by the middle classes (i.e. those in professional/managerial jobs), thus implying that the present system of childcare is a two-tier one, based on socio-economic position. (Moss, P., 1986; Brannen, J. and Moss P., 1988). The consequences for women in employment, and in stark comparison with many other European countries, is further explored by Moss in a recent newspaper article. He is quoted as saying "In Britain, men tend not to want to get involved in the (childcare) debate ... in many European countries it has become central in national and local politics." (Jones, J. The Independent, 23.9.91).

This then has implications for the extent and manner in which Afro-Caribbeans have access to day care. As has been discussed elsewhere in this present study, local authority day nurseries have a tendency to stigmatize, and as such cannot be compared in the same favourable light as any other part of the preschool system (Lindon and Lindon 1988 op cit). I want to suggest therefore that far from being viewed unproblematically as a wholly positive resource, Afro-Caribbean over-representation in the day nursery system may represent one symptom of their depressed socio-economic position.

This chapter then will examine the nature and extent of these other inequalities and will suggest that racism is the primary cause. Specifically, the key areas of housing, employment, education, health
and social services will be considered. To provide an introduction to this discussion, I cite one example of the criteria used by an individual local authority for day care:

"Children of parents who are living in housing conditions detrimental to health, or where other environmental factors (including lack of opportunity for playing with others) are such that it is desirable for the health of the child that it should be admitted to a day nursery."

This points to the way in which Afro-Caribbean children may be disproportionately affected since, as will be described later, gross inequalities in housing exist, some of which are directly attributable to racist housing policies (CRE 1990). Again, the argument is that, if day nurseries were seen as widely-available, high-quality, and non-stigmatizing then access to them by the black community could be viewed as an example of an equitable division of resources. Since the reverse description of day care is the accurate one, however, day care is more likely to be part and parcel of discrimination against black people.

In this chapter it is intended firstly to provide a general overview, from an historical perspective, of how racism has developed in this country. A presentation of certain manifestations of racism in Britain will then be given in the specific areas of housing, education, employment, health and social services.

The Historical Perspective

The black presence in Britain has an antecedence far longer than might popularly be thought. In Roman times for example there is evidence that black soldiers were posted to Britain (Shyllon 1973), and from the 16th century onwards contemporary records demonstrate a significant black presence. Whilst it is not intended here to give a detailed account of this early period, it is necessary to state at this point that the roots of racism are to be found there, and to describe the nature of that racism.
Much of the prejudice had a religious content. Sivanandan (1982) points out that the early Roman Catholic church held that a person could only be fully human if she or he were a believer within the "one true church". Non-believers included non-European peoples who worshipped different gods under different religions, and were therefore considered inferior "per se". Such religious prejudice can of course still be seen in the South African Dutch Reformed Church which bases its support for apartheid upon selective passages in the Bible which are supposed to support their case. For example in the book of Genesis where the descendants of Ham, who were allegedly black, are condemned for eternity to be slaves and servants.

Religion was cited in order to rationalize the loss of black peoples' rights in Elizabethan England. In 1596, the queen sanctioned that Africans had no legal rights, the popular perception being that Africans were

"A people of beastly living, without a God, law, religion, or common wealth".

Similarly, early expeditions in ships bearing the names Jesus, Solomon, and John the Baptist, enslaved black people - and often tortured and killed them.

Regarding black people in such a way, initially justified by religion rather than by science, made mass enslavement during the 18th century morally justifiable; if black people were so obviously sub-human, then the usual standards of humanity were unnecessary. Walvin (1981) pointed out that black and white relations were shaped by the experience of slavery and later by imperial domination. The political and social legacy of white domination over blacks in England, no less than in the colonies, has been the survival and persistence of notions of superiority which, in their turn, have lain the foundations for modern racialist ideologies.
As long ago as 1680 a contemporary minister and writer, Morgan Godwyn, analysed the use of religion to justify racism as being in reality a class ideology which prevented the plantation owners from the guilt of maltreating their slaves. One owner apparently told Godwyn, who wished to baptize a slave, that

"I might as well baptize a puppy. Another, that baptism would do no more good to her black slave than to her black bitch".

Fryer 1984.

Fryer makes the point that regarding black people as no higher than animals was necessary for a society which believed that sin meant eternal punishment and damnation after death. It was no sin to maltreat subhuman species, therefore they could be sure that they would not be condemned in the eyes of their maker.

The history of black people in Britain has further been characterized by economic exploitation followed by rejection when their economic purposes has outlived its usefulness. For example, when blacks were expelled from Britain under various statutes in 1596, 1601, 1787, and 1909. Even up to the present day, calls are heard from right-wing politicians and others for "repatriation" (e.g. Powell's "Rivers of Blood" speech of 1968"/Macdonald 1983). This politician's speech in fact perfectly encapsulates the point of "expendibility", for it was Powell himself when Minister of Health, who had exhorted Afro-Caribbean people to come to Britain to work in the national health service. When they were not longer required, Powell employed selective, anecdotal "evidence" to attack the character of Afro-Caribbean people in order to play on the fears of the white working class voters of his constituency, thereby "justifying" his call for repatriation. Historically then, Capital has always regarded black people as a pool of cheap maleable labour which can be discarded at any time. In this regard
there is a parallel with the position of women, as described elsewhere in this study.

Following Powell's speech, both left and right became desperate, not so much to distance themselves from his statement, but to try to make common cause without being too blatant about it. Husband (1986) commenting on the new definition of race relations in the early 1970s as "the immigrant problem" writes:

"Having defined events in these terms both the Labour and the Conservative parties were thereafter vulnerable to neo-fascist groups who were prepared to focus upon and exacerbate the racist sentiments that were at the core of this perspective. It was also to attempt to rephrase the political agenda in terms of the realities of labour demand and the failure of government to plan for the consequent pressure on the resources of housing, education, or welfare in the areas of migrant settlement. British party politics in the 1960s and 70s became profoundly entangled in a competitive struggle to contain and co-opt the growing racist votes... too late it became apparent that the electorate was being retained only at the cost of explicitly discriminatory legislation."

Bhat, Carr-Hill and Ohri (1988) sum up this theme of "dispensability" thus:

"From the expulsion of Jews in 1290, to Queen Elizabeth I's decision to remove 'blackamoors' in the sixteenth century, to action against Welsh, Gypsy, and Irish minorities, to the hypocrisy over the abolition of slavery in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, immigration restrictions, and repatriation have been persistent themes of government's approach to legislation on ethnic and racial minorities. In this century the 1905 Aliens Act and the 1919 Aliens Restriction (amendment) Act were the precursors of the Commonwealth Immigration Acts of 1962, 1968 and 1971, and the 1982 British Nationality Act."

White racism, seen from such a perspective, can be regarded as a product of capitalism. For example, returning soldiers after World War I, in certain parts of the country (Liverpool, Cardiff and Bristol) came into conflict with black populations which had settled in those areas, accusing them of taking the jobs to which they felt entitled (as
well as their women) (Bush 1981). Restrictive legislation was enacted because of these events in order to limit immigration and placate the white population (The Alliance Order 1920 and the Special Restriction <Coloured Alien Seamen> 1925). Thus the conflict which had resulted in the race riots of 1919 was laid firmly at the door of the black minority communities. Race relations was seen to be a black problem, and no account was ever taken of white racism supported and fuelled by capitalism. It is also important to recognize that the role of capital in supporting and using racism in a way which justifies its own ends is still very much an issue within the dimension of Europe and the free market of 1992. Sivanandan (1988) sees this as necessitating further exploitation of ethnic minorities as a cheap and disposable form of labour, with tightened laws of settlement aimed at these populations, whereas for whites these will be relaxed. Similarly, as was seen in a number of recent cases, the Home Office in Britain have increased efforts to root out and deport those whom they consider "illegal immigrants" - even though the precise definition of that term is unclear. The exposures by the German journalist, Gunther Wallraf, of the shocking treatment of the Turkish "gastarbeiter", (Karpf 1988) and the rise of the Front Nationale in France, would appear to support Sivanandan's claim of a new European dimension to the exploitation and persecution of non-white workers. Fears have also been aroused, with good cause, of the position of non-white migrant workers in Europe, following the collapse of the Communist bloc in Eastern Europe and the likely influx of white workers from those countries into EC countries.

The prejudice within the white population in the early twentieth century was reinforced through popular literature (e.g. the Little Black Sambo books, Tarzan, etc), cinema (D.W.Griffith's "The Birth of a Nation" glorified the Klu Klux Klan), and the content of the school curriculum and patriotic propaganda such as the Empire Day celebrations.
(Bush 1981). It is significant to remember than many of these elements were present until well into the 1950s, and some until the present day (the "Sambo" books have been constantly reprinted for example). The significance of popular culture should not be underestimated. Postwar cinema audiences before the television age were enormous, and yet the big Hollywood studios had firm guidelines on the representation of black people which prevented black actors from assuming roles other than those of servants, entertainers, and so on - essentially subservient, non-threatening roles. The portrayal of romantic relationships between the races was also banned. Even today, television is criticized for its failure to represent the diverse nature of British society, and for its lip-service to the representation of black people in the media.

The above has been an attempt to define the development of racist attitudes in Britain up to the point of the large-scale immigration from the Caribbean during the 1950s. The society which West Indian people had to face was already one in which racist attitudes had already become ingrained, thus destroying the popular mythology that it was not until this wave of immigration began that racism emerged. It was already there, and black people arriving in Britain became immediately aware of that harsh reality as they faced discrimination in every aspect of their lives; in employment, education, housing and in health care. It is in these essential areas that the racist attitudes of British society presented themselves in tangible form, and which are still a source of major inequality today.

The following account highlights these various areas of inequality. This inequality forms the structural context for Afro-Caribbean over-representation in local authority day care for, as has been confirmed by this research, it is the socio-economic position of Afro-Caribbean
families rather than any perceived "deficiency" of parenting which is the overwhelmingly common reason why Afro-Caribbean children are admitted into local authority day nurseries.

**Employment**

The basic reality for black people in the field of employment is that their position has remained fundamentally unchanged since the 1950s. The 1984 Policy Studies Institute report states:

"... the position of the black citizens of Britain largely remains, geographically and economically, that allocated to them as immigrant workers in the 1950s and 1960s. Whilst 19% of white men occupy professional or managerial positions, only 11% of Indians, 10% of Pakistani and Bangladeshi, and a paltry 5% of West Indian men hold such posts".

(Brown 1984)

The position for women is far worse. Only 1% of West Indian women hold a managerial or professional job. The Radical Statistics Group, having moved away from previously piecemeal explanations of inequality, lay the blame squarely on white racism:

"It is ... our contention that systematic, rather than incidental, discrimination is taking place and that, notwithstanding the importance of other disad­vantaging factors, structured racism operating in the organization of the economy continues to have a deliberate and powerful impact on the lives of black people".

(Ohri and Faruqui 1988)

Previous explanations over the years for black unemployment and low job status contended that; the black population is younger, it lacks the appropriate skills and qualifications, that discrimination increases where there is a surplus of labour, that black people tend to live in those areas more subject to recession, and that the "last in first out" rule of redundancy disadvantages black people to a greater degree than their white counterparts.

The radical Statistics Group took each of these "old" explanations
in turn and proceeded to dismiss or to considerably modify them. For example, they found that age difference accounted for no more than a tenth of the difference between black and white unemployment rates, and also that in fact many of the first generation black immigrants were overqualified for the jobs they held. In fact it was also found that second-generation black people do not get the most desirable jobs anyway. Similarly, the 1985 Labour Force Survey found that 25% of unemployed West Indian men had 0 levels, whereas the corresponding figure for whites was only 9%.

The authors then go on to identify a host of flaws in each of the past arguments, or rationalizations, for black disadvantage in employment, and reach the conclusion:

"What this clearly highlights is that, regardless of whether one examines the situation of those blacks in employment, those skilled, unskilled, or professional, those unemployed or indeed those on government-sponsored YTS, it must be concluded that blacks have been and are discriminated against at every level and in every sphere."

(Ohri and Faruqui 1988 op cit)

They further go on to point out that the bare numbers do not tell the whole story, and ask questions such as why black people are far more likely to experience recurrent unemployment than whites, and why they tend to remain unemployed for far longer periods. Dex (1983) reached the conclusion that:

"West Indians constitute a reserve or secondary labour force."

Little and Robbins (1982) reached similar conclusions, spread over many areas of black peoples' lives. In the specific area of employment they conclude:

"Minority groups are more vulnerable to unemployment than whites: they are concentrated within lower job levels in a way that cannot be explained by lower academic or job qualifications; within broad categories of jobs they have lower earnings
than whites, particularly at the higher end of the job scale; they tend to do shiftwork and are concentrated in certain plants, and have to make about twice as many applications as whites before finding a job. Analysis of (their) patterns of employment ... suggest that discrimination was an important factor in their disadvantaged employment; case studies directly confirm this."

Whilst race relations legislation has attempted to remove the more blatant signs of discrimination (the infamous landlords' signs "No Coloureds, No Irish, No Dogs" for example), the overwhelming conclusion reached by modern researchers is that racial discrimination in employment is the key reason for black underachievement within the labour market. Smith (1977) writes:

"It is quite clear ... that in most cases where an Asian or a West Indian job applicant is rejected because of unfair discrimination, he or she is not told the "real reason" for this rejection."

Similarly Fryer (1984 op cit) points out that:

"Black people who do succeed in finding work tend to be given jobs well below the level of their qualifications and experience: many of these are in marginal and service industries and low wages, unattractive conditions, and no prospects."

In recent years the CRE have also undertaken exercises in which employers have been exposed by CRE researchers, posing as job applicants, and were clearly discriminated against in a large percentage of cases.

Given the policy direction of the present government, guided by right-wing think tanks such as the Adam Smith Institute, the situation for black people is likely to worsen rather than improve. The theories of the right maintain that it is restrictive legislation in the labour market which causes rather than prevents unemployment. If freed from such checks as industrial tribunals and other protective legislation, employers would be more likely to take people on. Since however such institutions regard race relations legislation in a similar, sceptical, light, then presumably employers should then be free to discriminate as
they did before the Race Relations Act (which in any case is often flaunted).

Similarly, it is also very clear that the Adam Smith Institute regards even the minimum protection offered to workers by the trade unions as an encumbrance to employment, and they criticize for example union opposition to certain job creation schemes which operate poor wages and conditions:

"Employment policy, given its specific targeting nature, is very often open to manipulation by interest groups in the production process. For example, public sector unions have successfully sought to constrain the sorts of jobs available to young people hired on job creation programmes".

Many black people have found themselves forced into such job creation programmes, which is itself far from ideal. Once the trade unions have lost their powers of intervention in deciding the quality and rates of pay for workers on such schemes, however, black employees are likely to suffer still more.

No matter what the nature of past "explanations" for black disadvantage in employment - many of which have tended indirectly to blame blacks themselves for this (e.g. by not being qualified) - the evidence available shows that the problem rests with the racism within white society. Smith (1977) graphically illustrates the fact that skin pigmentation accounts for racial disadvantage in a way which a purely class model cannot:

"The present pattern of racial disadvantage is likely to persist over several generations unless action is taken now. In present-day Britain there is considerable mobility within the class structure ... many do "cross the divide". But sons (sic) of black and brown people are bound to be identifiable black or brown themselves, even if one of their parents is white ... there can be virtually no mobility, even between generations, across racial boundaries. If therefore particular racial groups come to be identified with an inferior role in society, then this will tend to persist indefinitely."
Though written over a decade ago, the evidence shows that the above situation has indeed persisted. This being the case, then the continuing overrepresentation of Afro-Caribbean children in local authority day care (and their relative lack of access to other forms of preschool child care provision) might be regarded as a barometer of the position of Afro-Caribbeans in British society generally. Given the low status and low paid employment which is the norm for the black population, even in two-parent families it would appear an absolute necessity for both parents to work - to a far greater extent than is true for the white population. Thus the system of day care and the socioeconomic position of black people is inextricably linked.

**Housing**

The conclusions of the 1970s research by the PEP(1976) in the field of race and housing demonstrated dramatic differences between the housing of minority ethnic groups and the rest of the population. All the measures of housing quality used in the survey showed minorities to be far worse housed than whites; black private tenants were paying much higher rents than were white tenants; and ethnic minorities were found to be underrepresented in council housing as a whole, while startlingly overrepresented in the lowest quality council housing. The earlier PEP reports of the mid 1960s demonstrated precisely the same phenomena. It seems surprising then that those reports were never acted upon.

Black people are still more likely than whites to suffer overcrowding and lack the various housing amenities which white people take for granted. In south-east England, black households are five times more likely to be occupying shared dwellings, and elsewhere the disproportion is even more glaring (Luthera 1988). In general, over 40% of black people, as compared with 11% of whites, were living in overcrowded conditions.
In relation to child health, Fryer (1984 op cit) concludes:

"The long-term effects of such conditions on children's health and welfare, and the problems thereby caused for mothers - especially mothers of babies and young children - scarcely need emphasis."

It is clear that poor housing is connected with lack of employment opportunities and associated poverty - many black people simply do not have the finance to get on the housing ladder - and within the private sector it is easy to discriminate. A recent CRE report (CRE 1990) for example gave irrefutable evidence of discrimination in a large number of accommodation agencies in the private sector. There is however evidence to suggest that such discrimination has existed over many years in the public housing sector as well. Apart from the Liverpool cases mentioned earlier, councils such as Ealing were found to deliberately discriminate on racial grounds (Smith and Whalley 1975) and had to be challenged in the House of Lords. Other councils discriminate more subtly by operating a "length of residence" clause in their allocation policy, whilst others have a "gatekeeping" policy at the point of allocation which can filter black families into substandard housing.

Skellington's study in Bedfordshire (Skellington 1980 op cit) again showed that housing visitors played a significant role by producing "good housekeeping" records on the families hoping to be rehoused, with the outcome that 80% of white received favourable reports, as against the 70% of blacks who received unfavourable ones. Skellington writes:

"Visitors made reference to colour or ethnic origin, recommended applicants for a particular standard of housing and implicitly matched applicants with "good" housekeeping practices to new estates ... despite the borough council's new points scheme it is evident that the outcome for both West Indians and Asians differs widely from the studied European minorities and the white comparison group. It has been shown that provided West Indian and Asian applicants conform to the
typical council house norm - a married couple with one child - equitable outcomes emerge. However, on all other criteria of evaluation West Indians and Asians have been shown to receive inferior treatment."

It is this kind of "institutionalized" racism that creates so much hardship for Britain's black population and for which it is so difficult to legislate. Townsend (1973) writes that:

"Coloured (sic) immigrants are drawn into an existing social system which is highly stratified according to access to different types and amounts of resources. In some respects the openings for them are the least desirable that society can offer - in areas of poorest housing, and jobs which are low paid and least secure ... inevitably there are individuals in the host society whose own escape from poverty depends on advancement at the expense of others - whether through individual or social exploitation, industrial action, or government intervention. Immigrants join the common struggle to escape depressed living standards and find themselves pushed into them."

Townsend's point was made over two decades ago by Rex and Moore (1967) who pointed to the efforts of Asians to pool what resources they had in order to escape the racism they found in the housing market.

It is perhaps the question of access to resources, and the way that racism has denied black people such access, which is at the heart of the debate. White working-class people, consciously or not, tend to push out black people when it comes to gaining resources such as housing or employment, as we have seen. And of course this reality is ironic when set against the popular myth that the reverse is true.

In fact, in most indicators of deprivation in all its facets, race appears as a major variable, and always appears in studies by local authorities and government departments such as the Department of the Environment (Townsend et al 1988).

In the context of this present study it is also important to note that single parenthood is another major variable in predicting deprivation and poverty, so that if you are a black single parent you are
thus far more likely to live in such poverty and deprivation.

Whilst there are dangers in stereotyping black lone parents as deprived, and of taking that word to be a characteristic of the person rather than a reflection of their economic and social position, such indicators are nevertheless important to this present study because they do tend to set the overrepresentation of Afro-Caribbean children in local authority day care in the context of poverty and deprivation, of which poor housing is very much a part.

**Education**

Within the education system, Afro-Caribbean children are heavily disadvantaged by those same mechanisms of racism which have been addressed above and which have emerged from the kind of racial stereotyping rationalized by pseudo-scientific theory. Sivanandan (1982 op cit) writes:

"West Indian children were consistently and right through the schooling system treated as uneducable and as having "unrealistic expectations" together with a low IQ. Consequently they were "banded" into classes for backward children or dumped into ESN schools and forgotten. The fight against categorization of their children as underachieving, and therefore only fit to be an underclass, began in Haringey in the 1960s ... spread to other areas and became incorporated in the programmes of black political organizations."

The "scientific" underpinning of racialism within education has its roots in the work of Eysenck, Jensen and Schockley (Sivanandan, A. 198 and their belief in white superiority of intelligence, based upon the essentially Eurocentric methods such as the IQ test. The result is that, as described in Kirp (1979), the children of West Indian parents are three to four times more likely than white children to be classed as educationally subnormal; that proportionately fewer Afro-Caribbean children pursue studies beyond secondary school; that the Department of Education and Science has pursued a policy of "inexplicitness" on the
issue of race and schooling; and that black voices have seldom been heard in discussions on the proper position of race in education policy.

What is perhaps more insidious, and this is related to the subtle racism shown to exist in housing policy, is the kind of well-meaning "low expectation" shown by teachers towards Afro-Caribbean pupils. In practice, this means that West Indian children tend to be "banded", not on any objective evidence such as examination results, but more on the perception of teachers about "good" pupils (Wright 1986).

Similarly, Bhat et al (1988 op cit) correctly observed that the interim Rampton report on multiracial education pointed towards unconscious racism amongst teachers, but this conclusion was later swept aside by the report of the revamped Swann committee which shifted the emphasis away from the responsibility of teachers and towards other areas. The committee argued:

"A substantial part of ethnic minority under-achievement ... is thus the result of racial prejudice and discrimination on the part of society at large, bearing on ethnic minority homes and families, and hence, indirectly, on children."

Thus whilst this correctly addresses discrimination in society and as such has moved away from the "individual pathology" approach so heavily criticized for example by Stone (1981) there was also a subtle yet important shift away from blaming the schools in particular and the present system of education in general. Stone in fact fiercely criticizes schools for avoiding the real issues of power, class and racial oppression in favour of the philosophy of "improving the self-concept" of black children for example by a kind of "half-baked multicultural education". She further writes:

"Whilst schools try to compensate children by offering Black Studies and steel bands, black parents and community groups are organizing Saturday schools - to supplement the second-rate education which the school system offers the
children."

It is this second or third-rate education which black children have to endure, born out of the kind of prejudice which consistently underestimates black intelligence, that lies at the heart of the problem and cannot be compensated for by the kind of tampering at the edges which multicultural education, according to Stone, appears to be doing. From this perspective, equal opportunity is best served by traditional, formal academic methods provided to a high standard for black pupils.

Stone's position is open to argument, of course. How for example does one define "traditional academic methods", and indeed have such methods been proved successful for pupils generally? Does the proposed abandonment of "multicultural education" imply for example the teaching of a Eurocentric, or indeed an Anglocentric History to the exclusion of all other cultures? Such a debate is presently being carried out within the DES, and the whole area of methods, testing, and curriculum content is presently under intense scrutiny by politicians and educationalists of all political persuasions. In her rejection of multicultural education, Stone may be accused of "throwing the baby out with the bathwater" if, in the name of a kind of "cultural imperialism" in the content of many subjects in the curriculum.

Nevertheless, whilst the controversy on multicultural education continues to rage, Stone does appear correct to focus upon black underachievement in schools as the cause of disillusionment they have for the system which has so evidently failed them. She also makes the point when criticizing the findings of the Plowden report that in essence the Committee members blamed the victims. That is, implicit in the report was the notion that underachievement in education was the result of a poor home background, cultural impoverishment, inappropriate patterns of speech, and so on. Whilst this report did not explicitly look at the issues of race, it was typical of its time in the way that the
individual or the family was pathologized - and of course this
dovetails neatly with the prevailing view of black people as inherently
inadequate and efficient. Stone writes:

"The idea that low self-concept is to blame for
black and working-class underachievement is based
essentially on theories which regard black and
working-class culture as deficient and which
assumes the internalization of the negative views
by these groups themselves. But Boudon has con­
vincingly demonstrated that even if all cultural
and social disadvantages were obliterated there
would still be a significant degree of educational
and social inequality."

Thus if black children are considered to be culturally and person­
ally deficient, with low self-esteem and so on, they can therefore
become suitable objects for therapeutic intervention.

"Theories which explain the West Indian child's low
achievement as being due to poor self-image, family
background and other social-psychological factors
put the schools under increasing pressure to
respond to these "needs" by developing pseudo-
therapeutic programmes."

It is most interesting to compare the attitudes revealed in
research into black preschool children (reviewed elsewhere in this
present study) with those implicit within the education system, for
there are striking similarities. Whilst early research from the 1960s
to the mid 1970s in the field of preschool children tended to take an
assimilationist position, whereby deficiencies in the development of
black children were attributed to racial characteristics and failure to
adopt white childrearing patterns, research into education from the mid
to late 1970s revealed the tendency by teachers to heavily stereotype
their pupils on racial lines. For example, Townsend and Brittan (1972)
reported that a majority of the secondary school heads commented
favourably upon the manners, courtesy, and keenness to learn of Indian
and Pakistani pupils. However, Brittan's study (1976) revealed a high
degree of negative opinion by teachers of West Indian pupils, more than
two-thirds expressing disfavour. Similarly, Stewart (1978) showed teachers as having a positive stereotype of Asians, and regarded them as having none of the behaviour problems they perceived in West Indian pupils.

Perhaps most disturbing was the finding of Tomlinson (1981) which showed that the heads interviewed were more likely to generalize at length about the negative attributes of West Indian pupils, whereas they tended not to generalize about Asian pupils. The generalizations about West Indian pupils were that they lacked long-term concentration, would tend to underachieve, and would require remedial education.

In terms of local authority day nurseries, then, the point which Sone has made so forcibly, that because of negative stereotyping black pupils become the object of therapeutic intervention, is a most important one. It may be no coincidence that the two nurseries in this study most closely bound up with the family guidance centre, staffed by psychotherapeutically trained professionals, were those nurseries with the highest proportion of Afro-Caribbean children. It does appear strange that the vast majority of those children were not in fact admitted for any perceived "dysfunction" either in themselves or their families, but for purely social and economic reasons (that the mother needs to work). Any behavioural or psychological "problems" were apparently "detected" afterwards.

The question of resources has frequently entered the debates on education, but the present Conservative administration is determined not to increase these, and argue that it is the organization which counts, not the amount of money allocated. The influential right-wing think tank, the Adam Smith Institute (ASI 1984) which has provided many of the radical ideas for the policies of the present government, argues that education policy should not be a political issue but rather should be consumer-led, identifying solely with the wishes of the parents; for
example by means of a voucher system. Ironically this does seem to support Stone's position; that schools fail to listen to the demands of black parents and tend to foist their own ideas of what is supposedly good for black pupils upon them. There is room, however, for scepticism. The Right has always argued against "social engineering" by the education system:

"Schooling, of course, presents enormous opportunities for applying and testing a whole range of social theories, and education has therefore attracted a sizeable number of social engineers. Where the consumer is sovereign, there is at least a check to their excesses."

All well and good. But actually the Right has always been in favour of selectivity and elitism in education, the eleven plus, the return of the grammar schools, and so on. And yet this kind of elitism, though discredited years ago, has never been termed by its supporters as "social engineering". Although they might argue that "most people" are in favour of bringing back the grammar schools, what they actually mean is that most people are in favour of a better education for their own children. Returning to the old tripartite system of schooling would heavily disfavour working class children and would therefore be likely to even further disfavour black children.

It could be argued that the present policy of testing throughout the school age groups, setting up the City Colleges (often in black areas, and now very much in doubt anyway), and supporting local authorities who wish to bring back grammar schools, is actually setting the scene for a return to the old system (City Colleges representing the old Technical Colleges). That system failed very many working class children, and there is every reason to suppose that, if revived, it would similarly fail large numbers of black children as well.
Health

That health is inextricably linked to social class is a highly relevant phenomenon when discussing the health of Britain's black population, for, as has been shows above, black people tend to be excluded from higher occupational status. Thus the findings of the Black Report (1980) that four to five times as many babies die per 1,000 for unskilled manual workers than those of parents of the "professional" classes is a disturbing one for black people in Britain. Moreover, there has been no improvement in this position during the past twenty years, and there are no signs that it is likely to, given the insecure state of the NHS and the depressed economic position of black people in this country. Bhat et al (1988 op cit) state that:

"black people suffer the health disadvantages of the working class. They endure working-class health inequality and then some more."

This has implications for local authority day care in that if in terms of health their children are more at risk, as seems likely to be the case given the above findings, then health visitors are more likely to place black families under scrutiny and recommend day care as a means by which a child's health will be monitored. This possibility will be further discussed within the fieldwork of this present study, although the absence of ethnic monitoring of users of that service has made analysis difficult.

The conclusion that the health inequalities suffered by black people is even greater than that of the working-class population generally is highlighted by a number of research findings. For example Marmot (1984) found that the maternal death rate among women from Africa, the Caribbean, and the Indian subcontinent, is significantly higher than that of the white population. There is also evidence that infant mortality is higher amongst these groups than for whites. If one widens the statistics to include weights at birth, there are clear
differences in weight between various ethnic groups, and on average the weight of ethnic minority groups is less than that for whites. Vegetarianism, according to these studies, has no effect on these relative birth weights.

When it comes to the quality of service received by black mothers in hospital, most studies find that black women suffer more labour dysfunction than do white women. Studies of Asian women show for example that they receive shorter periods of antenatal care for less than two months before delivery, compared with 5-6% for non-Asians. The authors conclude that:

"There is clear evidence of obstetric health inequality between ethnic groups despite the apparent availability of extensive maternity services. Medical 'explanations' of these phenomena have been limited but there are indications that the quality of service received by black Britons is not at the same level as for whites."

Certain illnesses affect black people exclusively, such as sickle cell anaemia. Other conditions are more prevalent among certain ethnic groups; rickets and osteomalacia are higher among Asians for example, and the skin disease vitiligo which is largely confined to black people. Few resources have gone into researching these diseases, however. Vitiligo has been virtually ignored by the scientific community in this country (Ariyanayagam 1987), though research in Cuba has suggested that it could be stress-related.

Bhat et al (1988 op cit) conclude that:

"The NHS has been slow to recognize that the health care requirements of ethnic minorities are different from those of the white population ... many members of the black community see this "slow recognition" as the inevitable consequence of institutionalized racism in the health services which affect patient care."

In the field of mental health, the analysis of the position of black people is highly problematic due to the ongoing controversies
surrounding the very nature of mental disorder. For example, it can be
said that what is normal behaviour within one culture might within
another be labelled as deviant behaviour or indeed as madness. This is
not the place to debate such issues, however important though they are.
What is most vital is to determine the incidence of black people as
psychiatric patients and the kind of conditions they are said to suffer
from. Also, some notion of the types of explanations offered for black
people's mental health problems should be mentioned here.

In terms of admissions to psychiatric hospitals, a major study was
undertaken by Dean et al (1981) in the south-east of England, which
found significantly higher admission rates for Afro-Caribbean men and
women than for other groups: more than one and a half times the
expected numbers at age-specific UK born rates. These findings on
admission have been replicated in many smaller-scale studies, which
have also tended to find higher rates of admission for Asians as well.

On admission to hospital, however, it is easier to discern a
pattern of the types of illnesses diagnosed. Cochrane (1971) found for
example that Afro-Caribbeans, more than any other group, have been
consistently diagnosed as schizophrenic. Similarly Dean (1981 op cit)
found that Afro-Caribbean people were five times more likely to be
diagnosed schizophrenic than are whites.

It is difficult to say why this should be so, in the absence of any
satisfactory causal explanation for schizophrenic illness. However, it
should be noted that schizophrenia is a psychotic condition associated
with aggressiveness and irrationality, and thus conforms to the kind of
racial stereotype perceived for example within schools. Littlewood and
Lipsedge (1982) make the point that:

"Whatever the empirical justification, the frequent
diagnosis in black patients of schizophrenia
(bizarre, irrational, outside) and the infrequent
diagnosis of depression (acceptable, understand-
able, inside) validates our stereotypes."
Summarizing the evidence, Bhat et al (1988 op cit) concluded that black people:

"Are more likely to come to hospital on a compulsory admission and police and social workers are more likely to be diagnosed as psychotic. The little available evidence on treatment shows also that they tend to be on harsher forms of medication than equivalent white groups and seem to be viewed differently once in hospital."

So little research has been done, probably due to the problems inherent in assessing the causes of mental ill-health, that trying to make definitive statements about it is futile. However, Bhat et al (1988 op cit) conclude that it is the areas which research has tended to ignore that need to be urgently examined, those very areas in fact which have been examined in this chapter:

"Few authors have investigated the role of stress as a causative factor of mental illness and, as a consequence, racism in such areas as employment, housing, education and child care have not been examined as causatory factors in mental illness."

So far we have seen how racism is manifested within structures and institutions in society, with the result that many black people have been marginalized from that society. Given their depressed socio-economic position it might be expected that at the very least black people when they do have access to social services, that those services take account of the particular needs of black people and are non-racist, preferably anti-racist in character. The evidence available, however, does not support this expectation. In 1978 for example a report by the Association of Directors of Social Services (CRE 1978) concluded that:

"The response of social services departments to the existence of multiracial communities has been patchy, piecemeal, and lacking in strategy."

Since that report there have been considerable tensions in inner city black communities in Britain, and yet remarkably little has been
done either in terms of research into black people's use of social services or on how to improve the service delivery to those communities. However, from small-scale studies it may be concluded that whilst Afro-Caribbean people are overrepresented in the control elements of social services, such as residential institutions for adolescents, they are considerably underrepresented in the support and preventative services (Arnold 1982). What constitutes "support and preventative services" is an important question. Clearly, day nurseries are not included in this because all studies show a marked overrepresentation of Afro-Caribbean children there. More likely, it is the support of a social worker, domiciliary care, and so forth where black people have less access, whereas Arnold found for example that children of mixed race were almost seven times more likely to be in residential institutions than white children.

Where local authority day nurseries fit into this pattern will be addressed later in this chapter, but the point still holds that there are deficiencies throughout social services in considering the particular needs of black people, and the day nurseries are no exception (given for example the institutionalized racism in staff recruitment and training, examined elsewhere in this present study).

According to Bagley and Young (1982) many black people have very negative experiences of the social services, and only approach them when in crisis, or else by compulsion, and thereby often emerge from their experience angry and alienated. Of course this is a vicious circle; because of the bad experiences they have had of social services departments, most black people would not approach them unless desperate, and yet the desperate state of affairs might have been prevented if social services had been more welcoming and had been approached earlier.

The potential remedies for the situation are subject to an equally
vicious circle and one which is seemingly just as intractable. More black people in social work and particularly in senior positions, for example. For whilst the training body (Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work 1985) had declared a commitment to increase the numbers of black social workers, and applications by ethnic minorities for social work training increased by some 72% 1982-4, these applicants were successful in only 24.4% of cases as opposed to a 30% success rate for white applicants. Afro-Caribbean underachievement in the education system was apparently not the explanation. The training body (CCETSW 1985 op cit) admitted that:

"Where a minority ethnic group applicant held similar qualifications to those of the majority group applicants, the latter were more likely to be successful in gaining a place on a course."

This is a disturbing finding which tends to demonstrate that the institutional racism identified in housing, health, employment etc. also exists within social work recruitment. This will be examined in another chapter of this present study.

Black suspicion of the social services, giving findings like these, are hardly surprising. In the context of child care in general, including local authority day nurseries, it appears to shed some light upon the pressures black people are under at the point of approaching social services (as they must do at some stage of the process of placing their child in a day nursery). If the suggestion that black people as a rule only approach social services at the point of desperation in their lives is correct, then such placement is more an act of desperation or at least of dire necessity, rather than a considered choice. This will constitute an important part of the fieldwork of this present study, when the black women users of day nurseries will be interviewed. However, at this stage it appears that in the field of fostering and adoption there may be some parallels. A report by one
social services department (Brent 1985) stated:

"As the proportion of children who were black rose, itself indicating the tremendous socio-economic pressures upon the black family and the stigmatizing attitudes of many white-dominated welfare agencies, the black community came to believe that it was a net donor of its most precious assets to white families. The self-respect and sense of self-determination of the black community has been threatened by a situation whereby most of its children in care were growing up either in white families or in white controlled residential settings."

Given that the overwhelming majority of local authority day nursery staff are white, precisely the same criticism applies. Although one step away from residential care, the day nursery is a "total institution" in the Foucaultian sense (Foucault 1975 etc) because for up to nine hours of each day, for five days a week, young black children are looked after by predominantly white staff. The precise effects of this, and of the professional ideologies of the staff developed through their training (examined elsewhere in this present study), upon family relationships during the time when the child is not at the day nursery, will be an important issue to address in the fieldwork of this present study in the interviews with black women users of local authority day care. It is an important consideration when trying to gauge the impact of an essentially white institution upon black children. Do the same problems of negative stereotyping apply in the nursery as well as the schools, for example? As mentioned earlier in this present study, the placing of their children in day nurseries may be a case of "trust born of necessity" for many black mothers.

To examine the question of "preferences" in relation to child care is an important one which will be addressed in the fieldwork of this present study. It is important though to consider the issue as far as possible here, based upon what is known already. The important facts are that black people have significantly less access than whites to all
forms of child care other than local authority day nurseries (Cohen 1988). As has been discussed elsewhere in this study, black women are much more likely to be the sole breadwinner than their white counterparts (Bhat et al 1988 op cit). Given the choice, people seem to prefer nursery schools, and regard these as having a higher status than the day nurseries, which are regarded as second-rate by comparison (Lindon and Lindon 1988 op cit) (whether this is true or not, this, according to available research, is how they are perceived). Black people have to work longer hours than whites for less pay, as we have seen elsewhere in this study, and it also appears to be the case that black people only make use of social services when in desperate circumstances.

Taking all of this together, one wonders whether "preference" really comes into it. It is hypothesized (and this is tested in the fieldwork of this present study) that black families tend to use day care overwhelmingly for economic reasons - as sole breadwinners, black women have to work to a far greater degree than do their white counterparts. If day nurseries are the only available resource, other than expensive private nurseries, and if for whatever reason black families have little access to other forms of child care, then day nurseries are simply Hobson's choice for black mothers. What they think of the nurseries is an important matter and again will be tested in the interviews with mothers. Valuable insights from black members of the day nursery staff may also provide some insight into this.

In this chapter the development of racism in Britain was reviewed. The nature and extent of racial disadvantage in the areas of employment, education, housing and health care was then discussed. Finally, the problem of racial disadvantage in relation to social services was examined, with particular reference to local authority day nurseries.
Full time local authority day care for the 0-3s has developed in this country from certain sets of beliefs and assumptions, some of which have been examined elsewhere in this study. In this chapter it is intended to examine specifically the policy issues in day care during the postwar period, and then to review the relevant research into day care during that period. This review of research will focus upon the central issue of Afro-Caribbean children in day care: although other related issues will be considered, this will be the primary focus.

It is necessary to place this review within a theoretical framework to show how certain ideological positions have tended to shape research in this field. In the next section these positions are identified and described.

Policy issues in the postwar period

Day nursery places were originally provided for the children of munitions workers during World War II, and this initiative demonstrated that economic necessity could in times of national emergency override all other contemporary conceptions of child development. Once the emergency was over, however, provision was withdrawn and policy reverted to the previous position of opposition to widespread facilities. It has remained essentially the same ever since (although due to demographic reasons some modification may take place). The position of successive governments has remained that of the 1945 administration:
The ministers concerned accept the view of medical and other authority that, in the interest of the health and development of the child no less than for the benefit of the mother, the proper place for a child under two is at home with his (sic) mother. They are also of the opinion that, under normal peacetime conditions, the right policy to pursue would be to positively discourage mothers of children under two from going out to work; to make provision for children between two and five by way of nursery classes; and to regard day nurseries and daily guardians as supplements to the special needs ... of children whose mothers are constrained by individual circumstances to go out to work or whose home conditions are so unsatisfactory from the health point of view, or whose mothers are incapable for some good reason of undertaking the full care of their children.

Ministry of Health (1945)

The above statement issued by the Ministry of Health in 1945 is perhaps a seminal one in the development of day care in Britain. It contains four main assumptions:

a) It is accepted that there is a body of (essentially male) professional knowledge which points to the best way for bringing up children.

b) Care by anyone other than the natural mother is harmful for children under the age of two, or for more than a limited time for children between the ages of two and five.

c) Day care can be necessary under certain circumstances, such as inadequate parenting.

d) Nursery schooling benefits everyone.

The outcome of the policy which derives from these assumptions has continued in various forms to this day: although the numbers of women workers have increased considerably since 1945, the number of day nursery places following the immediate postwar decline has remained virtually static. Whilst during the war there had been 1300 local authority day nurseries, by 1966 these had declined to 445, representing approximately 21,000 local authority day nursery places (Tizard et
Although places increased somewhat during the following twenty years, so that in 1985 there were almost 29,000 places, the rise can still be considered small when population increases and the massive rises in unemployment and other causes of family stress are taken into account (Cohen 1988). Again, the ideological basis for this position has its roots in the immediate postwar period, and the social security provisions initiated by the National Insurance Act, 1946, which was discriminatory towards women workers. The Beveridge Report (1942) which outlined the programme, made the prevailing attitude clear:

"That attitude of the housewife to gainful employ­ment outside the home is not and should not be the same as that of the single woman. She has other duties... In the next thirty years, housewives as mothers have vital work to do in ensuring the adequate continuance of the British race and British ideals in the world."

Again, such early pronouncements have remained fundamentally unaltered, and indeed have been confirmed by all of the major reports on day care until the present.

There is evidence that over the years demand for preschool provision has risen steadily and has consistently outstripped supply. For example the survey of Bone (1977) demonstrated that for two year olds the demand - as measured by a large survey of mothers - exceeded supply by over 50%. A similar survey carried out 1983-5 by the Preschool Playgroups Association suggested that this demand was rising for all types of provision, including that for local authority day nurseries (Mastel and Dykins 1986). Similarly, in an overview of research, Elfer (1988) concluded that provision for the under threes fell far short of demand. In 1977 in England and Wales there were 27,000 day nursery places, but a further 10,000 on waiting lists (Mayall and Petrie 1983). By 1984 those on the waiting list for day nurseries in England had increased to 16,043 (Cohen 1988a), whilst local authority day nursery places had increased to just 28,000 (DHSS 1985). For the under two age
group, by 1983 there were fewer than 6000 local authority day nursery places (van der Eyken 1984).

There would have been potential for considerable expansion of local authority day care had the recommendations of the Seebohm Report (The Committee on Local Authority and Allied Personal Social Services, 1968) been carried through in this field. However the response by the Ministry of Health was to give expression to the narrowing of the categories mentioned above, and priority given to children -

"with only one parent. Who need temporary day care owing to the mother's illness. Whose mothers are unable to look after them adequately because they are incapable of giving young children the care they need. For whom day care might prevent family breakdown. Whose home conditions constitute a hazard to health and welfare. Whose health and welfare are diminished by lack of opportunity to play with other children."

Mayall and Petrie (1983 op cit) however have heavily criticized this circular as being essentially meaningless because of the imprecision of its language. What, for example, is meant by having "no option" but to work? Joan Lestor's introduction in 1967 to the 1968 Nurseries and Childminders Amendment Act stressed that no amount of tinkering with the criteria for admission or introducing new regulations could actually solve the problem. She said:

"... the ultimate object of any solution to the problems of the under fives is obviously an expansion of the day nursery service."

As a result of the Seebohm Report, however, there was a halt in the decline of local authority day nurseries, but no significant expansion. This was despite the growing and continuous evidence that there was a substantial demand for places. A 1974 survey by the Office of Population and Censuses (Scarr and Dunn 1987) for example showed that 90% of parents of three to four year olds and 46% with under threes wished to have nursery places for their children.
More recent studies have also indicated a high level of demand for
day nurseries. Mastel and Dykins (1986) for example charted a steady
rise in such demand from 1974 to 1985. Similarly, in a survey for
Manchester City Council, MOP researchers noted a 27% demand for day
nursery places, placing this form of child care as second only to
playgroups in level of demand. In terms of preference, several
locally-based surveys have also shown high demand for full-time nursery
places, particularly for under three's (in Cohen 1988a).

It is important to note here that until the Seebohm reorganisation,
day nurseries had been the responsibility of the Ministry of Health.
This connects with the "medicalization" arguments presented earlier in
this present study and demonstrates the nature of the prevalent models
of child care; for example the belief that "doctor knows best", the
emphasis upon hygiene, strict routies, and so on (Truby King, 1913).
Equally significant is that although from 1970 the social services
departments took over responsibility for local authority day nurseries,
training and professional ideologies remained unaltered, firmly rooted
in the medical models of the old system (as discussed in Chapter of
this present study "Training and Recruitment"). Whilst other branches
of the child care system within the social services departments have
now become "residential social workers" and so on, in the nursery
system the methods and professional ideologies remained fundamentally
the same. This is not to say that residential social work and other
social work with children is without problems -this is far from being
the case (e.g. Milham and Bullock (1979). It is nevertheless true to
say that whereas the old pre-Seebohm children's departments were
absorbed into the restructured social services departments, and their
training merged into that of mainstream social work, training for
nursery nurses has remained quite separate and distinct, and has far
more in common with health service than with social work training (for
example many features of the nursery nurse training manual are indistinct from that of the health visitor's). The training body remains the Nursery Nurse Examination Board (NNEB) even though as a concession to modernity many local authorities have retitled their staff nursery "officers" rather than nursery nurses. It is also significant in this context that in most nurseries a kind of "uniform" is worn - usually a standard blue overall - which again harks back to the recent past when more distinctive nurses uniforms were worn and the officers-in-charge were "matrons". This title was used in fact throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s (Hann 1976; Hughes, Mayall et al 1980).

Some movement on the issue of local authority day care might have been expected from two initiatives in 1976. The Finer Report (1976) and related pressure groups such as the Finer Joint Action Committee focused specifically upon the apparent hardships suffered by one parent families. The committee proposed a massive expansion of local authority day care provision, something supported by the FJAC as well, and emphasized that lone parents should be offered the choice of whether to use the facility of day care rather than rely upon referral by others, and that this automatically implied a considerable expansion of the service. The Finer report correctly pointed out that demand for day care far outstripped supply, and that the very long waiting lists were still very much the norm (as they are today; see above).

In the same year as the Finer report the DHSS and the Department of Education and Science called a conference at Sunningdale to discuss day care provision for the under fives. The then Minister of State, Dr. David Owen, said:

"We all know that the situation currently facing the 0-5 age group is deeply worrying, and that if we do not take every opportunity to improve existing provision, then a whole generation of
children's futures could be unnecessarily blighted."

Owen however concluded his speech by adding:

"We could improve the provision for the 0-5s sub-
stantially by spreading the low-cost best practice
which already exists, proven and documented, on the
ground."

What this implied then was that there would be no expansion of day
nurseries, and none in fact came. The Finer report had no effect what-
soever on day nurseries, and the Sunningdale conference focused instead
upon ways to get increased child care at the lowest possible cost;
essentially that meant childminders and preschool playgroups.

Again, in 1978 the Central Policy Review Staff (the "Think Tank")
reported on "Services for Young Children with Working Mothers" and
stressed four outstanding problems with the existing services: the lack
of priorities and direction as to ways in which the service should
progress; the divided responsibility and fragmentation of administra-
tion services; the inequitable consequences for children and parents of
the present situation; and the denial to a substantial number of
children of the recognized benefits of education and care outside the
home. As with other reports, however, no action was taken and there
were no consequences flowing for the system of local authority day
nurseries. In contrast to social policy in many other industrialized
countries, most notable Sweden (Scarr and Dunn 1987), day care for the
under fives remained a low priority in Britain. Brannen and Moss (1988)
for example note that compared with most other European countries where
statistics are available, Britain has one of the lowest levels of
publicly funded child care for the under threes. The situation is even
worse when it is considered that over half of this provision consists
of part-time places in nursery schools. The authors note:

"It should also be added that, unlike Britain, all
other European countries with the exception of
Ireland, include children of working parents as a
priority for admission to publicly-funded child
Comparisons with Europe are instructive. Whereas in the UK only 2% of 0-2s are in publicly-funded services, in France the figure is 20-25%; Belgium has a similar proportion; and in Denmark there are 44% of this age group in state childcare services. For the 3-4 year old age group the figures across Europe rise dramatically, with many countries having at least 50% of their children in some form of state nursery or nursery school provision, and countries such as the three cited above having more than 80% of this age group in such provision. Germany, Spain and Greece all have over 60% admission to some form of state-funded preschool provision. The UK is near the bottom of the table with just 44% in all types of preschool provision (of which just 1% are in state day nurseries)(Family Policy Studies Centre 1989).

A European Commission study of preschool child care provision, concerned principally with lone parents, concluded that:

"Unless there are guaranteed good quality, free, or reasonably priced child care facilities for children of the relevant age, requiring lone parents to take employment is likely to put the welfare of children at risk as well as to cause agonising dilemmas for those who are trying to make ends meet as well as to care for their children" (ibid)

Social policy in the field of day care for children under five has therefore been characterized during the postwar period as a provision aimed specifically at those considered to be in some sense "deficient" and is not a universal provision offering general support for women and families. A recent DHSS circular makes the point abundantly clear. Day nurseries

"...may be provided by local social services departments for compensatory or rehabilitation purposes or in some cases to provide supplementary care."

DHSS 1985

Government policy remains at this time that parents should make their own child care arrangements and should pay. In 1988 when the
then Junior Health Minister Edwina Currie was asked to comment on the findings of the UK and Consolidated European Report, replied:

"...it is for parents who go out to work to decide how best to care for their children. If they want or need help in this task they should make the appropriate arrangements and meet the costs."

(quoted in Cohen 1990)

It is however true to say that deficiencies in the labour market have been causing an adjustment in even right-wing Conservative thinking, to the extent that even the influential think-tank the Adam Smith Institute declared in a recent report that:

"It is simply no longer realistic to think in terms of women staying at home."

Adam Smith Institute (1989)

The solutions to labour shortages offered by the present administration do not however extend to an expansion of state provision. Instead, private provision, tax incentives, voucher schemes and workplace nurseries are regarded as the answer. As Cohen (1990 op cit) concludes:

"Public sector provision is seen as crowding out the private supply and the limited role envisaged for Government (included) removing employee tax liability on employer provided childcare provision .. as part of a programme of targeted action to assist the development of the private market."

Day care therefore is not, nor is likely to be in the foreseeable future, a universal provision provided by the state. Rather local authority day nurseries in Britain are a specialized form of provision for those considered in some way deficient or deprived. The DHSS (1985 op cit) definition that nurseries provided by the social services are for "compensatory or rehabilitation purposes" is imprecise yet instructive, inasmuch as it makes clear the fact that day nurseries are limited to a certain category of child.

Such rehabilitation is of an unspecified kind, and in any case is in contrast to other forms of provision for the majority, nursery
schools for example, which are attended on a full time basis by approximately twice as many children as those who go to local authority day nurseries, and if part-time places are included this rises to ten times the number (DES 1986). It is also important to point out here that there is a distinction between the quality of the services offered to nursery school children and their counterparts in day nurseries, which again heightens the impression of a two-tier, unco-ordinated service identified by the CPRS above. This was emphasized by Hughes et al (1980 op cit) whose research concluded that:

"... council day nurseries (have) become almost entirely populated with 'priority' children, resulting in a virtual segregation of the most disadvantaged child in one type of nursery. As a result, children who, by any criteria, would most benefit from nursery education are instead placed in an environment where their educational needs are often explicitly ignored: as one matron told us 'we must not teach them anything here - that's for schools to do ...''

This lack of any educational input in local authority day nurseries was recognised by the all-party House of Commons Select Committee on Educational Provision for the Under-Fives which, in 1989, recommended amongst other things, that improvements should be made in the educational content of the care given to under-fives in local authority day nurseries (Cohen 1990 op cit). It is also significant that there is a distinction within the nursery schools between the staff which replicates the distinction between nursery schools and the day nurseries. In nursery schools the NNEB trained workers are on a lower level and are called "nursery assistants", whereas the teacher-trained workers are accorded higher status and are called "nursery teachers", (Cohen 1980).

Mayall and Petrie (1987 op cit) observed that:

"Training for nursery education takes place within the framework of concepts of education covering the nursery years to higher education, which perhaps
offer a relatively coherent ideology. Nursery
nurse training is part of no such professional
structure of thought. The definitions of what day
care at a day nursery should be may be less clearly
defined, and there may be more variation in
practice between staff and between nurseries."

The authors then go on to note the distinction between the two
forms of provision in relation to minimum standards for accommodation,
staffing and curriculum, and suggest that while in day care, local
authorities set the standards, in nursery schools such standards are
laid down by the Secretary of State and are therefore more susceptible
to effective pressure by parents if those standards are not met. It
might be argued however that the reverse is more likely to be true,
because access to those in power should be easier at the local level.
The most convincing interpretation, however, is that parents have
little influence over either form of provision. Mayall and Petrie
admit that nursery schools often only pay lip service to parental
involvement. The discussion of the distinction between nursery schools
and day nurseries is an important one because it helps define where day
nurseries lie on the scale, as it were, of preschool provision in terms
of status and quality, and thus helps in the formation of conclusions
about, for example, any potential or actual stigma attached to the use
of local authority day nurseries.

The question of quality of day care is a controversial one, and
comparisons with nursery schools difficult to make. Some researchers
(e.g. Bain and Barnett 1980) have gone as far as to say that children
entering school from day care are more likely to be "retarded" as
compared with their nursery school counterparts. What precisely is
meant by this is not defined though, and it has to be said that Bain
and Barnett's research has several suspect characteristics which will
be discussed in the second part of this chapter. Nevertheless the
belief is still held by other researchers that compared with nursery

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schools, day care remains a second-rate service. Although it is true that nursery schools take only the 3-5 year olds and are open for more limited times of the day (from 9 am to 3.30 pm) this in no way negates the argument concerning the difference in quality between the two types of provision, and it should be stressed of course that at age three there is an overlap of intake. Also, once in a local authority day nursery it is rare for a child to transfer to a nursery school.

One of the most comprehensive comparisons between different types of service was undertaken by Osborn and Milbank (1987) who compared seven different types of preschool provision and found that, whilst certain gains were found in all of these, results within the day nursery as compared with the nursery schools were less conclusive. Lindon and Lindon (1988) have noted the differences in professional status of workers in the two services. Day nursery workers are considered "non-professionals" whereas nursery teachers, as part of a "recognized" profession, are accorded far more respect by consumers and other professionals:

"... day care staff were not counted as professionals any more than mothers. After all, their aim was to be mother-substitutes, in order to minimise the damage to children separated from their mothers ... teachers in nursery education were excluded from this lack of respect because education was seen to be run by representatives of a 'real' profession."

The authors in fact regard the whole development of day care in this country as being based upon the assumption that children are harmed by time spent away from their mothers but that if cared for by a mother-substitute (the nursery nurse) such harm is somewhat reduced. Hence the status of nursery nurses has been more connected with this belief, rather than with any real "professionalism" (Lindon and Lindon 1988 op cit).

The issue of the harmful effects of day care, particularly on
younger children, is somewhat unclear, although there appears to be a consensus that it is the quality or otherwise of what is offered that is the most important factor, rather than day care 'per se'. In a review of research Burdon (1982) concludes that:

"The studies do not show that ANY sort of day care experience will NOT be harmful or disruptive of development. Day care experiences need not be harmful or disruptive if they are provided at ... levels of quality."

In another review of research, Elfer (1988 op cit) suggests that

"there is evidence that good quality care can enhance the development of young children."

And in a review of research in the United States, Belsky (1984) comes to the same conclusions, that it is the quality or otherwise of what is offered that is the single most important factor in determining the outcome of day nursery care. It is also the case that in careful, methodologically sound studies on day care, such as Belsky and Steinberg 1978 and Pilling and Pringle 1978, the authors went out of their way to stress that the findings that day care had no harmful effects on social, cognitive or emotional development, took place in "untypically high-quality nurseries" (Ferri 1981).

The problem then is that, where such "quality" is not present, it is possible, even likely, that day care will have a negative impact upon children. The problem is greatly compounded by the fact that, although local authority day nurseries are the responsibility of social services departments, there is no national system of checking on standards in day nurseries (Cohen 1988a op cit). This is in contrast to the position in education where there is a national inspectorate. This is not to say that there are no minimum standards laid down by statute. The Ministry of Health Circular 37/68 lays down standards of accommodation, staff-child ratios etc. But there is no national system of ensuring such standards are met.
It is also fair to note that because of rate-capping, or community charge-capping, local authorities - particularly those in high-stress areas where demands on finance is greatest - are under great financial pressure, with the likelihood that day nurseries, in common with other sectors of social services will suffer accordingly. Certainly in London, many local authorities have stopped using agency workers to cover to staff absences. Marshall (1982) for example concluded that with current levels of staffing, training, and nursery organisation it is impossible to provide the sensitivity and responsiveness necessary for the care of very young children. Given high absentee rates, staff turnover and so on mentioned elsewhere in this study, then it seems reasonable to assume that the quality of local authority day care is doubtful. Recent research also suggests that users of day nurseries do, when asked, consider them stigmatizing (Goldberg and Sinclair 1988). The authors of the research also emphasize that local authority day nurseries have often been criticized for a "lack of concern with the educational and developmental needs of children". Similarly, Scarr and Dunn (1987 op cit) suggest that:

"The experiences of children in day care were given negative meanings by their communities. In the popular mind, being a child in day care usually meant being neglected. While the other mothers are home baking cakes and stimulating the children's minds, the poor day care child languished until mum came home from work. Of such images are myths about day care made."

Since the categories for day nursery admissions are becoming narrower and are including far more children defined as being "at risk" (Cohen 1988 op cit), and that between 1975 and 1983 there were considerable increases both of referral by social workers and health visitors and, once in the nursery, of contact with other professionals such as psychologists, the position of local authority day nurseries is now a highly specialized one. What is significant then in terms of
ethnic minorities is that local authority day care provides more pre-
school places for these groups than any other form of preschool pro-
vision. This, given the fact that local authority day nurseries are a
tiny proportion of total preschool provision, and contain only 1% of
the under fives population, is a very significant finding, the more so
when it is considered that over a third of Afro-Caribbean children have
no preschool experience at all (Osborne and Milbank 1987 op cit).
Afro-Caribbeans have considerable difficulty, research has shown,
gaining access to any form of child care provision other than local
authority day nurseries. Cohen (1988a op cit) concluded that:

"These (black) parents often face greater diffi-
culty in finding appropriate provision. The suit-
ability of provision ... may involve not only such
factors as the hours of opening, cost and proximity
but also its linguistic and cultural reference.
Racism within provision or a lack of relevance to
their needs can significantly diminish already
restricted childcare options."

Cohen then offers certain possible explanations as to why Afro-
Caribbeans and other ethnic minorities do not have the same access to
mainstream child care provision, and this clearly, along with their
overrepresentation in local authority day nurseries (van der Eyken 1984
op cit), are central issues to be addressed in this present research.
Does it mean for example that a disproportionate number of Afro-
Caribbean children are classified as "at risk", or are placed within
other priority categories which signify some family deficiency? Given
that day nurseries are such specialized resources with narrow admission
criteria, this might be one possible conclusion. If this is true it is
therefore possible that Afro-Caribbean parents are stigmatized by their
use of this provision to a greater degree than any other ethnic group.
To what extent black families are stigmatized by the fact of their use
of local authority day nurseries is open to debate. If by stigma is
meant the marginalization by society of certain groups or individuals,
not because of any inherent prejudices held by society of them (Goffman 1963), then this is a useful concept to employ in relation to local authority day care. Indeed, given the extent of the prejudice experienced by black people in every aspect of their lives in British society, as noted in Chapter 2 of this present study, then such a stigmatizing process seems to apply to black people generally.

There is a parallel here with the process by which people with learning difficulties have been stigmatized; in the sense that they have been systematically excluded from using the normal services in society which the rest of the population takes for granted (Wolfsenberg 1972). The highly specialized forms of provision, although originally established to help people with "special needs", have in fact been shown to isolate them still further, and situate them permanently outside of the mainstream of provision enjoyed by the majority. Thus in a similar way it could be argued that the overrepresentation of Afro-Caribbean children in local authority day nurseries, and their underrepresentation in all other forms of preschool provision, is yet another manifestation of the way in which black people have become stigmatized by white society. This present study will address therefore the reasons why Afro-Caribbean children are usually admitted to local authority day nurseries and will try to explore whether these reasons are to do with individual or familial "deficiency" or whether there may be other reasons to explain their over-representation.

Kay (1971) also suggests that stigma leads to negative stereotyping, which in turn has implications for access to welfare benefits and so on. Black people and single parents are very much included in this range of negative stereotypes:

"The older terms - pauper, criminal, lunatic, prostitute; the modern terms - layabout, juvenile delinquent, ex-mental patient, unmarried mother and coloured immigrant, call up a series of stereotypes of irresponsible people lacking in the accepted
standards, collectively different and to be treated with suspicion and reserve, and in particular having their right to maintenance in financial need, sickness or unemployment put under a microscope."

The fact of being a woman on her own raising a child can itself by considered stigmatizing, in the sense that because of her status she can be put under scrutiny by the DHSS in case of "secretive cohabitation" (Marsden 1973). The position today cannot be said to have changed in practice, even though perhaps social attitudes towards lone parenthood have become more liberal. Scarr and Dunn (1987 op cit) for example observe that:

"Single parenthood has been blamed for many ills that belong more properly to poverty and to our lack of community and family resources. Studies of single parent households necessarily confuse low income, low educational levels, minority group membership, and a host of other disadvantages with single parenthood. Findings that children from single parent families do not perform as well in school as children from two-parent homes could probably just as well be attributed to these other factors as to living with only one parent."

Thus in this way, to stigmatize lone parenthood is very much "blaming the victim". The conclusion of the report on lone parents presented to the European Commission was unequivocal:

"Lone parents on average have lower living standards than two parent families and are more vulnerable to poverty."
(Family Policy Studies Centre 1989 op cit)

In relation to Afro-Caribbean parents of children in local authority day nurseries this stigmatizing process does have serious implications for how they are perceived, since they are more likely than their white counterparts to be heads of household and of lone parent families.

Seen from such a perspective then, local authority day nurseries, because they are not a service used by the great majority of preschool
children, and because of their apparently strict criteria for admission and reputation for poor quality as compared for example with nursery schools, might be regarded of themselves as being stigmatizing institutions (as for example are psychiatric hospitals, schools for "mal-adjusted" children, and so on). Richman and McGuire (1988) for example have described day nurseries as "therapeutic centres for high-risk children". Lindon and Lindon (1988 op cit) have also noted that many officers-in-charge regarded their nurseries as a "necessary evil". Even when compared with full-time nurseries in the voluntary sector, local authority day nurseries contain far more children from lower economic status households. Since fees are charged by the voluntary sector, usually according to income, it is the case that:

"almost all the places are taken up by children with two working parents or with a single working parent"
Cohen (1987 op cit)

In another study, Cohen (1990 op cit), summing up the evidence, stated that:

"Government policy continues to emphasize the responsibility of parents and employers to find and pay for daycare except when children and families are in particular need of provision on grounds of welfare. The continued restriction of public responsibility in this area to provision for children in need means that provision for these children continues to be met separately, in a form widely perceived as stigmatised."

Significantly, Osborne and Millbank (1987 op cit) found that even when compared with voluntary sector day nurseries (by no means "high status" institutions) the local authority day nurseries contained twice as many children from Afro-Caribbean and Asian backgrounds.

Cohen (1988 op cit) in a report for the European Commission, recommended as a means to avoid the stigma described that:

"Admission to existing local authority nurseries should be extended beyond children who are 'at risk' or 'in special need', and the welfare and family support functions should be made supple-

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mentary to a primary function of care/learning development. This would not only increase the availability of nursery care but also remove the stigma which is widely seen as attaching to segregated provision of this nature."

Another important finding in relation to the poor quality of local authority day care is the belief that this form of provision fails to meet the educational requirements of children (Hughes, Mayall et al 1980) and it seems this deficiency is not being tackled with any commitment. Although the Education Act 1980 empowered local education authorities to provide trained teachers for local authority day nurseries, van der Eyken (1984 op cit) found that more than 83% of his large sample had no such educational input. Similarly Pugh (1988) in a major survey of 121 social services and education departments found that only eleven reported the use of teachers within day nurseries.

This research also highlighted the lack of career progression in the preschool services generally, and that local authorities were often reluctant, because of various constraints, to develop closer working relationships between social work and education. Although Pugh detected an "interest" amongst local authorities in rethinking some of their planning and organisation for under-fives:

"... this (is) in the face of low resourcing, seemingly intractable problems over vested interests between departments, and often no clear sense of direction".

Pugh's major criticism of the present system for under-fives is the sheer lack of any coherent and consistent policy either at local or national level, which would go a long way towards breaking down the distinctions which currently exist, for example, between nursery nurses and nursery teachers, between the local authority day nurseries and the nursery schools. Even those centres which do exist, writes Pugh:

"... appear to be facing many of the same intractable problems that they have always faced, as they attempt to provide a co-ordinated service within an unco-ordinated system: operating different
admissions policies and different salary structures and conditions of service for staff; and different management structures and support systems for heads."

In general, the point made by Jones (1977) appears valid. The Victorian principle of "less eligibility", whereby recipients of welfare provision ought not to be provided with a service of such a high standard that it would act as a disincentive to "raise oneself up by one's own efforts", seems to characterize all forms of modern social services provision, of which the day nursery is an important part.

Social policy in relation to day care provision has therefore been characterized, since 1945, by a reluctance on the part of the state to provide such provision to the extent which would meet the evident demand. Instead, the state has provided what it regards as the minimum necessary amount of child care facilities for a limited number of children chosen on the strictest criteria. At the same time, a system of nursery education has been developed which appears to have denied access to Afro-Caribbean and other ethnic groups. Mayall and Petrie (1987 op cit) have concluded:

"... long-standing attitudes and beliefs inform the provision and regulation of day care in this country. Essentially, public policy is to provide for children who are socially disadvantaged, and in many cases at risk of being taken into residential care. In the private sector, a weakly regulated childminding service provides for the needs of working mothers."

The latest legislation in the field of local authority day care is the Children Act 1989. The act covers a wide variety of issues to do with children and young people and consolidates various pieces of legislation. In essence, it makes no substantial difference to the present situation, and does not encourage local authorities to expand day nursery provision. There is, though, a requirement to provide day care "as appropriate" for "children in need", which might suggest that the relatively few local authorities not now providing day care facili-
ties (in England these number seven; Cohen 1990 op cit) will now be required to do so. Whilst it is too early to give the definitive view of what the interpretation of this part of the act will be, the fact that day care provision, even if local authorities are compelled to provide it, is still targeted at "children in need" suggests that the "ghettoisation" of day nursery children is to continue. Cohen (ibid) commenting upon the new Children Act writes:

"The single greatest disappointment of the Act, however, is the continuing restriction of duties of local authorities in providing services to those children defined as being "in need", perpetuating the use of rationing systems such as the stigmatising admissions systems to local authority day nurseries so widely condemned ... and in contrast to the abandonment of similar policies within the European Community - in Denmark over a quarter of a century ago."

The creation by the Act of a broad category called "Children in Need" who are the primary target of local authority responsibilities under Part II has been the subject of debate. The definition of children in need is defined entirely in terms of health, development, or disability and does not include socioeconomic disadvantages; for example where there is a single breadwinner who needs to work. The statutory obligation is placed upon the local authority to provide day care only for the "children in need" category, and presumably therefore any other categories may be admitted only by the discretion of the local authorities - which leads of course to the "rationing" of provision observed by Cohen above. "Development" under section 17(11) of the Act covers social, emotional, and behavioural development, and therefore seems to confirm day nurseries as primarily therapeutic in their aims, rather than a service to the wider community; for example for working mothers.

It is now intended to review the research into day care since its inception during the postwar years, making specific reference to the
central issue of Afro-Caribbean children. In order to set the research to be reviewed in the context of race, it is necessary to provide a theoretical framework. The most useful model in this regard is that which represents the three different ideologies or viewpoints which have informed policies and practices in relation to black people in Britain, and which have similarly tended to define the parameters of social research in this field. They are: assimilationist, multiculturalist, and anti-racist and may be defined as follows.

Broadly speaking, the above three positions have arisen as products of different periods in history, since the large scale immigration of the mid-1950s. It is important though to recognize that elements of the first two positions are still very much in evidence today, and that active anti-racism is still a rarity.

**Assimilationist**

This position implies a "colour blind" approach to service delivery and explicitly denies the differences between black and white. The possibility of significant differences between these communities which may indicate a need for modification or substantial change to the services provided is not recognized, nor is consideration given to the possibility that entirely new services might be necessary. Essentially, proponents of this position argue that it is the responsibility of the black community to make any necessary adjustments in order to accommodate to British society and institutions. Any problems which black people have are, according to the assimilationist view, fundamentally due to the individual pathologies arising from differences in the lifestyle of black people which therefore needs to be altered to fit in with the British way of life. Assimilation, whilst literally meaning "the process of becoming similar", further implies the absorption of a nutrient by a living organism. According to Cashmore
this organic analogy was popular in early twentieth century sociology, especially given the influx of immigrants from Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean at that time. Thus the term "Americanization" came to be used to describe this assimilation process, as "Anglicization" became used in Britain during the 1960s.

The kind of social work text which reflected the assimilationist position was that of Fitzherbert (1968) which concentrated on "problems" arising from the Victorian childrearing patterns of West Indians, unstable families and common law arrangements, and so on. In fact this is the very position adopted by the nursery nursing and health visitors' training manuals (Brain and Martin 1983; Owen 1983) which are analysed elsewhere in this present study.

In the assimilationist position, white racism is not regarded as a relevant factor. Nor do the power inequalities which exist between members of the subordinate and superordinate communities. Rex and Mason suggest:

"Most of the resources within society will be in control of the latter, so that most members of subordinate groups will tend to start off with considerable disadvantages in material wealth."

Although a product of the early periods of large-scale immigration in the 1950s and 60s in this country, the assimilationist view remains in common currency, and is frequently to be found in the news media and in the statements of many politicians on national and local levels (Bhat et al 1988).

**Multiculturalist**

This is also known as the "ethnically sensitive" or "cultural diversity" position and is now the dominant ideology in many areas of social service delivery. This viewpoint recognizes the right of black people to be in this country, and believes that "integration" can be
achieved through a recognition of cultural differences. It is the host country's lack of knowledge of other countries which is responsible for discrimination. The way to achieve equal opportunities is via "special" initiatives, such as section 11 funding (referred to in Chapter 3 of this present study), whereby local authorities may employ ethnic minority workers to work with people from the "new Commonwealth" and other minority communities. By respecting and understanding the differences between the different cultures, prejudice and discrimination will be broken down, according to this view. Within a nursery setting this would include supplying culturally relevant play and learning materials, foods, and so on. Ballard (1979) argues:

"For the practitioner the question of whether the minorities ought or ought not to remain ethnically distinct should be irrelevant. The fact is that they are."

This position is not without its critics. Ahmed (1986) fears that in some training programmes "culturally sensitivity" has become "cultural racism" by stereotyping social problems according to cultural practices. For example the difficulties of Asian girls are often placed in the context of the "generation gap" and family conflict. The main criticism though is that it ignores the political and material realities of contemporary Britain. Bhat et al (1988 op cit) have made the point that:

"The difficulties faced by the black population are the result not only of migration and differences in culture and language, but also of living in a society which is hostile to black people, denying them equal life chances and can expose them to enormous material and psychological pressure."

Thus whilst it is important to be aware of cultural differences and to incorporate this awareness policies and practices, critics say that this alone will not significantly impinge upon structural inequalities between the races.
Anti-Racist

This viewpoint takes the stance that black people came to Britain because of slavery and colonization, and also because of the economic exploitation which led to underdevelopment in their own countries (Sivanandan 1982; Rodney 1972). Proponents of this position argue that racial inequalities can only be resolved by the elimination of racism and material disadvantage, and by a real sharing of power and resources. The problem is defined as being that of white racism in British society. It is further argued that despite the fact that a substantial black population has been settled in this country for over thirty years, there is no evidence to suggest a willingness on the part of the majority population to accommodate "cultural differences", especially when these adversely affect their material interests. Thus, they argue, the multiculturalists have too naive a belief that ethnically sensitive practices can hope to remedy the problems of the black community.

Anti-racist practices, then, include positive discrimination, anti-racist employment practices, examining all of those areas where evidence of racial bias exists and devising ways to eliminate it from the system by a process of monitoring, and if necessary of dismissing staff who knowingly abuse their position to allocate resources on a racialist basis (as has in respect of housing occurred in Liverpool, Hackney, and elsewhere). The anti-racist position would question the over-representation of Afro-Caribbean children in local authority day care and the related phenomenon of their under-representation in other forms of preschool provision. Questions would be raised of the referral process and would take into account the wider issues of poverty from which black families suffer to a greater degree than their white counterparts. The anti-racist position would also tend to regard the phenomenon of so many black children in local authority day care as
part of the wider malaise which creates the kind of examples of inequality and discrimination noted in Chapter 2 in this study: in housing, health, employment and in education, and would argue that those issues should be tackled as well as trying to improve child care provision for black families.

Much of the research into ethnic minorities and day care dating from the mid-1960s focussed upon the supposed inadequacies of black childrearing practices, their alleged lack of knowledge of matters of health and diet, and highlighted their apparent failures when measured by various tests.

Hood's 1965 study of 101 West Indian one year-olds (Hood 1970) actually found no difference between the sample and comparable white children, though did express concern about the "quality of their diets". It is interesting to note however that half of the West Indian mothers worked, as compared with less than one fifth of the white mothers in the sample. That no more deleterious effects appeared within the Afro-Caribbean sample than in the white sample as a consequence, calls into question some of the claims made by Bowlby and others concerning working mothers and separation. In 1967 Gregory (1969) studied most of the same sample as Hood's with similar results, except that she found that more of the West Indian sample were now working. Criticisms were also made about the poor quality of the child care arrangements of both groups in the sample. Stewart-Price (1967) claimed to have identified something called "West Indian syndrome" in a survey of 23 school children. This supposedly only affected West Indian children and was characterized by "aloofness", "withdrawal", "apathy", "lack of speech" and so on.

Pollack (1972) concluded from studying a large sample of under-three's (163) that the West Indian children were "far less
developed" on scales measuring "personal-social, adaptive behaviour, and language development" through a series of tests. Whilst clearly stating that the socioeconomic position of the West Indian families was much lower than that of their white counterparts (worse jobs, poorer housing, and so on), Pollack concluded that the causes of the differences between black and white development lay in the West Indian culture itself. She blamed "poor maternal care", resulting from West Indian family patterns "formed by slavery". The author recommended preschool education for West Indian children and projects to improve parental attitudes and childrearing practices. The problem was not, therefore, seen as one for white people, but was laid firmly at the door of the black people themselves.

The anti-racist standpoint might challenge this on the grounds that the tests used would be likely to be ethnocentric, and would therefore fail to show due regard for black culture. An anti-racist stance would regard lack of access to material resources as being the root cause of the difficulties encountered by black school children and would suggest affirmative action to remedy these. A further point deriving from the perspective of anti-racism is that research tends to use patterns of middle-class white child development as the yardstick by which all children must be measured. In so doing research is ignored which shows black children in a more favourable light than whites (and points for example to the research in Africa of Geber(1958) to justify this view).

Sayeed (1977), a doctor of medicine, in a paper given to the Royal Society of Health, pointed out a range of socioeconomic disadvantages which Asian people suffered but went on to blame poor maternal health and lack of knowledge as primary causes of ill-health amongst Asian infants:

"The level of general awareness of preventive medicine, basic hygiene, value of immunisation and vaccinations are not expected to be as high amongst
the Asians as their British counterparts."

How this conclusion was reached is not said, nor is the author's claim that dietary restrictions, for example because of religion, are another reason for what he says is poorer health amongst Asians. Sayeed also stated that language difficulties were not the only problem but that:

"health visitors, midwives, district nurses and social workers find it difficult to advise regarding diet for the baby and toddler."

What is meant by this is unexplained, but appears to suggest that Asian people were reluctant to accept "professional" advice - perhaps because it was culturally inappropriate. In general then, the author takes an assimilationist view which again places the onus on to the ethnic minority communities to be educated into the ways of the white British society. It is ironic though that the vegetarian diets so often criticized in these early studies are now regarded as 'de rigueur' for a healthy way of life!

The commission for Racial Equality(1978) did however publish a document "caring for the Under Fives in a Multiracial Community", which took an essentially multiculturalist viewpoint, and focused largely upon the training of nursery nurses, sufficient and appropriate play resources, food which reflected different cultures, and so on. In fact the CRE (and before that the CRC) has traditionally taken a multiculturalist view which was amply reflected in a report of their "Seminar for NNEB tutors" Feb 6-8 (CRE 1976). This contained summaries of fourteen papers on the care of ethnic minority under fives, not one of which, however, mentioned racism. It could be justified as the conventional approach at the time, but even much later research tends to ignore the dimension of white racism and structural inequality. As can be seen elsewhere in this present study, this ignores an important - perhaps the vital - dimension in understanding the position of Afro-
Caribbean under fives in Britain.

Garland and White (1980) - part of the Oxford pre-school research study - although studying the specific issue of day nurseries, ignored structural dimensions such as race, gender, and social class in their methodology and subsequent conclusions. The day-to-day operation of day nurseries was studied by a process of observation and interviews. The sample selected was mainly from the private day nursery sector; seven nurseries of this type included a hospital nursery, a workplace nursery, a university nursery, and so on. Three state day nurseries were researched in addition. Nine hours only were spent in each of the nurseries. The day nurseries themselves were situated in London, apparently due to the lack of daycare facilities in the Oxford area, although precisely where in London is not stated. Nevertheless, given the location of the study it is surprising that the issue of race was omitted. The research may be questioned, though on two specific methodological grounds, leaving aside the absence of a social structural context. Firstly, interviews were only held with the centre organisers (or sometimes with other members of staff where appropriate), thus ignoring the important viewpoint of the parents. Secondly, the local authority day nurseries of the sample were chosen for the researchers by the local authorities themselves as "examples of good practice" (Bruner 1980), thus rendering them atypical and from which therefore more general conclusions may not be safely drawn. The director of the Oxford pre-school research project, Jerome Bruner (1980) admitted as much himself:

"Banal though the remark may seem, it is hard not to say at the end of this preliminary study of London day nurseries, that we still know relatively little about them, about how best to run them or to train people to do so"
(Bruner op cit)

Bain and Barnett (1980) took a psychological approach in their
research of a local authority day nursery, and relied upon batteries of tests on both the children and the parents in order to elicit evidence of certain behavioural patterns such as "withdrawn", "depressed", and so on. Over half of the children in the study were black, mostly Afro-Caribbean. In their list of conclusions the authors do not address any of the structural issues surrounding racial disadvantage, but take an individual pathology view

"DHSS staffing guidelines for day nurseries, and NNEB training ... seem based on an assumption of the normality of the children. The assumption is wrong."
Bain and Barnett (1980)

They further suggest that families who use day nurseries are in general "low in coping resources", and that all twelve of the sample studied "intensively" in the day nursery were "to a greater or lesser extent psychiatrically disturbed". Bain and Barnett, having applied the searchlight of their psychodynamic theories upon the children and the parents, proceed to the suggestion that

"Many staff as children had experienced either early separation from their own parents and/or considerable instability in the personal relationships of their parents and/or family's living arrangements ... there is some indication that nurses with this kind of background work in nurseries in order to gratify their own needs to be children again ... we believe (this is) a significant unconscious factor for a sizable minority of nurses in their choice of work."
Bain and Barnett (1980)

The conclusions of Bain and Barnett are refuted by Richman and McGuire (1988) who, though of a similar psychiatric background, do not regard individual psychopathology as being the cause of problem behaviour within day nurseries. Instead, in research of six day nurseries in London, they reach the conclusion that such problem behaviour has to do with the management style of the day nursery, the size of the group, and staff attitudes towards parents. Broadly they
found that the more open and flexible a day nursery was, the less likely they were to experience difficulties with the children. Again, however, they did not address the issue of race, even though this might have been very interesting in terms of how open and flexible day nursery staff are to black parents as compared with white parents.

Hughes, Mayall et al (1980 op cit) draw upon a review of the research of others in a general overview of nursery provision, and conclude that council day nurseries offer good standards of care, pay a lot of attention to health, hygiene, and so on. Because they are full-time institutions which concentrate on priority cases, however, they cannot be used as models for other parts of preschool provision. They seem to contradict these findings though by later maintaining that day nurseries as compared with nursery schools are less successful in meeting the educational needs of the children, so that essentially a two-tier system is in operation, with day nurseries at the bottom. This image is reinforced by Lindon and Lindon (1988 op cit) who found that nursery school and nursery school teachers were regarded as representing "professionalism", whereas staff in day nurseries were not.

The DHSS-sponsored "sub-group on provision of services for under fives from ethnic minority communities" (1984) reached a host of conclusions and offered many recommendations in the field of provision for black under-fives, nearly all of which had been said before by the CRE and others. One or two quite surprising recommendations came out though which are worth stating here. The committee recommended that newly-arrived families should be offered day care provision by being placed on the priority list at once. This would immediately place such families into the category of "deprived and disadvantaged" families currently given priority:

"The government has asked local authorities to give
priority to children with particular needs. Children in inner city areas, with problems of poor housing, overcrowding, and lack of play facilities often fall automatically into the priority category whatever their ethnic origin. But ethnic minority communities face additional disadvantages... to these we would add the needs of newly-arrived families... their children too might benefit from the sort of help day care can provide."

It is interesting to note that the euphemism "ethnic minorities" almost always, as in this case, refers to Afro-Caribbean or Asian communities, as if the authors are somewhat coy about making open reference more honestly to non-whites. The committee also recommended the extension of the use of section 11 funding. That is, Home Office support funding for specific local authority posts for work with people from the "new commonwealth" (Afro-Caribbean, African and Asian people) referred to in detail in another chapter. They recommended that this type of funding, previously used only in field social work, could be widened to include education and other local authority activities. Given the range of criticisms of Section 11 funding, described in Chapter... of this present study, this is quite surprising. Bhat et al (1988 op cit) write:

"Even if section 11 had been used positively, it would have always remained a 'special measure' and its central administrative location within the home office would have prevented it from providing a means for a fundamental rethinking of mainstream policy within local education authorities, social services, and other departments."

In any event, and whatever its merits or otherwise, it does appear that section 11 funding has never been targeted at the day nursery system.

Osborne and Butler (1985) undertook CRE-sponsored research into ethnic minority children, and made use of batteries of tests to monitor their and their parents' progress. A medical model was used, therefore, in most of this study, and there is a glossary of the technical terms employed throughout. For example the English Picture Vocabulary
Test (EPTV) and method of psychiatric screening to provide scales of "anti-social" and "neurotic" behaviour were used. It is possible to criticise this research, insofar that it sought to compare Asian, Afro-Caribbean and white children by means of various "tests" mentioned above. Thus characteristics and behaviour were attributed to race and ethnicity. West Indians, for example, were thus found to be more "anti-social" than their white counterparts, as discovered through researchers asking mothers to rate their own children on a detailed questionnaire. However, the difficulty with research of this type is that it could just as easily be concluded that Afro-Caribbean mothers are more honest than the other respondents, and perhaps more critical! Aside from its ethically dubious character, the research leaves more questions than answers in terms of its methodology. Psychological testing is not value-free, and can be criticized for being culture-specific and containing inbuilt racial bias (Stone 1981). What is even more surprising is that the CRE has itself criticized for many years such bias, for example in entrance examinations to certain professions described elsewhere in this present study.

The Thomas Coram Research Unit has since the mid-1970s occupied quite a privileged position in relation to the DHSS and other government agencies with the result that a large number of research projects, reports, and occasional papers have flowed from it. Some recent examples will be reviewed here.

Tizard (1986) reviewed recent research on 0-3s and concluded, against the grain of public policy, that a system of day care for this age group on a universal basis would be no bad thing since:

"Under threes can potentially benefit from care by others as well as their mothers, and such care should not be regarded as an undesirable last resort for single parents or problem families."

She further went on to point out that if this position were adopted
as public policy, staff and parental morale would rise considerably. Given the history of policy in this field outlined above, up to the most recent Children Act, it seems highly unlikely that Tizard will get her wish, although if she did then it would have profound implications for Afro-Caribbean children in local authority day care who would, at a stroke, be represented within the mainstream provision used by everyone in the community rather than those considered "children in need" or "at risk". At present, day nurseries are tied to notions such as "deprivation", but if the term were used in Townsend's wider sense of "social deprivation" (Townsend 1987; 1988) then day nurseries might be regarded as part of the problem rather than the means to try to solve it.

Townsend defines social deprivation as:

"...non-participation in the roles, relationships, customs, functions, rights and responsibilities implied by membership of a society or its sub-groups."

He goes on to suggest that racism can be one cause of such social deprivation. Since the day nursery is not part of a universal provision to which all have access, it actually prevents the kind of participation in mainstream provision suggested above. In a similar vein, Moss (1986) has argued for far wider choice for parents of under-threes in terms of their child care arrangements, underpinned by a comprehensive network of advice centres or Information, Referral and Resource Centres as they are known in this context (IRRCs). Again he feels it unrealistic to marginalize child care for the under-threes as a strategy for the most "deprived".

Earlier in this present study the research on quality of service undertaken by Lindon and Lindon (1988) was described. It should also be mentioned that they found nursery staff to be apologetic about the service, which itself leads to a lack of contact with the parents in a co-operative way in order to try to improve what is offered. They note
low morale and lack of job satisfaction amongst staff, which filters through to impair the quality of experience of the children. This area will be considered in the fieldwork of this present study.

There was no mention of race, however, in Lindon and Lindon's work, although the important point about regarding day care as having "customers" who might in other sectors of life expect a decent standard of service, is taken on. Day nurseries, the authors say, are confused about who the "customers" actually are: the children or the parents? They also observe that the quality of day care is "sabotaged by its own beliefs" i.e. that children would not be in day nurseries if their mothers brought them up properly.

The theme of recommending a greater variety of preschool provision characterized the monitoring survey of the preschool provision programme funded by central government via the voluntary sector (Van der Eyken 1987 op cit). The DHSS had allocated seven million pounds to "pump prime" new initiatives for preschool children throughout England. The target groups were ethnic minorities, lone parent families, and isolated families/families under stress. Day nurseries were only a part of this initiative, which included small-scale projects like play buses and Gingerbread (lone parent) groups. In fact, the voluntary sector nurseries which benefited from the scheme numbered just twelve, offering only 137 full-time and 187 part-time places nationally.

The significance of the initiative is as yet unclear without research into the workings of public policy in this field. However, the most likely possible motive for it lies in the very slow rise in the number of local authority day nursery places (from 26,000 in 1975 to 29,000 in 1985; Cohen 1988 op cit). Central government, as has already been said, has refused any significant expansion since the late 1960s, with the result that the provision is narrower than ever:
"Total public expenditure on childcare services for under-fives barely increased at all during the period 1975-85 despite the increase in women's employment and the increased demand for provision registered by surveys. In 1985, total expenditure on local authority nurseries, playgroups, and grants to the voluntary sector amount to 0.03 of gross domestic product and LEA expenditure on under-fives 0.097 of GDP (England). Developing adequate provision will therefore require considerably more public investment than it currently receives, and it is important that government responsibilities in this respect are recognised."

It seems likely then that the strategy of government is to resist any demands for cash from the state child care sector, to allow "startup" funding for the voluntary sector, and thereafter hope that those organizations can raise their own funds. In addition New Right thinking (Adam Smith Institute 1988) is likely to bring commercialism into the child care field and higher fees. If the analogy of the NHS is anything to go by, then the gap between state day nurseries and those of the private sector will increase in terms of quality differentials, and black families, since they are overrepresented in state day nurseries anyway, will find that once again their relative position in relation to the white majority will have declined.

Even as things stand now, a report for the Commission of the European Communities (Cohen 1988) demonstrated from a wide-ranging survey of research that Afro-Caribbean and Asian parents had extreme difficulty in finding day care which was of good quality and suitable for the particular needs of their children. Whereas they - Afro-Caribbeans in particular - were heavily overrepresented in local authority day nurseries:

"Very few attend independent nursery schools or playgroups."

The Commission report also noted the inequalities of provision:

"Varying according to such factors as where they live, their parent's employment situation and ability to pay, and their ethnic and social background. Inequalities in schooling for older
children have over the years generated considerable
debate. Far more fundamental inequalities in
provision for children under five have yet to
attract the same interest."

The point is very clear that there are no plans to increase public
day care provision, and one of the plainest statements yet from this
administration came at the World Conference at Nairobi:

"Longstanding government policy is that public
provision of day care ... should be concentrated on
those whose need for it is greatest - those
families with particular health or social needs who
will benefit from a local authority day care
place."
Home Office 1987

That a policy of non-expansion is part of the New Right thinking is
a point reiterated by Cohen (1988 op cit) who says that whilst some
finance has been offered to the voluntary sector (as outlined above)
this has been within the context of a reduction in central government
expenditure on child care provision generally. This therefore adds
weight to the belief that the under-fives initiative was really
connected to a policy of stasis in local authority provision, and if so
would be very much in tune with other government policies that are
claimed to "target" resources on the small minority whom the state
considers to be most "in need", whilst the private and voluntary
sectors will look after the test.

McLeod (1982) also makes the point that there has been a decreasing
emphasis on support for preventative services, in favour of fostering
and adoption. She further suggests that this emphasis on removing
children from their natural families into substitute care:

"..takes place at the expense of day care services,
and also at the expense of expanded advice services
and cash grants to natural families."

This continued reduction in real terms in Income Support and child
benefit would appear to support McLeod's claim. Mechanisms of family
support, including low-cost or free child care as well as cash
benefits, have been consistently eroded during the past decade.

It remains to be seen to what extent the present government's attitude to day care will be altered, if at all by the European Community. However the recommendations of the report to the European Commission (Cohen 1988 op cit) are very clear. Day care for the 0-3s should be considerably expanded to become a universal option for families who want it, rather than remain a specialized service for those considered "at risk" or "in need". Their "welfare" role should become subordinate therefore to a more general child care role which other forms of provision such as nursery schools have adopted:

"Admission to local authority day nurseries should be extended beyond children who are "at risk" or "in special need", and the welfare and family support functions should be made supplementary to a primary function of care/learning development. This would not only increase the availability of nursery care but also remove the stigma which is widely seen as attaching to segregated provision of this nature. There are different models for this form of provision; the essential elements are high quality care, all day when required; access to necessary support services, and a close involvement with other services; and parental and community involvement in management."

To put it mildly, the above seems an unlikely outcome for the foreseeable future. The Children Act (1989 op cit) makes it abundantly clear what the statutory obligations of local authorities are in relation to day nurseries, and so universal provision is not on the agenda. Given the present administration's antipathy to the European Social Charter - which covers areas such as welfare rights, minimum wages, and so on - EC initiatives in the social field are unlikely to affect policy in this country at this time.

The role of the childminders, whist not the focus of this study, is important because of the gap in the system which they fill, particularly in the geographical area of this present research where children under the age of eighteen months are not admitted into day
nurseries. These children according to Bone (1977 op cit) are the main care providers for children under two, apart from relatives or friends. 3% of all children aged 1-4 are with childminders and whilst this seems a small percentage, it represents a large number of children. In 1977 there were 86,706 children with childminders in England and Wales, around three times the number of those in local authority day nurseries (Mayall and Petrie 1987 op cit).

Most of the research on childminding, however, points to the fact that most parents, given a choice, would prefer their children to attend a nursery: (Bryant, Harris and Newton 1980 op cit; Mayall and Petrie 1987 op cit). The important point to note is that the perceptions of the parents about the defects and inconsistencies of childminding are supported by the available research. The most recent large-scale study, by Mayall and Petrie (1987 op cit) compared childminding with day nurseries, and found that the former suffered by comparison on almost every count. The authors criticize the DHSS reports which have consistently advised the expansion of childminding, which Mayall and Petrie regard as being merely cost-cutting and not in the best interests of children. They concluded that such DHSS recommendations were:

"...made partly as an economy measure, and partly because of the one-to-one relationship supposedly offered at a minders. But there may be grave drawbacks for the children. They are likely to experience frequent changes of placement, and they may suffer from a relatively poor environment, and get relatively little attention from their care-giver. Furthermore, mothers who are already experiencing serious difficulties in their own lives may find it just too difficult to make and keep going a good working relationship with minders, who in turn may be intolerant of them."

The authors further note that childminders have been known to discriminate on grounds of race, and that they are often reluctant to take children who are "difficult".
From the above it would seem that the hope expressed by government, but also by researchers such as the Jacksons: Jackson and Jackson 1979 that somehow childminding would be able to fill the enormous gap between supply and demand in child care, is neither realistic nor desirable.

In reviewing the research of the past twenty-five years, it is surprising how little has been done on race and day care. Where such research has been carried out, it has taken either an assimilationist or a multiculturalist position, but never an anti-racist perspective. That is to say that where research has been carried out on the issue of black under-fives, white attitudes towards black people are never considered, and the "problem" - even in some of the most recent research - has been defined in terms of characteristics or attributes of black people themselves. Another strand to the research over the years has been that day nurseries have become narrower and more specialized in intake, and essentially now deal with "problem" children and their families. This is despite the outcome of the many studies and reports which all seem to have concluded that a move towards a universal system of preschool provision would benefit everyone, and would have, amongst other advantages, the effect of removing the stigma currently attached to local authority day nurseries.

Finally, it is significant that many studies have shown that Afro-Caribbean and Asian people have considerably less access to all other forms of preschool provision (such as nursery schools) than do white families, whereas all of the relevant studies point to an over-representation of black children in day nurseries.

In this chapter the postwar policy issues in relation to day care were presented, with particular reference to the unequal position of women and the emphasis placed by successive governments on women's role as "homemaker". Statistical evidence was presented to demonstrate the
high and increasing demand for day nursery places, and the continuing resistance by both Conservative and Labour administrations to expanding provision was charted. Comparisons with other European countries were given, and deficiencies in the UK provision duly noted.

Further to this, the question of quality of local authority day care was examined, and comparisons with nursery schools were made. The related issue of social stigma and lack of access to other forms of preschool provision by Afro-Caribbean families was explored.

Following the above, a review of the research into day care was given, with particular emphasis upon Afro-Caribbean children. This was placed in the context of a model which has tended to define positions on race in Britain since the early 1950s; assimilationist, multiculturalist, and anti-racist. Based upon this, some conclusions concerning the present system of under-fives provision, particularly local authority day nurseries, were reached with regard to Afro-Caribbean users.
In researching the Afro-Caribbean experience of local authority day care it is necessary to have access to of the professional ideologies held by workers in the field, principally: health visitors, social workers, and nursery nurses, the assumptions and decisions taken in relation to Afro-Caribbean children by these groups of professions or occupations. In the case of all of the above occupations except social work, that knowledge-base tends to be that of the medical model, which emphasizes individual pathology, and this has implications for the assessment and referral of children to day care and their subsequent experiences within the day nurseries.

**Health Visitors**

The background required for student health visitors is that of nursing, only the RGN/SRN qualification being acceptable, along with midwifery or obstetrics training. Five O levels are required as well as any entrance requirements which individual colleges might impose. Courses last just 51 weeks and, unlike midwifery or other nursing courses, health visiting courses take place within colleges of higher or further education. Whilst the role of the health visitor has been the subject of modification over the years, fundamentally the tasks expected of them have remained unchanged since those defined by the Committee on the Education and Training of Health Visitors (CETHV 1967).

1. The prevention of mental, physical and emotional ill-health and its consequences.

2. Early detection of ill health and the surveillance high risk groups.

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3. Recognition and identification of need and mobilization of appropriate resources where necessary.

4. Health teaching.

5. Provision of care; this will include support during periods of stress, and advice and guidance in cases of illness as well as in the care and management of children. The health visitor is not, however, actively engaged in technical nursing procedures."

Priorities are established on the basis of the levels of staffing in the health districts. In areas such as London, considered a high-stress area, this always includes new births and unsupported pregnant women (as well as obviously high-risk categories like non-accidental injury), and visits to children may go on until school age and are very much at the discretion of the health visitor or her (the profession is almost exclusively female) superiors. As with midwives, the role goes beyond monitoring and dealing with medical matters, and the most recent DHSS document clearly states that

"Much of their time is spent with families, helping them to attain health-promoting behaviour, teaching them and continuously assessing the situation for potential problems, in order that action can be taken at an early stage to prevent further difficulties from arising."
(DHSS 1988)

This being the case, their role in relation to referring children to local authority day care cannot be overstated. In many cases they are the only visitor to a family by a state agency that family ever has on a regular basis (Owen 1983). In a study of 1983 for example 75% of children in day nurseries had been referred by health visitors, whereas ten years earlier the figure had been just 44% (Cohen 1988). Cohen suggests that this pattern is common and has been replicated elsewhere. Because health visitors are major agents of referral, it is necessary to present here some of the theories and models that inform their profession.
From an analysis of the standard training manual of the profession (Owen 1983 op cit) certain conclusions may be drawn in this respect. The book is described as having become "the established basic text for health visitor students since .. 1977" and as such may legitimately represent the basic tenents of health visiting.

Firstly, the psychological models employed in health visitor training are drawn from Freud and the post-Freudian schools of psychoanalysis; that same body of knowledge in fact which has been documented earlier in this present study. Great emphasis is placed upon the mother in an individual rather than in any sociostructural context, and the work of Bowlby et al is taken at face value.

"Much of Bowlby's early work on deprivation was misinterpreted, but recent studies still support his central themes. The work of Winnicott and others tends to indicate that these early experiences may have far-reaching effects, which can be seen in disturbed children and adults. Of particular interest to health visitors is Winnicott's theory of the un-integrated child, as he emphasizes the importance of holding the infant in the early days and of the 'good-enough' mother."

Thus deficient mothering is, according to the models employed by health visitors, to blame for "disturbed" children. In the three hundred and sixty-seven pages of the textbook, another possible cause of family stress, racism, is not mentioned at all. In fact the issue of "race" itself is considered in just one and a half pages, one of which appears halfway through the chapter on "the need of special groups", alongside mental handicap, mental illness, unemployment, and so on; itself a highly negative image of non-white people. In addition, (and although the 1983 edition), the text refers to ethnic minorities as "immigrants".

It seems therefore that the models upon which training is based are highly individualistic, with a tendency to pathologize and medicalize the problem of women. No analysis of structural forces takes place

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which might have placed family pressure in terms of race, gender or social class oppression. How health visitors see themselves and are seen by consumers is an important area of study of itself, and is therefore outside the remit of this present study. However it is necessary to refer to some relevant research which provides some background to these questions.

Generally, it seems health visitors do have problems of professional identity, including deciding whether and to what extent they are a "profession" at all. Because of the nature of their work they are not in fact "expert" in one particular field, but must draw upon different bodies of knowledge in order to perform the variety of tasks demanded by their job (Drennan 1986). Similarly, Hunt (1972) pointed to the fact that although health visitors place themselves on an hierarchical scale between skilled workers and the established professions, they have a very unclear idea about their own professional identity. Such professional insecurity may help account for the fact that health visiting, rather than emerging as a separate and distinct occupation in its own right, is very much rooted within the medical services and takes its own ideology and knowledge-base from these.

How health visitors are perceived by the consumers is again difficult to gauge and shall form an important part of the fieldwork of this present study. Research has tended to show, broadly, that whereas between fifty and sixty percent of consumers express "satisfaction" with their health visitors, the remainder are either indifferent or have expressed clear dissatisfaction. There is also some evidence to show that this level of dissatisfaction increases once the child has attained the age of five months or so, and that the main sources of dissatisfaction include "rigidity" and "embarrassing or personally distressing incidents" during health visitor visits (Graham 1979; Foxman, Moss et al 1982; Field, Deaper et al 1982).
The Field, Draper et al study (1982 op cit) was based on a sample of 78 first-time mothers, and it was found that 60% of the sample were mainly positive about their health visitor, 20% were described as being "indifferent" towards them, whilst the remainder were "definitely hostile". It was also found that where the health visitor had had previous contact during the pregnancy, women were more positive towards them. 40% of the women were described as "depressed", although the relationship between this and attitudes towards the health visitor are not described. Nor do the researchers say what is meant by "depression" or who actually used that term - though presumably it was the health visitors themselves, in conjunction with the women's GPs. Similarly the Foxman, Moss et al study (1982 op cit) found that 49% of their 85 mothers were "very satisfied" with their health visitors, though around 25% had very mixed or negative feelings. It was found here that older or breastfeeding mothers were more satisfied with the health visitor.

The study by Graham (1979 op cit) of 120 women showed that working-class women, whilst initially favourable both to the health visitors and the child health clinic became increasingly unfavourable after the child was five months old.

The consumer's view of health visitors will be an important part of the fieldwork of this research. It is very clear from the above that they do have a central role in the system of referral to day care, and research tends to show that, although they have responsibilities for many groups of all ages, it is to young children that they themselves tend to give priority. Wiseman (1979), in a study of 250 health visitors in a health region, asked them to rank in terms of priority 33 care groups and give their reasons for such a priority. The health visitors gave most weight to the under-fives; children in "at-risk" groups; children of single parents; and "problem" families. In short,
those categories most closely associated with the day nurseries. Their reasons were to do with prevention, screening, monitoring, support, and health education. In relation to Afro-Caribbean children and their families, therefore, it would have been advantageous to discover on what basis the health visitors, given these central concerns, make their referral to local authority day nurseries. Limitation on access to health visitors, as opposed to their managers, is a limitation upon this present research in this regard, however.

Social Work

The standard qualification for social work is the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW), and the profession has over the years upgraded the requirements for entry, so that A levels are now needed for even the basic two-year training (though with dispensation for mature entrants). In addition there are a large number of one and two-year postgraduate training courses which are often combined with Masters or Diploma courses in social science. Finally, there are four year combined courses at undergraduate level. In general, the profession has become a degree level one with an emphasis towards the social sciences, particularly social policy. Training though is far from uniform in philosophy and emphasis, although the training body (CCETSW) imposes standards, minimum requirements, and essentials to be covered by all courses. Recent highly publicized cases, particularly in the field of child abuse, have given social work a higher public profile, and CCETSW appears to be taking a more active role in telling the departments of social work in universities, polytechnics and colleges what is expected of them. Unlike the 1960s and 70s when courses often adopted psychodynamic or overtly political models, it seems from examining recent prospecti (CCETSW 1988-9) that a more pragmatic approach is being taken, with more of an emphasis upon skills, the law,
welfare rights and so forth. It is also true to say that race and gender issues are more in evidence now than, say, a decade ago.

In the specific area of race, CCETSW has over the years made a number of statements and declarations of intent. In 1983 for example the following commitment was made:

"Social work students should have enough knowledge of and sensitivity toward different races, cultures and ethnic groups by the end of the course, to enable them to feel reasonably confident in working with any particular group, family or individual." (CCETSW 1983)

In many ways this represents a classic statement of the "racially sensitive" or "multiculturalist" approach and is typical of the stance taken by CCETSW. Despite, or perhaps because of this, however, CCETSW has come in for criticism for its failure to address racism and in particular the institutionalized racism which has led to a gross underrepresentation of successful black candidates for CQSW courses (ibid). The content of courses has similarly been criticized, and despite the many "statements of intent" issued by the training body, the Social Services Inspectorate was still moved to observe that:

"The consensus view was that (the training) ... was hopelessly inadequate for the task in hand. The content of the courses had chiefly been to do with concepts of racism and cultural aspects of communication and ... did not touch upon the practical considerations that would have helped social workers in their daily tasks." (SSI 1987)

Whilst social work training has attempted to adopt "racially sensitive" training, and seldom a specifically anti-racism position, even where courses have tried to adopt such a position the selection procedure has appeared to work against this. On the Liverpool University Postgraduate course for example, which has declared in its literature a commitment to anti-racism, only four of the forty-two students in 1988-89 were black, and none of the tutors. Whether or not forces similar to those operating in the selection of medical students, (exposed by the
Commission for Racial Equality as carrying an inherent racial bias (CRE 1988)), are at work here is open to debate. Nevertheless the statistics, irrespective of the qualification of the applicants, demonstrate a massive underrepresentation of successful black applicants to social work training courses, as has been demonstrated in another chapter of this present study.

A further problem within the profession is that there are certain constraints placed upon social workers both in training and in practice as to how "radical" they can be. For example the University of Warwick course, known to take a highly political stance, has effectively been written out of the profession by Directors of Social Services in terms of employing its graduates. In a similar way in the early 1970s when "radical social work" was in vogue, there were many dismissals of those social workers who adopted this philosophy in practice. Thus even where social workers do wish to adopt anti-racist positions in their practice, the built-in resistance to radical action within departments (reflected in a conservative attitude towards recruitment, which will be examined later in this chapter) may tend to act as a brake on progress.

This is one of the dilemmas for social work training which does not occur within the health-based professions; social work training often draws upon structural models of inequality and oppression - and indeed postgraduate students must have undertaken courses in the social sciences between being considered for the one-year courses - and yet the workers find themselves powerless to effect change even if they wished to.

The problem of lack of access to support services as defined in another chapter, the social worker's role in the control aspects of state welfare in which black people are often heavily overrepresented (e.g. mental health and residential child care institutions), and the
gross underrepresentation of black people in the social work pro-
feusions, suggests that social work may itself have become part of the
problem of institutional and structural racism rather than a means of
its resolution (Bhat et al 1988). As has been described elsewhere,
many black people are suspicious of social services and usually only
use them in times of great stress or else because of coercion.

Nursery Nursing

Courses for nursery nurses, unlike the above professional training
courses, require no prior knowledge or experience of the field, and no
formal qualifications are insisted upon, although individual colleges
may demand two or more GCE/GCSEs. In a recent survey (CRE 1989) it was
found that 70% of colleges required two or more GCE O levels for entry;
clearly though very many colleges do not have such a requirement and
there is thus a lack of uniformity. Nursery nurses - or nursery
officers as they are nowadays more usually called - must be sixteen on
entry to courses, and although requiring a lot of skill, the job status
remains as low as that defined at the inception of the Nursery Nurse
Examining Board (NNEB) in 1945, which basically placed it on a par with
domestic service. Despite the low, non-professional status, nursery
nurses have by far the closest contact with young children of any of
the three careers examined here.

The standard qualification for nursery officers is the NNEB
certificate. In a study by van der Eyken (1984) of 25% of the day
nurseries in England, it was found that the vast majority of staff held
this qualification. Very few staff held qualifications other than this,
though officers-in-charge were more likely to have a further qualifica-
tion; fifteen out of ninety for example held the Certificate in Social
Service, a two year social work qualification.

The intake to courses for this standard two-year training has been
and remains a very narrow one; entrants are overwhelmingly young, female, and white. 1981 figures show that only nine of the forty-nine colleges in the sample courses accepted even a few mature students, and throughout that year only two trainees were male (NNEB 1981). Van der Eyken (1984 op cit) also found that in a large sample of nursery officers, only five per cent were from any ethnic minority. This situation is unsurprising, given the lack of commitment over the years by the NNEB to equality of opportunity in black recruitment. In 1986 the Commission for Racial Equality surveyed 144 colleges offering the NNEB course (CRE 1989 op cit) and amongst other things they found that only eleven stated a commitment to equal opportunities, regardless of ethnic origin. The research goes on to pinpoint the dearth of examples of good practice in course recruitment policy, and for example showed that only eight prospecti included welcoming words in various community languages, only two colleges had a policy on racial harrassment, a "handful" referred to the relevance to training of living in a multi-cultural society and so on. The conclusion reached by the CRE was that:

"The most striking finding of the CRE survey, however, was the complete absence of any national standards of criteria governing any part of access to the course. There were almost as many ways of recruiting NNEB students as there were colleges providing the course."

(ibrd)

Aside from the narrowness of intake, the Van der Eyken survey found that

"Many of the staff are very young and ...there is a high turnover and high rates of sickness and absenteeism."

(Cohen 1988 op cit)

The author relates this to training deficiencies which permeate every level:

"..two-thirds of the officers-in-charge felt that their staff were insufficiently qualified to deal with the large number of priority children and
especially to deal with parents ... the NNEB provides a good basic education concerning the physical care and development of normal children but many of the staff are ill-equipped to deal with the large number of serious behaviour problems of the children."

(ibid)

It is possible that such training deficiencies might be compensated for in part by in-service training by the local authorities. The frequency and quality of this will be addressed within the fieldwork of this present study, particularly in relation to race awareness, but an example of its apparent limitations can be seen in a memorandum on recruitment and retention from an assistant director of social services (City of Westminster 1990) which proposes just six days per year for such training, intended to cover:

"...child protection, child care legislation, working the families, equal opportunities, HIV/AIDS, first aid, health and safety, multidisciplinary team work, child development."

The time allocated does appear less than adequate to cover so much ground, and, as can be seen, in this local authority there is no specific mention of race and the day nursery.

The issue of preparation given on the NNEB courses for staff to deal with the difficulties of parents, will be explored within the fieldwork of this present study, as will the "typical" staff profile in terms of age, cultural background, experience, and so on. At present there is little published evidence on this.

The content of the two-year NNEB course bears out the findings of van der Eyken that there is little to prepare trainees to deal with certain important issues. By far the greatest input of the course is concerned with developmental matters (NNEB 1988). Even where other issues are apparently dealt with, such as the section on "The Family in the Community", one has the right to be sceptical given that the NNEB has consistently rejected numerous findings by researchers that staff
are ill-prepared to deal with parents (NNEB 1981). The neglect of any consideration of working with black children and their families is also surprising, given the overrepresentation of black children in day nurseries. The issue of race is not mentioned in the latest training manual (NNEB 1988 op cit). Even in reports which do mention the topic, as in the 1981 document "A Future for Nursery Nursing", it takes the form of a specialism to be tacked on to the main course content:

"Students undertake advanced theoretical and practical work, and specialize in an area of their choice eg. with immigrant or handicapped children." (NNEB 1981 op cit)

This view of black children as being part of "special needs", to be regarded within a range of social, mental, or physical handicaps is identical to that observed in health visitor training described above, and the standard text books are similarly at one. This textbook (Brain and Martin 1983), as with Owen's definitive work for health visitors (Owen 1983 op cit), does not mention race until page 241 of its 300-plus pages, when the category of "Children with Special Needs" is reached. Alongside haemophiliacs and mentally handicapped children can be found "the child from the ethnic minority group". What seems worse though is the way the issue is dealt with in such a Victorian, deterministic fashion:

"Afro-Caribbean children can be lively, boisterous and responsible. Their feeling for music and rhythm often makes it physically impossible for them to remain still when music is being played."

(Brain and Martin 1983 op cit)

"Children of Afro-Caribbean origin: children may need special guidance in handling and caring for play materials or books, as these are generally lacking in their homes. They find a great deal of choice bewildering, as they are not encouraged to be self-regulating at home. Strict discipline and sometimes corporal punishment at home can mean that soft-spoken restraints and explanations about behaviour limitations go unheeded at the nursery; sometimes the children even regard adults as "soft" or "weak"."

(ibid)
"The custom of common-law marriage, changing of partners and the acceptance of illegitimate children found among some Caribbeans is an inheritance from slave trade days."
(ibid)

Such statements, all taken from Brain and Martin (1983 op cit) hardly need further comment, although it is confusing to read in the same text book that "making assumptions, stereotyping and generalising are to be avoided"! Aside from the racialist undertones of this material, the fact that any discussion of the subject of race is regarded as a "specialism", both in this book and within the course structures, rather than as an essential part of nursery officer training, perhaps says something about the priorities of the NNEB. The training body, however, has seemed impervious to criticism, as was pointed out by the Greater London Association for Advisers for the Under Fives:

"Another area of concern by this committee and others is that racism is not adequately covered in courses, and that students are left inadequately prepared for working in the multiracial environment of the day nurseries."
(GLAUF 1980)

The authors then go on to say that courses are simply "taught" and there is no room for criticism by the students:

"The NNEB courses don't cater for students who want to complain about either the taught courses or the practical placements; there is no space for them to voice their criticisms, and many would fear that their assessment might be jeopardized if they did."
(ibid)

The above issues have formed the design of the questionnaire for nursery workers in the fieldwork of this present study. At this point, however, it can be said that in terms of attitudes towards race, the ideology which seems to have underpinned nursery nursing lies in the belief that racial differences can be equated with individual pathology; that somehow certain racial characteristics are the cause of
certain behaviour problems, as can be seen from the examples above. The corollary of this is that certain racial characteristics fall short of white standards and are therefore deficient. Such underlying beliefs, coupled with the failure to recruit black staff, has implications for the day nurseries where, as we have seen, black children are considerably overrepresented.

On issues other than race, the view represented by the training texts is again very similar to that in health visiting, concentrating on the "parentcraft" model which owes its antecedence to Truby King (1934). There is a strong emphasis upon a routinized, standardized, all-encompassing view of how all children should be reared. For example:

"Most normal babies will want to be fed approximately every four hours and any routine planned would have to be arranged around the feeding schedule."

(Brain and Martin (1983 op cit)

The whole emphasis therefore is upon routine, hygiene, toilet training and so on; replicating what the trainers might call "a well-run home". In this respect the moralistic tone adopted when describing Afro-Caribbean "common law" arrangements is very much in keeping with their own view of what is both respectable and desirable. That the trainees are so young and are unable to question the content of their courses, as noted above, might suggest that the NNEB are seeking malleable young minds to achieve within the day nursery their ideal vision of what a "normal" home should be.

**Recruitment**

The issue of the general under-representation of black people within the professions has been alluded to in another chapter. Here it is proposed to look more closely at the position within social services departments, of which local authority day nurseries are a part, to try
to obtain some insight into this area. Elsewhere in this study the lack of access by black people to the personal social services has been examined (Arnold 1981; Bhat et al 1988) and the conclusion was drawn that the experience many black people have of these services has frequently proved negative. It has also been shown elsewhere that Afro-Caribbean people are heavily overrepresented in the "controlling" elements of social services. Although no research has been done on this, it may well be the case that such negative experiences of the social services have had a deterrent effect upon black people applying to work in that field, in much the same way as they appear to have been deterred from joining the police force. It must however be confirmed that even where black people do apply for social work training, they are still less likely to be accepted, even when their qualifications are the same as those for white applicants (ibid).

In terms of local authority day nurseries it might have been expected that, because educational requirements are not so stringent, more Afro-Caribbean people would be working as nursery officers. The evidence is clear however that this is not the case. In a study of 90 day nurseries in England, van der Eyken (1984 op cit) found that, whilst a total of 18% of the children in these local authority day nurseries were Afro-Caribbean, and 5% Indian or Pakistani, only 5% of the black staff came from either of those communities. This lack of black staff is disturbing in the light of the finding that, nationally, local authority day nurseries, whilst accounting for just 0.9% of all preschool child care provision, do in fact provide more places for ethnic minority children than any other form of preschool provision. This itself indicates a lack of access by black people to mainstream provision such as nursery schools, and as such the pattern perceived within social services departments generally, that black people only tend to have access to the more "controlling" aspects of the social
services, seems to be replicated here, given that the day nurseries are aimed at children of those families considered in some sense "deficient" (Cohen 1988 op cit). There are many possible reasons why recruitment of black nursery officers is so low. One factor must be the apparent lack of commitment to equal opportunities displayed by the training courses, as described above. It is also the case, of course, that nursery work is so poorly paid and of such low-status, that young black people, anxious to escape from poor socioeconomic conditions, require at least the possibility of earning more money (if only by the possibility of overtime and working unsocial hours). Nursery nursing does not provide this. As Cohen (1988 op cit) has argued:

"nursery workers have low status and work long hours for low pay. Many of them are young and the vast majority are female. There is a great deal of absenteeism due to stress and burn-out. There is also low unionisation."
(Cohen op cit 1988)

Again she writes that

"Lack of career structure and adequate training also makes it less worthwhile to enter the work, since there is little opportunity for advancement or transfer to other branches of social work."
(ibid)

It could also be the case that because nursery nursing is at present overwhelmingly a "white" occupation, that fact - as with many other occupations, such as the Fire Service - may be preventing black applicants, because it is clearly more difficult to be the "first" in any organization, as women have found when entering previously all-male organizations. A further point to make about black recruitment as day nursery staff is that it would appear that where there are black workers in the system, they are rarely at senior levels and more usually are employed as domestic workers or cooks. This poor image may also deter black applicants. The above, then, will provide a background to some of the issues to be explored in the fieldwork of this present
research.

There have been some recent training initiatives which have sought to address some of the perceived deficiencies outlined above, as well as the additional problems of lack of co-ordination in training for work with under-fives, inadequate opportunities for career progression, and access to in-service training (Cohen 1988 op cit). This has involved the setting up of the National Council for Vocational Qualifications, out of which it was hoped that new forms of childcare qualifications might emerge, based upon nationally agreed and monitored standards. A project is currently under way "Working with Under Sevens", the aim of which is to examine a range of child care occupations in the under-sevens field, and which may have the effect of improving the status of child care work, and widening access to it (VOLCUF 1989). Various models have been proposed, notably by Hevey (1986), whereby child care work would ultimately achieve the same professional status as social work, health visiting, and teaching. Cohen (1990) however sounds a note of warning that:

"there is some concern that the exercise is being carried out with too much haste and that too few resources will be available for its implementation."

At the time of writing then, it is very much a matter of "wait and see".

On a wider social service level there is, as with the NNEB training courses, a measurable lack of commitment by the local authority social services departments to recruitment of black and ethnic minority workers. A recent survey by the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE 1989a) of social services in England, Scotland and Wales found that only 34% of respondents submitted written equal opportunities policy documents. Of the 116 departments, only 70 responded, and so the true position might well be considerably worse. (Those local authorities in
the survey were targetted by the survey because many had substantial ethnic minority populations within their areas). Perhaps of greatest concern is the fact that even the minority of respondents who did have written equal opportunities documents did not necessarily have specific plans for implementation to improve the recruitment of black workers.

The Commission concluded that:

"It is clear that most departments are not meeting their duties in law under Section 71 of the Race Relations Act 1976 ... Ten years on from the publication of the report Multi Racial Britain: the social services response, most departments still have ad hoc arrangements without a wider strategy for ensuring equal opportunity provision across the broad range of services."

(ibid)

Central government "strategy" for recruiting more black workers to social services departments (almost exclusively in fieldwork it has to be said) is via Section 11 funding. The Home Office funds 75% of a post, provided that at least 50% of the social worker's time is spent working with residents of the "new Commonwealth". Several criticisms have been levelled against this, however. Firstly there is evidence that local authorities, often working to tight budgets, have simply used the money to help sustain their general provision; a "windfall", if you will (Rooney 1983). Another criticism is that because black social workers have been recruited by "special funding", they tend to feel marginalized from the main service and something of second-class citizens within their departments. In a study of three large social services departments in the North-West of England (SSI 1987 op cit) for example, it was found that there were very few black and Asian social workers, and that those few were largely funded by Section 11 grants.

The effects of this, the researchers said were, amongst others that:

"There was a tendency for S11 staff to have rather narrow spheres of influence and interest and to be located outside the mainstream of the department. S11 workers felt isolated and pushed into roles,
such as interpreting, which they felt were inappropriate. They were expected to be capable of dealing with situations which no white social worker of similarly limited training and experience has to handle."

The point is reinforced by Bhat et al (1988 op cit)

"Rather than methodically examining the scope and relevance of mainstream provision, authorities may define work with such communities as a specialism which can be left to a few relatively junior specialist workers. The authority can satisfy itself and potential critics that the needs of minority communities are being attended to when, in fact, no thorough attempt has been made to evaluate their needs."

Social workers funded via Section 11 also tend to feel that, because they are treated as "ethnic specialists", their chances of promotion are considerably limited. Thus the problem of black underrepresentation at the higher levels of management in social services cannot be resolved if black recruitment depends upon "special" funding (Ballard 1979; SSI 1988). Generally, then, many writers have expressed great reservations about both the effectiveness and legitimacy of Section 11 funding as a means to extend black recruitment and improve service delivery to multiracial communities (Rooney 1983 op cit).

A few local authorities have attempted to recruit a workforce that reflects the racial and ethnic composition of the populations they service (Eaton 1985). There is a threefold justification for this, and for the connected policy of ethnic monitoring of staff to ensure that the policy works (Young and Connelly 1981). Firstly because as a major employer a local authority has a duty to promote social justice, and a failure to promote equal opportunities means it no longer has the moral standing to prevent racialist practices within its area. Secondly, if social services are to become more sensitive to the needs of the black population that population must be properly represented within the institution so that a black perspective can be brought to bear on its activities; for example black staff can sensitize white staff to the
racial and cultural context of their practice. Thirdly, if the social services are to gain the confidence of the black community, they must be seen to be promoting racial justice in its employment practice, and as being capable of delivering a relevant and sensitive service.

The Social Services Inspectorate were unequivocal in their document "Social Services in a Multiracial Society" that departments should, both in terms of staff recruitment and in service delivery, become far more responsive to the needs of ethnic minorities. They urged all departments to be committed to

"Achieving change in social work policies and practices that are sensitive and relevant to the needs of black and minority ethnic families and communities."

SSI 1988 op cit)

The Inspectorate then went on to detail six key areas in which such a commitment should be expressed, including staff recruitment, training and staff support, and service provision. The difficulty though is that social services, like other local authority departments, are to a greater or lesser extent under the political control of elected councils, and it is often they who decide whether and to what extent any commitment to racial equality and equal opportunities is made.

In the case of this present study, and as will be described within the fieldwork section, the local authority area where this research was carried out has no policy on race, publishes no statistics on racial composition of the workforce, and so on, and clearly this lethargy in the area of equal opportunities is reflected in the lack of any clear policy within the social services department. This was demonstrated early on in this present research when a small-scale study of recruitment advertisements were made in order to help identify a suitable range of local authorities in which the fieldwork might take place. Because of the various obstacles placed in the way of this research
noted elsewhere, this exercise became redundant. However, it was noticeable that the three local authorities, judging by the wording of the recruitment advertisements and the types of newspapers in which they advertised (eg. in the black press), expressed, at least publicly, differing attitudes towards black recruitment as social services staff. To what extent the apparent lack of commitment to equal opportunities is translated into the quality of service delivery for the black community, will be explored in the fieldwork of this present study.

In this chapter an analysis of health visiting, social work, and nursery nurse training was given, with particular reference to their stances on race. A description of the usual content of training courses was given, and in the case of health visiting and nursery nursing, some textual analysis of their training manuals was presented. Further to this, the issue of recruitment to the above professions was addressed, and equal opportunities policies in social services departments considered; particular emphasis being placed upon the failure by many social services departments to adopt such policies, and the criticisms of section 11 funding expressed by many researchers in this field.
CHAPTER 5

Research Methodology

As will be explained in this chapter, it did not prove possible to gain permission to interview the Afro-Caribbean women, who would have been a major source of information, at an early enough stage to make this practicable. Nevertheless the theoretical underpinning of this is presented below, as a statement of intention.

Introduction and statement of the Problem

The issue of Afro-Caribbean children in local authority day nurseries is an important yet under-researched one. Local authority day care has over the years been a sensitive political issue of itself, since it represents ideological positions on the role of women. Although it has been argued by feminists and others that day care should be a universal right, the fact is that this form of preschool provision has, despite great increases in demand, remained constant in terms of places. Local authority day care has therefore become increasingly narrow in intake, and is now intended for those considered most deprived or deficient.

This being the case, that Afro-Caribbean children are so heavily overrepresented is a disturbing phenomenon which needs to be examined. Within the context, discussed elsewhere in this present study, of black overrepresentation in the "controlling" aspects of social services, we need to discover where local authority day care fits into this scenario. The simple fact of being Afro-Caribbean appears to be the major variable in determining which form of preschool provision a child is likely to use: whilst access to playgroups, nursery schools, private nurseries etc. is denied to many black people, and in such provision
they are underrepresented, local authority day care is by far the most common form of preschool provision used by Afro-Caribbeans (Cohen 1988). Race, then, would appear to be the major determinant of use of preschool child care provision.

The relationship between the providers of day care and the users of that service is therefore an important area of study, as is the related area of underrepresentation of black workers within nursery nursing and the social services generally. The prevailing occupational culture or underlying ideology and philosophies of the day nursery staff, examined in an earlier chapter, also need to be questioned in the fieldwork of this present study, as are potential points of conflict between the staff and the users of day care.

The issues go beyond the confines of the day nurseries, as has been described in another chapter of this present study. The gap in perception between the black users of day care and the white nursery workers and other associated professionals in the field relates to the totality of black women's experiences in white society; to socioeconomic oppression, educational disadvantage, negative experiences of health and welfare systems, and so on. Local authority day nurseries are a provision for the most disadvantaged. It is therefore necessary to define the precise nature and extent of this disadvantage in relation to the Afro-Caribbean users of day care, many of whom are likely to be women "heads of household" and sole family breadwinners (Bhat et al 1988).

In summary, the problem may be defined thus:

There is a well-documented overrepresentation of Afro-Caribbean children in local authority day care, and an equally marked underrepresentation in other forms of preschool provision; is this an explicable phenomenon?

Given this overrepresentation, and the underrepresentation of Afro-
Caribbean nursery workers, how and to what extent is service delivery affected? Are there gaps, as shown in other studies of welfare systems between the perceptions, aims and objectives of care-givers and those of the care-receivers?

Methodology

The fieldwork methodology has adopted various techniques which, it is hoped, are both complementary to the background research presented earlier in this present study, as well as to each other, and as such conform to the notion of "triangulation"; what Shipman (1976) describes as:

"...a blend of synthesis of methodologies and approaches."

Webb et al (1966) has argued that

"Every day gathering class-interviews, questionnaires, observations, performance records, physical evidence - is potentially biased and has specific to it certain validity threats. Ideally we should like to converge data from several different data classes, as well as converge with multiple variants within a single class."

What this suggests is a "common sense", less idealized form of research as exemplified by Douglas (1976) who suggested that the research process involved constant movement from broad goals, through ideal to practical research methods. Similarly Wilson (1979) argues that in exploratory research it is appropriate to use much less precise hypotheses which are "conceptual guides" rather than adopting an experimental approach.

Many researchers have recognized that the collection of information need not be dictated by a rigid plan from which no deviation is permitted (Strauss 1963; Denzin 1970; 1978; and Becker 1970, 1973) are good examples).

In the case of this present fieldwork, then, the interviews were to
have been carried out with mothers of Afro-Caribbean children using a research method designed to elicit the maximum useful information in as non-threatening a form as possible. This was the life-history approach adopted for example by Bertaux 1978; 1981. From the starting-point that the method should match the information required (Zelditch 1962), these extended interviews can potentially produce a considerable amount of valuable data, including attitudes and opinions, and perhaps most importantly allow a sense of "connectedness" between those aspects of their lives which the women are asked to comment upon: something very difficult to achieve via a questionnaire. Thus whilst these interviews would have been "guided" by the researcher, enough space would also have been given to allow for the individuality of the interviewee; her opinions, thoughts, and perceptions. It was intended that such an approach would have elicited very useful information from the point of view of the consumers of care, not just the referrers and providers.

In terms of questioning nursery staff and other professionals, more focussed research methods were employed, using questionnaires. This accords with the "focussed interview" approach defined for example by Merton and Kendall (1956) which, though delineated by set questions, also makes some allowance for the opinions, attitudes and feelings of the interviewees - for example by the inclusion of questions requiring extended answers. In this sense this research method is similar to the "semi-standardized" interview format (Hughes 1976) whereby interviews are based around a set format with opportunities for further discussion. For example, such interviews would include; "face-sheet variables"; basic information about the staff - background, age, qualifications, race, etc.; the worker's view of the task; underlying attitudes towards parents; and so on. Towards the end of the interview, however, there is the possibility of more open-ended discussion, which allows more room for extended opinions, for example "Is there
anything else you would like to say about Afro-Caribbean children?".

By the conjunction of these two types of methodology, it is possible to achieve the "configuration" defined above. For example by comparing the stated aims of day nursery staff with the observations and perceptions of the black users of local authority day care.

In addition to the above, it was also necessary to obtain hard statistical information. This took the form of obtaining from individual nurseries the numbers of children in each nursery, the ethnic composition of the children, by which agency each was referred, and for what reason the children were referred. As well as this, information about the ethnic composition of the nursery staff has been obtained, which will be combined with data from the interviews concerning age, experience, and qualifications in order to produce an accurate staff profile.

**Structure of the Research and Practical Limitations upon it**

Initially it was anticipated that the research would take place within three London boroughs; Westminster, Lewisham, and Hammersmith and Fulham. For a variety of reasons this had to be reduced to just one local authority, City of Westminster. Some explanation is therefore necessary.

Westminster and Hammersmith and Fulham were to be the two main areas in which the research would have taken place, with Lewisham providing the comparative study. These three local authority areas were chosen, partly because they have large ethnic minority populations, but also because of the contrasting attitudes towards recruitment of black workers, as highlighted by an initial survey of advertisements in a range of publications. After due consideration, the London Borough of Lewisham was withdrawn from the study because of time constraints, as compared with the possible value to the overall purpose of the study.
It was therefore envisaged that City of Westminster and Hammersmith and Fulham might provide sufficiently contrasting styles of social services to prove appropriate research settings. Also, both had relatively high proportions of Afro-Caribbean people living within their boundaries; clearly a prerequisite for any meaningful research.

In terms of sample size, three local authority day nurseries in each of the two boroughs were to be visited. Ten nursery officers from each of the two boroughs were to be interviewed. Each of the Officers in Charge, a total of six, were to be interviewed. Three area team leaders in each of the two boroughs were to be interviewed. Under-fives co-ordinators from both boroughs (one in each), and both assistant divisional directors (children and families) were to be interviewed, as were the two training officers. Race relations advisors and the three nurse managers from each of the two boroughs were to be interviewed, according to their particular health authority. Finally, it was intended to interview ten black women users of the day nurseries in each of the two boroughs (twenty in all).

Negotiations began with both of these boroughs for access, in November 1989. Firstly with the under 5s co-ordinator for Hammersmith and Fulham. There was an immediate obstacle, however. An industrial dispute was already under way in Hammersmith and Fulham which had resulted in the closure of six out of their eleven day nurseries. According to Nalgo, 90% of the nurseries were in fact inoperative, and so clearly any prospect of undertaking research was going to be highly problematical.

The under 5s co-ordinator was thus very concerned that she was unable to envisage an end to the dispute before January 1990, and even this was an optimistic estimate. It was a vociferous campaign, and whilst ruled out of this study, it did serve to highlight some of the
problems within nursery nursing, principally that of low pay. It also raised important issues of relevance to black workers, which are worth mentioning here as an "important aside". Low pay was clearly a factor in the dispute. Of considerable concern however was that in return for in-service sponsorship of their NNEB qualification, trainees had to agree to a four year commitment to work for the Borough - excessive by the standards for example of social work training sponsorship requirements. If leaving before this four-year requirement, nursery officers would surrender their qualification. The union felt, with apparent justification, that young black trainees would suffer disproportionately since firstly, because of their relatively poor socioeconomic position, they would be attracted to sponsored training courses which paid somewhat more than a grant. Also, the entrance requirements are less stringent, which again would attract black applicants. In any event, there was intransigence on the part of the local authority, and thus little optimism about a speedy solution.

By contrast, the position in Westminster seemed much more hopeful, and the department was very co-operative, following approaches to the principal day care co-ordinator. By February 1990 the Hammersmith and Fulham dispute had still not been settled and therefore, with regret, it was decided to concentrate upon Westminster social services, which seemed to offer the best opportunity for undertaking this research.

The revised structure, then, was as follows:

Three nurseries were chosen by the principal day care co-ordinator, from the north, central and south areas of the borough. These are called Paddington, Marylebone, and Victoria respectively. From these nurseries it was decided to interview a sample of twenty nursery officers, and each of the three officers-in-charge. It was further agreed that at a later date, interviews with twenty Afro-Caribbean mothers of day nursery children, dispersed amongst the three day
nurseries, would be undertaken. The age of the women, it was decided, would be between the range 16 - 25, since this is by far the most typical age group of mothers of day nursery users.

In addition to the above, further arrangements were made to interview the following in the Westminster area: Three Assistant Divisional Directors (children and families), three social work Team Leaders, training Officer (social services), Senior social worker, Marlborough Family Centre and Police Child Protection Team.

As well as the above availability within social services, access was arranged to the three health visitor Nurse Managers representing the three health authorities within which the three sample day nurseries were situated: Paddington (north), Marylebone (central), and Victoria (south). As an additional resource, an interview was arranged with a representative of the Commission for Racial Equality who was based in the City of Westminster. This was arranged due to the fact that the local authority does not have a community relations advisor.

All of the above intended sets of interviews were achieved, with the initial considerable exception of the black women users, access to whom was initially, and at a very late stage in the proceedings, delayed by the social services department. The circumstances surrounding this were as follows.

The fieldwork with the local authority and the health authority officers was virtually complete, and the time was approaching to interview the black women users of local authority day nurseries. Simultaneously, after a considerable period of unsuccessful attempts to do so, the assistant director of social services was finally contacted, with a view simply to obtain more information. It transpired however that, despite the considerable co-operation of the principal day care co-ordinator, the assistant director actually knew nothing of the
research, even though I had gone to his office just two days before to obtain information on centralization of services! An appointment was made to meet, and we met to discuss the issue, his having already agreed to be interviewed on tape because of my disability. Before the interview even began, however, the assistant director said he could not be interviewed at that time and referred me to another assistant director. Regrettably, this person wished me to resubmit the proposal (the original of which had been submitted a long time previously). She said that she would present the proposal to the senior management team, and made the point that interviewing parents was a sensitive area which required "clearance by her department". I telephoned the Department on countless occasions to try to obtain some clarity about whether or not permission would be granted to interview the women. After a letter in April from me, it was not until June and I even received an acknowledgement from the Policy and Resources Department. Even at this very late stage, there was no indication whether or not permission would be granted, and clearly the research was incomplete and the whole was likely to suffer. Finally, after I was resigned to not having an essential component of the study, in September I was informed that as the research had gone so far I would be allowed access to users of the day nursery service for the purposes of interviewing. This was in the form of a letter from the assistant director (children and families), in which it was stated that such research "would not normally be allowed", but that "given the circumstances' they felt it was only fair that it be allowed to proceed (see Appendix). I then wrote to the Assistant Divisional Director to finalize details and made several attempts to contact him by telephone, but without success. Why there was no response on the local level I do not know, and can only speculate that there was a certain lack of enthusiasm or an ambivalence towards this part of the research. In any event it was not until
February 1991 that the go ahead was given in a practical sense, and by that time it was far too late to begin to set up and carry out interviews with a meaningfully large enough sample of Afro-Caribbean women.

It is therefore acknowledged that this creates a serious gap in the research, and the conclusions will take this into account.
CHAPTER 6

The referring agents:

Health Visitors, Area Team Leaders, Assistant Directors of
Children and Families, and other agencies

Health Visitors

As can be seen from Chapter above, health visitors and social workers are the main agents of referral to the three day nurseries. Even where families are classed as "self-referrals", both the social services and the health visitors have a role in the process at some stage. For example, there is an admissions panel for each of the social services areas in which the day nurseries are situated and these have the right to admit or not to admit a particular child. On each panel there would be the team leader, the nursery manager, a social worker and a health visitor. Reports are produced by the referrer, or where there is self-referral, by an assigned social worker, usually the duty social worker to whom applications must initially be made.

Because the pivotal role of social workers and health visitors in the processes of both referral and, as importantly, of admission, it was an objective of this study to question representatives of those services about their general role, and their role in relation to local authority day nurseries with particular reference to the referral of Afro-Caribbean children.

The health visitor plays an important part in the referral process, and indeed is often the first point of professional contact for the parent of a pre-school child. As the consultant paediatrician for the Parkside Health Authority stated:

"The major health input to day nurseries is via the Health Visitor."

Parkside Health Authority (1990)
In spite of their pre-eminence, it was not possible to interview any of the health visitors themselves; access was only permitted to their managers. The issue is further complicated in terms of any meaningful analysis by the entirely different regional structure of the health authorities as compared with social services. In this case, whilst the nurseries operate within a single social services department, (of the City of Westminster), as do the social workers, the three nurseries operate within two different regional health authorities, who are the employers of the three nurse managers interviewed. Because of the different characteristics of these two health authorities it is intended to analyse the interviews to offer some background information on both so that a more complete analysis might be presented.

The health authorities in question are Parkside and Riverside. Prior to reorganisation in September 1990 a third, Bloomsbury, had responsibility for one of the nurseries. However, the position now is that two day nurseries in the sample, which will be called "Paddington" and "Marylebone", are situated within the Parkside regional health authority, whilst the third, "Victoria" operates in the Riverside health authority. These three are situated in social services areas North-West, North-East, and South respectively.

The characteristics of the two health authorities are as follows:

**Parkside**

Parkside Health Authority covers around 21 square miles of inner and north-west London, the north part of the City of Westminster, the northern part of Kensington and Chelsea, and the whole of the London Borough of Brent. It contains within its boundaries extremes of wealth and poverty and, as the authority's Profile (Parkside Health Authority 1990a) states:
"Overall, in comparison with other health districts, Parkside displays one of the most underprivileged profiles in the country, including the full range of characteristics associated with an inner city area – a high level of social deprivation, high unemployment, and poor housing."

The district also contains a higher proportion of families from an ethnic minority background than anywhere else in the UK, more than a third of the population having been born outside of the UK. In spite of this, the authority has no policy on race, and no particular strategy for the recruitment of ethnic minorities. Health visitors are based within the 27 clinics and health centres across the district. In the case of the health visitors associated with the Paddington day nursery, they are based at the Harrow Road Clinic, where they are (in common with health visitors in other health authorities) directly responsible to a nurse manager (who are the subject of these interviews). In the case of the Marylebone day nursery, the health visitors are based at the Upper Montagu Street clinic.

Riverside

There are about 283,400 people living within the boundaries of the Riverside Health Authority. However, the population itself is very mobile; in some electoral wards 50% of households move every year, and this, according to the authority:

"..can contribute to a lack of community cohesion and extended family support."
   Riverside Health Authority (1990)

The proportion of children in Riverside, with 5.5% of the population under five years old, is well below the regional and national average, however. Although encompassing some of the most affluent areas of the country, by any measures used many districts of Riverside score highly in degree of deprivation. For example, the Department of the Environment calculates an index of deprivation based on a weighted sum
of the percentage of elderly people living alone, one parent families, unemployment, poor housing, overcrowding and people from ethnic minorities. By this measure, Riverside districts score anything between -10.98 (low level of deprivation) to +20.11 (high level of deprivation). Using the Townsend index, on a score from 0-12, Riverside encompasses the full range of scores. The specific area of the "Victoria" day nursery in which part of this present research took place, receives a score on the Townsend scale of 6-8. Using another measure, the Jarman index, Riverside ranks second only to Parkside in the North-West Thames Regional Health Authority area in terms of deprivation (Riverside Health Authority 1990 op cit).

In terms of single parent families, Riverside as a whole is around the national average (c4%), and the Victoria day nursery area is a little below this figure.

Ethnic minorities form a sizeable proportion of the Riverside Health Authority population, although recent statistics are difficult to obtain due to the mobility of the population and the arrival of new ethnic groups into the area. The 1981 census found that 14% heads of household in Riverside came from the Caribbean, Europe (not UK) and Eire; 11.5% came from the New Commonwealth and Pakistan (Riverside 1990a). There are no figures based on individual districts or areas, however.

Perhaps the one outstanding characteristic of the Riverside Health Authority's health statistics is the extremely high abortion rate; at 30.4 it is two and a half times the national average, and almost twice that for the North-West Thames region generally. Approximately half the conceptions in the health authority area are aborted (Riverside 1990a op cit). No reasons have as yet been suggested for this phenomenon.

The organisation of community health services within the Riverside Health Authority has been reorganized, and the various services -
district nursing, health visiting, school nursing, health centres and clinics - are now managed locally. This is particularly relevant to the day nurseries, because Riverside's community health services are now (since April 1990) divided into four "localities" which match those of the social services. Thus that part of Westminster which falls within the boundaries of the health authority is now a self-contained community health area, with its own management structure responsible for the primary services above. This structure consists of a locality manager who is responsible for one of the four areas, a senior nurse manager who is responsible for all nursing disciplines, and nurse managers, one of whom is responsible for health visiting (Riverside Health Authority 1990b).

The Victoria day nursery is situated within the same building as the health centre where health visitors are based.

Because their reorganisation was taking place around the same time as the interviews were taking place with the nurse managers, the full effects of it cannot be gauged. Nevertheless, in terms of structure, there can be identified significant differences between the two health authorities, the implications of which may become more apparent in the future in relation to day nurseries.

**Analysis of Questionnaires: Nurse Managers (Health Visitors)**

As with the other interviewees in this section, interviews were carried out by means of a questionnaire and were tape recorded. The questionnaire is in Appendix along with a verbatim transcript of the interviews. The two Parkside interviews were held in the clinic/health centre, and the Riverside interview was carried out in the nurse manager's office at a site separate from the health centre.

Because this analysis is based upon a small group of respondents, it will take the form of presenting groups of issues arising from the
interviews which seem most relevant to the purpose of this research. The replies to the questionnaires appear in full in the record of the transcripts, and it is thus hoped that the following represents the main relevant points to emerge from these.

**Interviewees:**

- Nurse Manager Parkside (Paddington Nursery)
- Nurse Manager Parkside (Marylebone Nursery)
- Nurse Manager Riverside (Victoria Nursery)

**Career Choice/Background Training**

The reasons given for entering health visiting were so various that no particular common themes emerged, and indeed some answers were contradictory: for example whereas one nurse manager said it was a "straightforward promotion", another said it was a "sideways move". Interestingly, these two respondents work for the same authority!

In terms of satisfaction with training, there were again varying answers although the Riverside employee was the only one to be unequivocally positive about her training, which she suggested was due to the particular quality of training in the Riverside health authority, which included regular updating of practice and policy. On the other hand, and most relevant to this present research, none of the three had received any significant training on race and racism in their basic training, and only one of the three thought this a serious omission.

**General questions**

These questions were principally concerned how they perceived the role of the health visitor, their own roles, and the quality of service their department provides. Perhaps the most significant issues to emerge concerned their views on the quality of service and of the
training of health visitors. None of the respondents were convinced that they were providing a good quality service. They cited mostly the continual reorganization which appeared to be going on in their authorities, and the confusion this has created in terms of role and responsibility. This concern is borne out by the facts of recent large-scale reorganization in both Parkside and Riverside, in both cases two significant reorganizations in a few years have taken place. It did emerge that Parkside tends to be more bureaucratic than Riverside, however, in terms of the paperwork involved in its procedures.

The interviewees also saw staff shortages as a great problem, which led to a lack of time and resources to put good ideas into practice.

Similarly, there was uniform dissatisfaction with the basic health visitor training, which all the managers regarded as being rather superficial, "unrealistic", and so on.

Day Care

In terms of contact with the day nurseries, all interviewees noted that health visitor contact was substantial and formalized. In the case of the two Parkside day nurseries this was in the form of an allocated "link worker", whilst the Riverside nurse manager said that she visited the nurseries personally and attended reviews.

The question of whether staff were adequately equipped to assess children for local authority day care was answered negatively by two of the nurse managers, which, given the high referral rate by health visitors, was surprising, as was the question of criteria for referral, which two nurse managers did not appear to know. It might have been expected that all would have been aware of the six criteria as a matter of course, especially in view of the finding that health visitor contact with the day nurseries was close and formalized. One manager even said that it was "not the job" of the health visitor to assess children.
for the day nursery, that it was the social worker's. This was in the Riverside area though, which according to the data obtained on referrals has very few children referred by the health visitor alone, by far the highest proportion having been referred jointly by the health visitor and the social services.

The three nurse managers had a generally favourable impression of day nurseries, and had no criticisms to offer of the system.

Race Issues

This group of questions provoked some surprising responses. Perhaps outstanding amongst these came from the nurse manager from the Paddington day nursery area, who when asked whether health visitors tended to refer more Afro-Caribbean children than white to the day nurseries gave a firm, negative reply. This is despite the fact that the Paddington nursery is 90% Afro-Caribbean. It was an even more surprising response because almost half of the referrals to this day nursery were referred by the health visitors. It is equally ironic that the only one of the three respondents to agree that more Afro-Caribbeans were referred to day nurseries came from Riverside, where the Victoria day nursery has the fewest number of Afro-Caribbeans.

In spite of the over-representation of Afro-Caribbean children in all three nurseries, then, there was a surprising lack of acknowledge­ment of this by the nurse managers in the two areas where this over­representation is highest. Only one of the nurse managers had any Afro-Caribbean health visitors in her team (two out of eight). Two out of the three nurse managers thought ethnic background was irrelevant to day care referral. The one who thought it relevant, did so on the grounds of language development. None of the respondents was aware of a clear policy on race, but all referred to the "equal opportunities" policy of their authorities in a generalized way.
Before going on to present the findings in relation to the social services team leaders and assistant divisional directors, a description of the structure of social services seems useful here, particularly in view of the reorganization of those services that has taken place over the past two years. This will hopefully place these findings in a more meaningful context, and help clarify the position of the day nurseries within the larger organization.

Reorganization of Social Services in the City of Westminster

A profile of the City of Westminster and a description of how the social services day nurseries are organized appears in Chapter . Here will be presented some details about the recent reorganization of social services in Westminster, with particular reference to children and families. The diagrams show how the management of Westminster Social Services Department is structured. (See FIGURE 1 overleaf).

In 1988 recommendations were made to reshape the structure of social services in Westminster. This arose from the recognition of the tensions that existed before that time between district and centrally based services. With the proposals of the Griffiths report on care in the Community and the Cleveland child abuse cases very much in the minds of social services planners, more effective systems were considered to be necessary to ensure the most effective deployment of resources and the capacity to respond quickly to local needs on a district basis. Westminster therefore produced an organization of devolved specialist services on a more local level. Whereas previously such services were based centrally at City Hall, under the direction of Principal Officers, since 1989 both the groupings of the services were changed as well as their geographical dispersal. Thus the main proposal of the reorganization was to integrate district and centrally based services into three operational sectors: Children and Family Services,
Fig. 1  PROPOSED NEW SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

DIRECTOR

AD Information and Evaluation
  ADD Central Services
    ADD Admin
    ADD Personnel
    ADD Finance

Computer Development Unit
  ADD Elderly North West
  ADD Elderly North East
  ADD Elderly South

ADD Disability & Health
  ADD Mental Health
  ADD Mental Handicap

ADD Disability & Health

ADD Children & Families
  ADD Ch&F West
  ADD Ch&F North West
  ADD Ch&F North East
  ADD Ch&F South
  ADD Ch&F Resident Care

Principal Office Manager
Principal Office Manager

Principal Research Officer
Management Information Team
Senior Management Secretariat
Principal Child Protection Co-ordinator

July 1988
Elderly Services, and Disability and Health Services. Each sector is meant to provide a comprehensive range of community social work, residential, day and domiciliary care services.

With particular reference to Children and Families, the reorganization had implications for day nurseries, which became part of the Children and Families sector. Prior to 1989, services for children had been the responsibility of the Assistant Director (Children's Services) and four Assistant Divisional Directors (ADDs) who were each responsible for different aspects of child welfare; children's special services, adoption and fostering, day care, and residential care. Following reorganization a service encompassing children and families was created, still under the overall direction of an assistant director but with four ADDs located in different geographical areas of Westminster; the West (Bayswater), North-West (Paddington), North-East (Marylebone) and South (Victoria). There is also one ADD who has responsibility for residential care. In this research the three ADDs situated in the areas where the three nurseries are located were interviewed i.e. North-West, North-East, and South.

Under this new system, then, the day nurseries were brought into a more integrated structure and became, along with the specialist social work teams, the direct line management responsibility of their local ADD. Day nursery managers became in effect part of the area teams and had more say in decision-making and so on. According to the nursery managers this was a considerable improvement on the previous situation in which they had felt very much "out on a limb" and devoid of any easily available supervision and support.

The aims of the Children and Families division reflect the desire to shape a service which is both accessible and integrated, and amongst those stated are:
"to support families so that they can stay together in the community by providing flexible packages of services in partnership with parents and children.

to develop services so that they are useful and relevant to the local community and help to prevent family disruption.

to work in partnership as a division and to break down the traditional demarcation between field, residential, and day care workers where such demarcations are not relevant or useful.

to develop further the professional practice of all our individual staff and the division as a whole."

(Westminster Social Services 1989)

If fully realized and implemented, the above would have great implications for workers in the day nurseries, particularly in terms of their integration into social services in a more concrete and meaningful way, and the consequent enhanced professional status this should bring about; for example by the expansion of the role of the nursery officer to visit families in the community. It remains to be seen how this will turn out in practice. At the time this research was carried out, it was perhaps too early to see the fruits of this.

Analysis: Team Leaders

As with the above interviews, these were carried out using a questionnaire and were tape-recorded. Full verbatim transcripts appear in Appendix J. This analysis will present the responses question-by-question, and conclusions will be offered at the end of each group of questions.

Q (i) Changes in Admission Criteria

None of the three team leaders had been in their posts for as long as five years, and so the question of whether the criteria had narrowed in that time scale could not be answered. The team leader longest in the area had been there for just two and a half years, whilst the shortest...
time in post was less than one month. This is a familiar pattern in Westminster amongst field workers.

One team leader, who had been longest in Westminster of the three, said she had not detected a narrowing of criteria during that period. The team leader who had been there second longest, and who was the Chair of the Admissions panel, said he did not think there had been a narrowing of referral criteria. The team leader who had been in post for less than one month was non-committal.

Q (ii) Child Protection Register
It was emphasized by all of the interviewees that top priority for a place at day nursery was for a child to be on the Child Protection register. It was interesting to note that just one of the team leaders said positively that she thought procedures had been tightened up and clarified in the area of child protection, and went on to give a detailed account of procedures; for example the joint training between police and social services. Neither of the other two team leaders mentioned this.

Q (iii) Source of Referral
All of the interviewees said that they thought it was the initial self-referral of the parent which constituted the main source of referral. Health visitors and social workers were the only two agencies mentioned as likely to be part of the referral process, and this may be at any stage in the process, e.g. a health visitor may give the initial advice to the parent, who then refers herself to the admission panel.

Q (iv) Changes in Referral
Two of the three said they did not know whether the referring agents had changed over the years. This included the longest-serving worker. One said that he did not think the referring agents had changed at all,
although he did say that assessment (once an application had been made) would now be transferred from the social workers to the day nursery managers.

Q (v) Other Professionals

All three mentioned speech therapists as having the greatest input into day nurseries of the outside professionals. Only one, the team leader newest to the area, mentioned the community psychologist. The team leader in the area of the Marlborough Centre did not make much of its involvement in the day nurseries, and this is at odds with the view of the social worker from this centre, interviewed later in this chapter, who emphasized the close ties they have with the day nurseries.

Conclusions

All of the replies should be placed within the context of the relative inexperience in their posts of all of the respondents. Nevertheless, there are some significant findings from this set of interviews.

1) Only one of the team leaders thought that procedures for children in the light of the recent heightened awareness of the issue, had been changed to take account of this. That this one team leader knew and could specify, whereas the others could not, is somewhat surprising, even allowing for the different length of service. It might have been supposed that the importance of this issue would have resulted in more knowledge of the procedures and the specific changes which have in fact been made in Westminster.

2) The belief that the main source of referral was self-referral is not borne out by the statistics from the nurseries. However, the term "self-referral" is somewhat ambiguous because of the involvement of social workers at some stage of the proceedings in many areas; for example in the Victoria day nursery area there are officially no self-
referrals, and in Marylebone there are just three. This does not appear to accord with the impression of the team leaders, but it could mean that parents initially refer themselves to social services who then go on to make the official referral.

3) As mentioned above, the involvement of the Marlborough Family Centre in the day nurseries was played down by the team leader in whose area the centre is situated, even though such involvement is now significant and, as another interview below makes clear, expanding.

4) In the questionnare there was a final, open question where the respondents were invited to say anything they wished. Although the nature of the research was very clearly defined for them before the interviews took place, not one of the interviewees raised the issue of race.

Analysis: Assistant Divisional Directors Children and Families (3)

As with the other interviews, the following were carried out using a questionnaire and tape recorder. There are verbatim transcripts in appendix III. Here the analysis shall present the responses question-by-question as they appear on the questionnaire (appendix III) and conclusions will appear at the end of each group of questions.

General:

Q (i) Whilst there are differences of emphasis in response to this question, each of the three Assistant Divisional Directors confirmed that there is no policy on race "per se" in Westminster. There were discrepancies between the three, however. One said that there is a one-line statement on equal opportunities, whereas another said he thought it was about a page and a half. The third referred to the policy of the Children and Families division, from which one paragraph was quoted. In general, though, it was confirmed that Westminster does
not have a policy on race.

Q (ii) Only one of the three knew the criteria for admission into day care, although the others were able to give a general idea of what those criteria were.

Q (iii) All knew that the children "at risk" category was given highest priority.

Q (iv) All said that alternatives were offered to the applicants for day nurseries, although only one gave specific named examples of voluntary agencies and playgroups for which he was responsible. Childminding, playgroups and nursery schools were the usual alternatives.

Q (v) Each of the ADDs said there was a waiting list for day nurseries in their particular areas which ranged between twenty and forty.

(b) One said he did not know what parents did while waiting for a place. Two thought, but could not be certain, that parents might use their own family networks or else used childminders and playgroups. Only one of the three mentioned specific actions which might be taken to try to meet the needs of those parents in the meantime - such as Family Care Workers - who would go into the home to help the parents.

Conclusions

In general there was a uniformity of response to the questions in this section. There did however appear to be a surprising level of ignorance about important issues to do with day care. For example, only one of the three knew what the criteria were for admission, whereas it might have been expected that all would have known this. There was a similar vagueness about equal opportunities, and each gave different answers to the question posed. There were also differences, and an
uncertainty of response, about what parents waiting for their child to be admitted into day nurseries might do in the meantime.

Race Issues

Q (i) Two of the three said no, they could not give any figures because the council had no policy on ethnic monitoring. One ADD did give his estimate in one of the nurseries in his area (four or five, he thought). When pressed, another ADD said he thought between a third and a half of children in some of the day nurseries, if not more, were from ethnic minorities (Paddington).

Q (ii) One thought that Afro-Caribbean children were over-represented in the day nurseries in his area (Paddington); one thought under-represented (Marylebone); and one thought it was statistically insignificant (Victoria). Because none of the ADDs had any precise knowledge of the statistics, they were in no position to make accurate judgements.

Q (iii) The department does not have any policy on race, and so this question was somewhat redundant. However, one said that in his area they were starting anti-racist training for all staff. Another said race was an issue that they were "hoping to address" but had not yet done so. The third mentioned trying to reflect the cultures of children within the day nurseries by play materials etc.

Q (iv) Two of the interviewees said that there was no formal policy to consider Afro-Caribbean children as having special needs. The third gave his own opinion as to what those needs might be: positive images of black people in the nursery, special hair and skin care, etc.

Q (v) Two of the three thought there would be no difference. One thought quite positively that it would be more likely to be that of
"single parent working" (ADD Paddington).

Q (vi) In one area, such race awareness training had begun (instigated by one of the three interviewees). All stressed that it was left to local initiative rather than departmental policy.

Q (vii) No one could say accurately how many Afro-Caribbean workers worked in the day nurseries in their areas. None of the three was able to give any breakdown of occupation of the Afro-Caribbean workers in the day nurseries.

Q (viii) Only two of the three were asked this question (an error). One defended the nurseries and felt they were doing all that they could do to achieve good relationships with black users. They other felt that whilst efforts were being made, there was still a long way to go.

Q (ix) Two of the three thought not much positive use was being made of S.11 funding, and none was spent within the day care system anyway. One said that some posts, not in day nurseries, were funded by S.11 to employ Chinese and Bangladeshi social workers.

Q (xi) One felt that Westminster services were not particularly geared to the needs of his area, which has a high proportion of Afro-Caribbean people (Paddington). Another felt the over-representation issue was more worrying in relation to juvenile justice. The other said he had strong views in relation to adoption and fostering, but could add nothing to his stated opinions regarding the day nurseries.

Conclusions

The most significant and relevant points to emerge from the responses to this question were:

a) The lack of basic knowledge about the proportion of Afro-Caribbean children in their areas is surprising. Even thought it is not
Westminster's policy to monitor admissions, the finding that only one of the three ADDs considered that Afro-Caribbean children were over-represented in the day nurseries, whereas it is clear from this present study that they are over-represented in all three, is significant. It is also interesting to note that, whilst the respondent who thought that Afro-Caribbean children were over-represented in the day nurseries in his areas was correct in this impression, he considerably underestimated the true proportion of Afro-Caribbean children (which is around 90%). Of equal significance is that the respondent from the day nursery area which has the second highest proportion of Afro-Caribbean children (around 30%), felt that they were under-represented. Thus it was found here that it was not just a lack of statistical knowledge on the part of the three ADDs, which might be explained by the policy of no ethnic monitoring, but a clear false impression of the true position of the proportion of Afro-Caribbean children in day care in Westminster.

b) It was confirmed by the interviewees that, not only did the council not have any policy on race, but that it was not the policy of the department to consider Afro-Caribbeans as having special needs.

c) Only one of the interviewees stated what seems from the findings of this present research to be the case, which is that Afro-Caribbean admissions are more likely to be for single parents who work.

d) Again, it was surprising to find that none of the interviewees could give any idea about the numbers of Afro-Caribbean workers in the day nurseries. This seems indicative of the gaps in the knowledge of both day care and staff who work in the day nurseries by this group of senior managers. Whether or not this confirms the low position of day nurseries in the "hierarchy of needs" is open to question, although it may fairly be considered an indicator.
Connected with this lack of general knowledge or apparent concern about Afro-Caribbeans in day care, is the finding that when given the opportunity in an open question to say what they thought about race and day care, two of the three ADDs did not perceive any difficulty and were more concerned with adoption and fostering, and juvenile justice. Again this might confirm the lack of status afforded day nurseries, and to some extent justifies the concerns of the day nursery staff that they do not feel valued.

Staff
Q (i) All placed the average age of nursery workers at early twenties.

Q (ii) One ADD said that there was one male manager of a day nursery in his area, and some male domestic workers. Another knew of a male nursery worker, one chef, and a male domestic worker. The third knew of no male nursery workers in his area.

Q (iii) One did not know, since he was only recently in post. One said 75% in the previous year in his area. The third said it varied 25-30% in one nursery, to 50% in another.

Q (iv) One thought, impressionistically, that it is quite high, whilst the other two did not regard it as a particular problem and was not that high in their areas.

Q (v) There was no specific system for recruiting black people, although individual areas tried to encourage black applicants. One ADD was not asked this question (an error). Again though, there was no overall policy and local initiatives were the only likely encouragement.

Q (vi) One felt that it was not enough, another that it was all right as far as it went, another that "as a starter it is OK". All felt strongly however that post-qualification training was very important,
and one had been working on this in his own area.

Q (vii) Two of the three were not convinced that relationships between staff and parents were as good as they should be. One thought they were "generally good". One felt this area "can be quite problematic".

Q (viii) Two just said "no" to this question. One (Victoria) said that nurseries do try to encourage more parental involvement but that they are constrained (for example by having to care for both parent and child).

Q (ix) Two of the three (the ones who said "no" above) again replied in the negative to this question. The third was more circumspect, mentioning various groups that had been operating at the nurseries for parents and staff.

Q (x) There was a unanimous "no" to this question.

Conclusions
1) Some findings confirmed those of other studies;
   a) The relative youth of nursery staff
   b) The rarity of male workers in any capacity within nurseries
   c) The high rate of staff turnover.
2) In the area of absenteeism, however, unlike other research in this field (e.g. Van der Eyken 1984 op cit) this was not said by two of the three ADDs to be a problem, although it has to be said there was no statistical evidence to confirm this.
3) Specific to Westminster, several important conclusions may be reached from this part of the interview;
   a) There was no system for recruiting more black workers
   b) There was a feeling by two of the three ADDs that relationships between nurseries and the parents could be improved, and that the
situation was now problematic.

c) It was said by all three that parents had no input in shaping policy, and by two of the three that there was not even any formal structure for staff and parents to meet. Most significantly, this is in direct contradiction of the various policy documents of Westminster Social services, which stress parental involvement.

d) There was an implied criticism of nursery nurse basic training by all of the ADDs, although again there was a lack of specificity, merely that there should be more post-qualification training.

**Area Team**

Q (i) All three had not been in post long enough to answer the question, and two did not hazard any guess. One however did say that from what he had been told, there were more children now on the child protection register, and also that day nurseries had become much more of a "welfare" service than five or ten years ago, with more "problem children", "disturbed children", and so on.

Q (ii) One said clearly that Westminster nurseries had not yet adapted practices in this respect. Two could not positively say that the policies and practices had been adapted to meet the higher profile of child abuse, but still said that it was an important issue always uppermost in their minds.

Q (iii) One was asked no further questions, because he was relatively new in post and would not be in a position to answer them (Victoria). The other two thought health visitors were the primary referrers.

Q (iv) Neither thought it would have changed, and one definitely said "no", it had always been the health visitors.
Q (v) One said that it would be primarily health service professionals dealing with particular developmental problems and did not think this had changed over time. By contrast, the other said that the use of the Marlborough Centre had probably changed the situation, and much more work with parents groups and staff groups was being done. Also, psychologists and social workers from that unit had been involved with day nurseries (Marylebone).

Conclusions

Because of the fact that one of the ADDs was so new to the post that he was unable to answer most of the questions in this particular section, it is difficult to reach any firm conclusions. Nevertheless, certain points stand out:

a) The belief by one of the interviewees that, over the years, nurseries have taken on more of a "welfare" role and contain more children with behavioural problems, is confirmed by other studies in this field. Thus must however be qualified by the fact that none of the ADDs appeared to have enough statistical information on this and many other topics, and so their opinion was based upon impression and hearsay. It is also the case, certainly in Paddington, that the impression of an increased influx of children on the "at risk" register is not borne out by the facts; in fact the reverse is true.

b) The belief that health visitors are the main source of referral is again not borne out by the facts revealed by this present research; there are considerable district variations which were not mentioned by any of the three ADDs, and health visitors in fact score quite low (as a single referred) in both Victoria and Marylebone day nurseries, although it is true that in Paddington they refer almost half of the children and as joint referrers with social workers refer a similar proportion to the Victoria nursery. It was quite surprising however
that this variation in patterns of referral were not highlighted by the respondents, who, after all, have direct responsibility for the day nurseries in their areas.

c) The statement of the increasing role of the Marlborough centre, which is essentially a centre for therapeutic intervention with children and families, is a significant one which confirms other research suggesting that day nurseries are places of therapeutic intervention rather than simply of child care. It is also the case that, whilst the ADD for the Marlborough centre area was clear as to its significance in relation to the day nurseries, the Team Leader in the same area played down any such significance (see above).

Other agencies

Three interviews were also undertaken with representatives of other agencies. Whilst not strictly agencies of referral, two of the three do have a formal and close connection with the day nurseries and one, the Commission for Racial Equality, clearly has relevance to the issue of race and day care. No questionnaires were employed in these interviews, and the following is an attempt to present the most relevant points arising from the interviews.

Analysis of interviews with representatives of related services

Training Officer: Westminster Social Services Department

This interview was carried out with a questionnaire (see Appendix III) the responses to which appear verbatim in the transcript (Appendix IV). The interview was recorded on tape. The following is a resume of those responses.

1. The training officer described the type of courses that are run by his department, which consisted largely of developmental needs of children, and issues such as separation and loss. Each nursery is allocated four days per year for in-service training, and the depart-
ment pays for agency cover during this time. He says he has a good
relationship with the nursery managers, and that they are therefore
quite willing to release the nursery officers for the courses.
2. He said he did not know what an overtly anti-racist stance meant.
However, he did go on to say that the needs of black children were
"taken into account" in training, and mentioned issues like Identity.
The Training Officer did consider the various positions on race taken
by individual nurseries as being very haphazard due to the lack of any
council policy on the issue.
3. He answered that he thought the section was well thought of within
the department and was well integrated within it.
4. He described the development of training advisory groups within the
new divisions of the social services department, and how this enables
the Training section to keep in touch with what is happening on the
ground.
5. He said that staff fill in evaluation forms on their training
experiences and do so honestly. Their views are taken into account.
6. He confirmed there is no overall commitment to race awareness
training in Westminster, but cited the example of Area 1 where such
training, due to the influence of a new ADD who is black, was beginning
to take shape. He did not know how such training could be evaluated.
(A question was asked about how his section dealt with crisis
situations in nurseries). He suggested that work was and would be done
in sensitizing nursery workers to the impact which working with the
children has upon them, in order to promote understanding about the
various processes.
(A hypothetical case was put to him concerning a possible conflict
between a black and a white worker) He said he had not experienced a
case like this and would not be sure how to deal with it. He then went
on to say how noticeable it was that there were so few black staff. Then he stated how poor the pay and conditions for nursery staff at Westminster were as compared with other boroughs such as Camden. Recruitment, he said, had been a problem.

7. This was a general, open question, in which the training officer said several important things in terms of this research:

a) He felt that nursery workers have a very poor professional self-image, and have low status. He feels they have the least skills, the least resources, and the least training of anyone in the department.

b) He said "I don't think there are any completely normal children in day nurseries. They are all from odd backgrounds to say the least. Even if the mother is a single parent and she has got no obvious psychopathology herself, it means that she's having to cope with possibly a number of children on her own, which is stressful and would make demands on anybody". This direct quote represents a longer exposition about the training officer's opinions of children in day nurseries.

c) He finally makes it very clear that most people, including those in social services management and fieldwork "do not have a clue" about the work of the day nursery.

Conclusions

Perhaps the most significant points emerging from this interview with someone in perhaps the unique position of having had contacts within the social services management structure as well as directly with nursery officers and managers, are as follows:

i) The perception he holds from his experience of the very lowly status, poor training, resources, pay and conditions of nursery workers.

ii) The belief he holds from working closely with a wide variety of people in the department, that many within management and fieldwork
have no idea of the task of the day nursery worker. This is most interesting as it coincides with the beliefs held by nursery officers themselves concerning how the public at large see them, but because it includes those working within the same department, it is an even more pessimistic view.

iii) Of particular relevance to the Afro-Caribbean population in day nurseries, he appears convinced that even those children who are there because their parents are single working mothers, are in his view abnormal and from "odd backgrounds". If his view is shared by his department generally, then it has implications particularly for Afro-Caribbean children who, as this research has tended to demonstrate, are largely referred because of the needs of working mothers rather than any "abnormality" in them or their family.

Analysis of interview with a social worker at the Marlborough Family Resources Centre

This interview was not with a questionnaire and was therefore more free-flowing than tightly structured. Some precise questions were asked, and these will be annotated here. There are difficulties in presenting an analysis of this type of interview, although the full transcript appears in Appendix V). The following are the relevant points of the interview.

i) The centre provides an essentially clinical-psychotherapeutic resource for families. Within this broad role, which includes outreach work with individual families, work within the nurseries is common and increasing. He said that there was a group at Parkside nursery for the staff, run by two child psychotherapists from the centre, and that a parent's groups was taking place at Bloomsbury, led by workers from the centre.
ii) To the question of the connection with Middlesex Hospital, came the reply that they were under Bloomsbury Health Authority, and that they came under the department of Child and Family Psychiatry, where there was also a unit which came under that department. He said that his centre was staffed by a variety of disciplines - nurses, psychiatrists, psychotherapists, psychologists, and social workers like himself who were placed there by Westminster.

The question asked about how many Westminster social workers were covering the centre, the answer was somewhat confusing. It seems that there are two full-time social workers actually at the centre, with a variety of others who have some connection with it.

He suggested that the parents groups at the nurseries were staffed on an ad hoc basis on the basis of whoever wished to do it. His own commitment was to Westminster, he said, and that was why he did not work in Camden nurseries, even though it was part of the same health authority (Bloomsbury).

iii) He makes the suggestion that nurseries might one day have a similar model to the Marlborough Centre inasmuch as parents might come in for part of the time for help with their childcare skills. When asked what he meant by "childcare skills" he cited the fact that most of the team are "experts" in child and family work - therapists, psychologists and so on. He further went on to give examples such as behaviour problems of children, such as having "tantrums". On the question of observing parents via a one way screen, he justified this by saying that enables the worker to be scrutinized by others to ensure that the work is being done correctly. His line was that it helps him to help the parent.

iv) He was questioned whether there was any feedback from parents, and mentioned the review system, and also an adults group which he ran. He suggested there was a lot of encouragement for parents to say how they
felt about certain things.

v) He said that records were kept on clients and that whilst his notes could be seen by them because he worked for social services it was unlikely that the records kept by the health authority would be seen, because they are medical notes and are exempt from that requirement.

vi) He was also asked about psychologists in nurseries, and thought this had not happened for some time, but that if it did it would probably be by an educational psychologist who could test young children before the age of five. He did not rule out the fact that there may be other psychologists from the health authority going into nurseries, but said that they were concerned with developmental matters, whereas the Marlborough was centred on children's behaviour.

Conclusions

It is surprising that in other interviews with nursery managers and so on, with the exception of an ADD the involvement of the Marlborough Centre was hardly mentioned. Yet from this interview it seems that the centre does play a substantial role in certain day nurseries, and applies various forms of psychotherapeutic techniques to the perceived behavioural problems of certain nursery children and their families. To an extent this tends to confirm the view of day nurseries as housing more children considered to be "disturbed" in some way, and reinforces the perceptions of other interviewees, rightly or wrongly, that "there are no normal children in day care". Whether such an image is deserved is highly questionable, given for example that the vast majority of Afro-Caribbean children in the nursery for which such data could be obtained (Paddington) were referred for socioeconomic rather than for behaviour or developmental reasons. Nevertheless the connection with centres such as this one, maintains an image of the day centre as a place for "problem children". The question of "surveillance" of
families also arises here (Danzelot 1980), which tends to be supported by the fact that parents do not have automatic right of access to their files because the Marlborough Centre is part of the Health Authority and thus their files are considered to be "medical" rather than "social services" and do not therefore fall within the Data Protection Act.

**Police Child Protection Team**

As above, this interview was tape recorded and a full verbatim transcript taken. This appears in appendix (\(\backslash a\)) of this study. The relevant points of this interview are:

a) The child protection team is a multidisciplinary one, whereby the police play an essential investigatory role in child abuse; physical, emotional, or sexual. Records of families who come to the notice of the team are kept, and information from the various agencies is pooled.

b) The female police officer interviewed said that one of the great problems in the area was "incorrect chastisement" of children which she believed was "more apparent with ethnic people than perhaps Europeans".

c) The officer said that around 40% of abused children in her area were under five years old.

d) It was also said that sexual abuse of children by Afro-Caribbeans was "probably very low". She could not say which group was highest.

e) The officer thought that the typical age of abusive parents was "around the twenties or a little over", and often living in poor, overcrowded conditions such as in bed and breakfast accommodation.

f) It was also said in the interview that physical abuse often happened where the male member of the household was not the natural father. She also said that no particular ethnic group "stood out" in the area of physical abuse.
Conclusions

Perhaps the most relevant point for this present research is that the incidence of child sexual abuse by Afro-Caribbeans was considered to be "very low". It is also interesting to note that whilst the interviewee at first presented a negative image of what she referred to as "ethnic people" having a different standard of chastisement of children, when it came to actual cases, she was very clear that "no particular ethnic group stood out" in physical abuse cases. Thus there was a gap between the image of non-white people of the type portrayed by the "assimilationists" discussed elsewhere in this present study (Chapter 3) (e.g. Afro-Caribbeans having Victorian standards of child-rearing) and the reality of the situation, which is that in all forms of child abuse Afro-Caribbeans are no more likely, and in some areas far less likely, to abuse their children than do white people.

The Commission for Racial Equality

This interview was tape-recorded and a full verbatim transcript appears in Appendix (VII). The main relevant points to emerge from this interview are as follows:

a) Westminster has no relations advisor, and the former Community Relations Council has ceased to function. The body which has nominally replaced this, the Westminster Community Relations Forum, did not at the time of the interview have an office base.

b) The CRE representative said of Westminster that "the council declares itself to be an equal opportunities employer, but hasn't got an equal opportunities policy, it's just on paper. There is no implementation of the policy." He then went on to give the example of a colour bar which operated in the refuse collection department, and about which nothing was done.
c) The interviewee said he did not know how many black children were in day or other council care, because he did not think the council kept any figures (their policy is not to keep such figures). The CRE has no legal enforcement powers to force councils to collect such statistics, so over-representation of black people in day care for example, or homelessness, children suspended from school etc. cannot be monitored in this area. The view of the CRE is that such figures are essential if policies are to be designed to remedy the situation.

d) The CRE representative was not particularly knowledgeable on the subject of preschool provision. He did however suggest that the lack of black nursery officers had parallels with the lack of black teachers, and pointed out that only about 2% of teacher trainees are black.

e) He suggested that the underfives were not considered a priority, even by the CRE, because issues such as racial attacks, discrimination in employment, the education system and so on, seemed to take priority.

Conclusions

The CRE representative represented the view, which has tended to be confirmed in other interviews, that Westminster appear less than committed to a clear policy of racial equality. There is no ethnic monitoring either of staff or of children in care, and so the work of the CRE is hampered in terms of helping to develop strategies to combat racism with the council departments. He personally did not know much about the preschool field, and so the issue of black over-representation in local authority day nurseries was not adequately discussed. However, it did emerge that, as with many other agencies and departments, and indeed with central government, the issue of preschool children appears to receive a low priority within the CRE.
CHAPTER 7

The Local Authority Day Nurseries: An Overview

This section provides a background to the local authority day nurseries in the City of Westminster. Both the demography of Westminster will be described as will the organisation of the local authority. The pertinent policies in relation to day nurseries will then be presented. These elements will be a precursor to an analysis of the day nurseries, which will include: a description of each nursery; a presentation of the relevant data on staff, admission, and referral; and a comparative analysis of the three nurseries.

City of Westminster

At the time of the 1981 census, the City of Westminster had a population of just over 191,000 and of these some 3.5% were under the age of five. However, some districts contain a far higher proportion of under fives than others; for example the area of the "Paddington" day nursery has over 50% of all of the under fives in Westminster (Westminster City Council 1987). Between 1981-86 it has been suggested from records of live births, that the under fives population in Westminster grew by some 20%. Again, the Paddington area also has the highest proportion of single-parent families in Westminster, as well as the highest levels of poor housing (using standard measures of housing conditions)(ibid).

The City Council has ten day nurseries, divided between the three districts of Victoria, Marylebone and Paddington. Although three nurseries were allocated for the research rather than choosing them, there was some logic in this inasmuch as one nursery from each of these
able characteristics in terms of ethnic composition, reasons for referral, size of waiting list, and so on, the distribution of the research setting was in fact reasonable.

As well as the ten local authority day nurseries there are 45 registered private and voluntary day care groups for the under fives in Westminster. However, only one, at Imperial College, caters for under twos, and this nursery exists for the children of students only. To this overall picture must be added the variations in private and voluntary provision between different areas. The Paddington day nursery area for example is very badly served by the private and voluntary sector in comparison with most other areas, even though it has the highest concentration of under fives and the highest proportion of single parents (ibid). In terms of overall under fives provision, there are twice as many places available per thousand children under five in the St. Marylebone and St. John's Wood areas than in the far more deprived area surrounding the Paddington day nursery (Westminster City Council 1987a).

In the voluntary sector, by far the largest provider of day care is the Westminster Children's Society which operates ten day nurseries throughout Westminster. It is most important to recognize however that these nurseries do not prioritize according to the social services referral criteria, nor do the council have nomination rights for admission to the voluntary sector. Westminster's researchers conclude that Westminster Children's Society:

"... operate a largely private market model compared with the model operated by the City Council of strict allocation of places according to criteria of need".

(Westminster City Council 1987 op cit)

Although Westminster allocates an annual grant to the voluntary sector, there is an apparent tension between them because of the sense
that the voluntary sector has failed to understand the need for providing a service which is related to need rather than ability to pay. Voluntary day nursery places are more expensive than state day nurseries and this may account for their lack of presence in the more deprived areas such as Paddington. Westminster Children's Society nurseries for example charge about $25 per week, which is beyond the reach of many lone parent families, working or not (Westminster Under Fives Working Party 1989). By contrast, the average charge to parents of children in Westminster's day nurseries is 60 pence per day, and some parents pay only 20 pence (Westminster City Council 1987a).

It should also be noted here that the voluntary sector provides few full-time day nursery places. For example in the Paddington day nursery area just 40 places are provided by the voluntary sector which at 27 places per thousand under fives is the lowest of any of the Westminster areas. Similarly, Paddington has easily the lowest number of places in nursery classes, although it is one of only two areas which has a nursery school.

Nursery school places are in fact very few in Westminster, just 154 (Westminster City Council 1987a). Although the council proposed a policy of trying to improve education within day nurseries and generally urges future unification of the services, nothing in this direction has to date been achieved. Nationally, this would have considerable implications in terms of costs, staffing and so on, not least of which is the fact that nursery school teachers earn 45% more than NNEB trained nursery staff (ibid).

Childminding is also an important form of provision in Westminster because the local authority day nurseries do not as a rule take children under one year old, and the private and voluntary day nurseries under two years old. For this younger age group it is there-
fore the first choice. In Westminster there are 143 registered child-
minders, 43 of whom are sponsored by the Council. 73 children are
placed with these sponsored childminders, but demand for places far
exceeds supply. This is partly due to the problems of recruitment of
suitable minders, according to the Westminster Evaluation Project Team
(Westminster City Council 1987 op cit).

Sponsored childminding supplements the day nursery service in
Westminster, providing care particularly for the under twos, but also
for the over twos who need more hours than they obtain from nursery
schools or playgroups. In spite of the criticisms of childminding by
several researchers (Mayall and Petrie 1983; Bryant, Harris and Newton
1980;), then, there is no doubt that they fill a significant gap in the
services offered by Westminster. They are therefore given considerable
support by the council as evidenced by the fact that almost half of the
Day Care Adviser's budget for 1986-7 was devoted to sponsored minding
(Westminster City Council 1987 op cit). It is a very low-cost form of
provision, sponsored childminding being approximately one quarter of
the cost of day nursery provision (Westminster City Council 1987a),
which again makes this an attractive policy option. The report above
(ibid) made the clear recommendation to actively seek, train and
register additional private childminders.

It must be made clear though that compared with many other local
authorities, Westminster's level of childminders per head of child
population is low. Whereas nationally childminders provide 14.9% of
preschool provision, in Westminster they provide just 5.2% (Westminster
City Council 1987). Significantly the Paddington day nursery area,
which has the lowest amount of voluntary and private day nursery
provision, also has the highest childminding provision; more than twice
the average for the Westminster social services areas.

Unfortunately, no figures are available on a district-to-district
basis for the Afro-Caribbean population in Westminster. However, the following statistics are from the 1981 Census (Census of Population 1981):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>7,504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>4,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (African, Chinese etc)</td>
<td>6,388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total New Commonwealth and Pakistan</td>
<td>18,891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total as percentage of resident population</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbeans as percentage of resident population</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whilst Afro-Caribbeans form the largest ethnic minority group (from the "New Commonwealth") in City of Westminster, in relation to the rest of the London Boroughs the size of population is around the average. It is probable, however, that certain districts of Westminster, notably in the North, have a higher proportion of Afro-Caribbean residents than others.

Day nurseries are part of the Children and Families Division of Westminster Social Services. This comprises:
- specialist social work teams in all the area offices and hospitals
- residential units
- day nurseries
- intermediate treatment centres
- fostering
- adoption
- juvenile court work

(Westminster Social Services Department 1989).

Westminster is clear about its priorities for day nursery places and the six criteria will be noted below. Generally speaking, however,
the principal criterion is that of preventing children from going into residential care, and it is this which dictates the highest priority. It should also be noted that, according to Westminster's report "Children Under Five" (1987)

"The children of single parents who work are also considered as serious applicants".

Each district has an Allocation Panel which considers applications, and whilst the priority categories are fixed, these panels do enjoy some measure of discretion. Members of the panel include the area team leader, the local nursery managers, health visitors, and the day care advisor. Recent policy has meant that representatives from the nurseries (perhaps at deputy level) go into the homes of the applicants as part of the assessment process.

Children under two years old are rarely considered for a day nursery place in Westminster, and children of this age are usually found childminding places. Again though, there is some discretion here, and each situation is taken on its merits. At the time of writing there may be a policy change whereby a child may move from a sponsored childminding placement to a day nursery, on reaching the age of two, thus releasing a childminding place for another child. There is in fact very great demand for under two places.

The criteria for admission to Day Care in Westminster are as follows:
1. The child is on the Child Protection Register
2. Child has been assessed as having some developmental delay.
3. Applicant suffers from ill health and needs help looking after the child
4. Child has a disability or a handicap
5. Child lives in poor or overcrowded housing or in stressful conditions.
6. The applicant is a single parent and needs help looking after the child whilst the parent is at work or college.

(Westminster City Council 1990)

The stated objectives of the day nursery service in City of Westminster Social Services are defined as follows:

1. To provide a secure, happy, caring environment.
2. To provide a stimulating environment to encourage individual children to reach their full potential.
3. To continuously assess and monitor children's physical, emotional, intellectual and social needs.
4. To help prevent breakdown of families under stress.
5. To encourage and support parents to meet the needs of their children.
6. To work in close collaboration with parents at all times.
7. To encourage all staff to reach their full potential.
8. To work closely with outside agencies and other professionals wherever possible.
9. To provide a specialised resource for a limited number of families within the community.
10. To be increasingly aware of the changing needs of day care resources within the community and respond accordingly.

(Westminster City Council 1989)

In addition to these Day Nursery Objectives, City of Westminster provides Practice Guidelines (ibid, 1989) which are worth presenting here as a background both to this analysis of the nurseries and also of later interviews with the staff.
PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Care of the Children

Children should be handled with thoughtfulness and respect for their individual needs.

Children come from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds and these must be respected and provided for.

Staff should ensure that children are comfortable under all conditions, i.e. dry, warm and suitably clothed.

Very young children should be closely supervised in their prams inside and out.

Shouting at children should always be avoided. If voices are normally kept at a reasonable level, then raising the tone occasionally, when a child misbehaves, often has the desired effect.

No child should be slapped, handled roughly, ridiculed or treated in an undignified manner.

Staff should try and anticipate situations and spend more time reasoning with children and diverting their attention. Staff should be aware of difficult children and seek help from colleagues, other professionals and if appropriate, management.

Mealtimes should be a happy relaxed social occasion in which children are encouraged to eat to satisfy themselves. Children should have a certain amount of choice in what they eat. They should not be forced to eat. If they are unsure, they should be given a small portion. Drinks should be available at all times. Staff should sit and eat at the same table as the children, feeding any young children can be fraught with difficulties but staff should make mealtimes a pleasurable experience and not a battleground.

Food should be put on the plate in an attractive and appetising manner.

Food should never be denied or withheld as a punishment.

Children's dietary needs whether cultural, religious or medical should be respected and be met with appropriately prepared food.

Any child with a feeding problem should be discussed with the Manager with a view to working out an appropriate food programme.
The above represents the official practice guidelines of Westminster City Council. The official, definitive Policy Statement on Under Fives contains seven broad policies. Because of its relevance to later analysis of interviews, it is worth quoting one paragraph of the policy 1.5 of the statement concerning parental involvement, because of its direct relevance to the findings of this present research:

"The City Council will promote parental involvement in the full range of day care activities. These will span activities directly centred on their own children, to partnering staff in the provision, planning and management of services more generally."

(Westminster CC 1988)

The significance of this will be made clear in Chapter 9 but it is worth adding at this point that the Council's "Guidelines for Staff/Parental Involvement" states that:

"It should be strongly recommended that NO Day Nursery Staff should be:

1. developing personal friendships with parents - this can cause divided loyalties; being a friend, or being a professional member of staff.

2. offering or agreeing to do babysitting or other services, outside of work hours for the parents

3. involved in parents social events, or involving parents in their own personal social events outside of working hours.

4. discussing with parents the latters' confidential matters without making it clear that the information may have to be passed to other professional staff involved."

(Westminster CC 1988a)

The following day nurseries were used for this research, the names having been changed to ensure confidentiality: Victoria, Marylebone and Paddington.

It was an important part of the methodology to ensure that the nursery staff did not feel threatened by my presence, and so a
considerable amount of time was spent within each nursery, at different times of the day, working alongside nursery staff whilst also explaining to them the nature of the research. It was the case that some workers did find enquiry into their roles threatening, because a particular group of them had had a very negative experience of such research in their previous work for another local authority. There, apparently under the guise of research into race and ethnicity in day nurseries, the local authority had used the findings to close day care facilities and thereby cause redundancies. Thus the similar subject of my research became an undoubted threat, and so long periods within the nursery to allay such well-grounded suspicions was time well spent.

Forty hours were spent in each of the three nurseries, then, and it was only perhaps half way through this time that the interviews were begun. Factual data, presented below, was however obtained fairly early on. It should however be stated that levels of involvement were different in each nursery. Whereas at Victoria there was no encouragement to go into the nursery rooms and be alongside the nursery staff - and when this did occur it was always with a "minder" - at the other two nurseries there was a far higher level of involvement, which even extended to looking after the office for an hour with one of the parents whilst the manager was busy with other work! Paddington was particularly accommodating in the sense that specific actions were taken to encourage the research process, such as the allocation of a room specifically for the interviews, and the availability of drinks during the actual interviews.

In terms though of the hard data presented below, concerning referrals, all three nurseries were equally co-operative.

**Victoria**

Victoria Day Nursery is situated in the South of Westminster, off a
busy main road. The nursery is within a pre-War building near to the Thames, and is owned by the Health Authority and also accommodates a Community Unit, Child Health Clinics, Chiropody and Dental Clinics, District Nurses, a Family Clinic and a Baby Clinic which are run on a weekly basis.

The day nursery has its own entrance at the rear of this multi-agency centre. The main door is large and made of metal, and leads into a grey-coloured corridor where the walls are rather bare, have very few notices for parents, no children's pictures, and so on. The nursery itself is on the first floor, so that prams have to be left on the ground floor. There is no wheelchair access, and no lifts. The nursery itself is set out as follows. To the left side of the entrance is the office, shared by the manager and her deputy. Next to the office is the children's washing area and toilets, and on the same side as this is the kitchen. To the right of the entrance are the children's rooms, all of which overlook a small but newly-furnished playground. All of the children's rooms share a narrow, high-fenced balcony, and each has its own wet and dry, rest and work areas, library corners, and "home" corners. Each of the children's rooms are therefore self-contained and cater for different age groups, from eighteen months to four and three-quarters years of age. This nursery also has the use of a floor above, where the nursery officers have a sitting room, and where there is a pre-school room for the older children.

Staffing
Victoria Day Nursery has:

Care Workers -

1 Manager (has worked there for 25 years)
1 Deputy Manager
8 Nursery Officers (including 1 newly-appointed nursery officer who is Afro-Caribbean)
The Staffing ratio is 1:5 but at the moment it is 1:6 due to shortages. The trade union is presently negotiating for improved staff ratios and conditions of work. Their recommendations are:

1:2 for 2-3 year olds
1:3 2-3 year olds
1:4 4-5 year olds
1:1 children with Special Needs

A 36 hour week for work with special needs children, and increased training opportunities, are also part of the union's demands.

In addition to the care staff there are the following ancillary staff:

Domestic Workers -

1 Cook (has worked in this nursery for 28 years)
1 Assistant Cook
3 Cleaners

Four of the above staff are Afro-Caribbean

Children -

The Victoria day nursery has 43 nursery places. At the time of this research however there were only 34 children on the register, of whom 7 were Afro-Caribbean. All of the children but one came from families who live on the nearby Council housing estate.

Reasons for admission to the Day Nursery -

The following gives a breakdown of admission criteria; some children were admitted for more than one reason.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child Protection Register</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Delay</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents Ill Health</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability or handicap</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor or Overcrowded housing</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parents needing to work/study</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Single parent Criteria combined with other criteria as follows:

- Poor or Overcrowded housing: 4
- Parent Ill Health: 3

Race -

Of the above:

- 7 of the children are Afro-Caribbean

Age -

- 5 of these children are under 2 years old
- 11 of the children are 2-3 years old

Other -

- 6 have speech therapists

Referrals -

- 5 were referred by Health Visitors only
- 7 were referred by Social Workers only
- 19 were referred jointly by Health Visitors/Social Workers
- 2 were referred by a Day Care Adviser/Assistant Social Worker

In this day nursery, then, there were no self-referrals.

The Marylebone Day Nursery

The Marylebone day nursery is situated in a large Victorian house in an upper-class area of Westminster. Whilst it is situated in an affluent area, approximately 30% of the children come from bed and breakfast accommodation. The house itself is indistinguishable from those adjoining it, and therefore enjoys a pleasant, spacious ambience. The nursery has the use of the entire building, with the exception of the top floor. Access to the nursery is via four steps which lead to the front door. There is a brightly-painted hallway, to the immediate left of which is an office shared by the manager and her deputy. On this ground floor there are two children's rooms, each of which is self-contained and used for particular age groups. Both have wet/dry
and rest/play areas, as well as a home corner and so on. Children's drawings are hung all around the walls of both of these rooms. Direct access to the large garden is possible from each of the two ground floor rooms, and this play area is well equipped with various items of play equipment such as climbing frames. On the first floor there is a room for younger children, which has a similar layout to those on the ground floor, except that the wet/dry play area is in another room which is also used as a changing area for the younger children. On this floor is situated the preschool room and parents' room.

Marylebone Day Nursery has:

Care Workers -

1 Managers (has been in post for six months)
1 Deputy Manager (has worker there for ten years)
8 Nursery Officers (of which 1 is Afro-Caribbean)

In addition there are the following ancillary staff:

Domestic Workers -

1 Cook
1 Assistant Cook
3 Cleaners

Of this group, 3 are Afro-Caribbean

The following gives a breakdown of Admission Criteria; some children were admitted for more than one reason:

There are a total of 40 children on the register.

- Child Protection Register: 10
- Developmental Delay: 7
- Parents Ill Health: 13
- Disability or Handicap: 8
- Poor or overcrowded housing: 11
- Single Parents who need to work/study: 15
Single Parent Criteria combined with other Criteria as follows:

- Child Protection Register: 3
- Developmental Delay: 1
- Disability or Handicap: 1
- Poor or overcrowded housing: 3

Race -

Of the above children:

- 12 are Afro-Caribbean
- 7 are of mixed race.

Age -

- 5 are aged between 2 and 3 years
- The remainder are aged 3 to 5 years

Referral -

- 17 children were referred by social workers alone
- 5 were referred by health visitors alone
- 4 were referred jointly by health visitors and social workers
- 1 child was referred jointly by social worker, health visitor, and family resource centre.
- 3 were referred jointly by GPs, social workers, health visitors, the Tavistock Clinic, Community Services Unit, the Speech Therapy Unit, and ILEA educationist.
- 1 child was referred jointly by the social worker and clinical psychologist.
- 3 self-referrals

Paddington Day Nursery

This is a modern, purpose-built nursery situated in a predominantly working-class area, but which is now, in common with many other areas of Central London, becoming increasingly occupied by middle class
people. The building is eight years old, although construction work is still going on there to extend the outside play areas and so on. The nursery is on one floor. At the entrance there is a large hallway, to the right side of which is a corner for the department's seamstress, who operates an industrial sewing machine which services the department's nurseries. There is also a notice board for parents. On the left side there is the main office, used by the Manager. Across the corridor there is another office for the deputy, the staff sitting room, and a cloakroom. The right side of the building is where the actual nursery is situated, for the use of the children. At the entrance there is a large hall where there is a library corner, brightly furnished with miniature sofas. Off this main hall is an entrance to the community room which is sometimes used by parents and children. It is also used as a store room for toys and houses a big freezer. There are four rooms, two on each side of the hall, each of which has a wet/dry area, library, tables and chairs. These rooms, unlike in the other nurseries, cater for a mixed age group of children. The hall is used as a common room for the children for parties, Christmas dinners, etc. The nursery kitchen is at the end of this hall. All the rooms have access to the garden which, as has been described, is in the process of development as a play area.

It is true to say that this nursery is held up as a "model" by the Department and an example of good design.

Paddington Day Nursery has:--

Care Workers -

1 Manager (who is Afro-Caribbean)
1 Deputy Manager

10-12 Nursery Officers (1 Afro-Caribbean)

This nursery also uses agency cover for annual leave, sickness, and for staff on training courses. Because of Council cuts, posts have been
frozen until recently, although at the time of the research they were interviewing for vacant posts.

Domestic Staff -

1 cook
1 kitchen assistant
1 laundry assistant
1 cleaner
1 catering assistant

3 of this group are Afro-Caribbean

The ratio of nursery staff to children should be 1:5 according to the guidelines, but in reality this varies between 1:6 and 1:7.

Reasons for admission into Day Care -

The following gives a breakdown of Admission Criteria; some of the children were referred for more than one reason. The Nursery has fifty places, although at the time of this research there were forty-seven children registered.

At Risk Register 0
Developmental Delay 4
Parents Ill Health 6
Disability or Handicap 2
Poor or Overcrowded Housing 3
Single Parents who need to work/study 34

Single Parent Criteria combined with other Criteria as follows:

Developmental Delay 3
Poor or Overcrowded Housing 2
Disability or Handicap 1

15 of this total receive speech therapy
Referral -

Of the above:

- 24 are self-referred
- 20 referred by health visitor
- 1 referred by social worker
- 2 referred by health visitor/social worker/GP

Race -

From observation the ethnic composition of the nursery was as follows:

- 90% Afro-Caribbean
- 3% mixed race white/Afro-Caribbean
- 3% other ethnic non-European
- 4% white European

Comparative analysis of data from the three Day Nurseries

Care Workers -

Afro-Caribbean care Workers:

- Victoria = 10%
- Marylebone = 10%
- Paddington = 14%

The figures for ancillary/domestic staff across the three nurseries are as follows:

Afro-Caribbean domestic Workers:

- Victoria = 80%
- Marylebone = 60%
- Paddington = 60%

Children -

The percentages of Afro-Caribbean children for each of the three nurseries are as follows:

- Victoria = 21%
- Marylebone = 33%
- Paddington = 90%

Admissions -

The principal reasons for admission were as follows (some children
referred for more than one reason):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>Single parent needing to work</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parent suffering ill-health</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor/overcrowded conditions</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child Protection Register</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marylebone</td>
<td>Single parent needing to work</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parent suffering ill-health</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor/overcrowded conditions</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child Protection Register</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paddington</td>
<td>Single parent needing to work</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parents suffering ill-health</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developmental delay</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor/overcrowded households</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Figures expressed to nearest whole percentage)

Referral -

Children were referred by the following agencies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>Joint referral (HV/SW)</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health Visitor</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marylebone</td>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health Visitor</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joint referral (HV/SWO)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joint referral (GP/SW/HV)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others (combined total)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paddington</td>
<td>Self-referral</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health Visitor</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others (combined total)</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Figures expressed to nearest whole percentage)

Conclusions

Because there are significant variables involved, caution should be expressed here about interpretation of the above statistics. However, the following conclusions may be reached:

1. Whilst there is an average across the three nurseries of 48% Afro-Caribbean children, the average proportion of Afro-Caribbean nursery staff is just 11%.
2. The proportion of Afro-Caribbean domestic/ancillary staff amounts to 70%.
3. Although the research settings were geographically evenly spread throughout Westminster, in relation to the total Afro-Caribbean population of the Borough (4.5%), Afro-Caribbean children were heavily over-represented in all three day nurseries.

4. Despite the low priority accorded single parents who are working, according to the stated criteria of City of Westminster, this category nevertheless is the most common one for all the three nurseries. It should be noted, though, that, certainly in Victoria and Marylebone, this category is quite often combined with other reasons for admission.

5. There are three outstanding differences between the Paddington Day Nursery compared with the Victoria and Marylebone Day Nurseries.

   a) the Paddington Day Nursery has by far the highest proportion of Afro-Caribbean users; around three times that of the next highest;

   b) the Paddington Day Nursery is the only nursery which has self-referred admissions, and these form 50% of the total number of users. Conversely, the numbers referred to this nursery by social workers is negligible. Referral by health visitors alone, however, is the highest proportion of any of the day nurseries (43%).

   c) the Paddington Day Nursery has by far the highest proportion in the "single mothers who need to work" category.

Whether or not there is any connection between the very high proportion of Afro-Caribbean users and the highest admission rate of "single mothers who need to work" in Paddington is a matter of speculation. Because of respect for confidentiality, information on admissions according to race were unavailable. It cannot be stated with certainty therefore that the main reason for Afro-Caribbean admissions was the mother's need to work. Given the above data, however, it does demonstrate the need for further investigation into the possibility of this being the case.

It is possible that the different admissions policy in Paddington
has had a great effect on the type of admissions. The components of this policy, unique to Paddington district, are:

i) Applicants are no longer "filtered out" before Allocations Panel meetings, as to the likelihood of their success, as is the case in the other districts. A social worker is assigned to see every Paddington applicant, whereas in all other areas only the "likely" candidates are seen.

ii) The Paddington Allocations Panel meetings have a "rotating" chair, with the aim of more democracy and expression of all opinion about who may be admitted into the day nursery.

iii) All applicants to the Paddington Admission Panel are encouraged to attend a pre-meeting with the chair of the panel, whereas this is actively discouraged in the areas of Victoria and Marylebone.

The significance of these differences will be discussed in the final conclusions of this present research. At this point however it appears that there is a relationship between allocation procedure, racial composition, possible demand, and socioeconomic profile of the Paddington district. Because of the lack of hard evidence from Afro-Caribbean users themselves, however, it should be stressed that any conclusions reached about race and the day nurseries must be tentative, and will indicate areas for future investigation rather than absolute certainties.

It may also be that the lack of voluntary sector day nursery places has made it necessary for Afro-Caribbean working mothers to turn to the state sector for childcare provision. Even where such places are available, their relative expensiveness might also make them beyond the reach of most Afro-Caribbean women.

It should be stated here that at the time of this present research the other nurseries were in the process of developing a policy of staff
visiting applicants for a day nursery place. This may well have an impact on the profile of future admissions, but at this stage cannot have made any difference to the above results.
CHAPTER 8

The Day Nursery Staff Profile

Interviews with Nursery Officers

As has been stated above, these interviews were carefully designed to take account of defensiveness which might have been understandably present on the part of the nursery staff. In spite of this, the fact that the interviews were taped might have led to a certain degree of inhibition by some of the respondents. The following is an analysis based upon the questionnaire which appears in Appendix III. It should be noted that initially there were 21 nursery officers in this sample, but due to a technical problem, one of these could not be recorded throughout. Hence the discrepancy in the numbers which appears in the first part of the questionnaire analysis.

Nursery Officers: analysis of questionnaires:

Career Background.

1. 16 of the nursery officers responded "because I like children" or "I have always wanted to work with children" (generally attributing their career choice to early influence, including school).
   3 had come to nursery nursing after other careers had been ruled out for various reasons.
   1 said her choice was determined by her own experiences of family problems.
   1 did not know her reason.

2. 13 said it met their expectations
   8 had reservations, which included the belief that the work was
"much harder" than imagined, "more stressful", and so on.
3 were all NNEB qualified.

4. 18 nursery officers left school at either 16 or 17.
3 left school at 18

5. 11 of the nursery officers stated that they did come into the work "directly"
10 said they had done something else before coming into this work.
These responses are however misleading, because of those who
replied in the negative to the question, 5 had considered "going
to college" (for pre NNEB and NNEB courses for example) as con­stitu­ting not going into nursery work "directly". Given that these
respondents have not in fact worked anywhere else other than
nursery nursing, they should be included in the first total.
Thus 16 of those questioned came "directly" into nursery nursing.
5 nursery officers had done other jobs, and 3 of this total had
been children's nannies.

6. Some respondents were vague about their qualifications, and were
unable to give for example actual numbers of GCEs etc. they had

gained.
17 of the total had a combination of CSE and GCE O level
qualifications, and one of this number had 2 A levels as well.
3 respondents had just CSE qualifications
1 had been educated in another country and did not name her
qualifications

Conclusions

Generally the replies to this set of questions were unsurprising
and tend to confirm the findings of other researchers. Perhaps the
fact that the great majority of the sample said they had come into the
work "directly" is of most significance because it tends to confirm the
image of nursery officers as young women who lack the variety of previous life experience which may better equip them to deal with parents. 80% of the sample had come into the work either directly from school, or else from college (prior to NNEB).

Training.

1. 14 of the respondents did not think their training prepared them for the job they were now doing. 7 thought that it had prepared them. Of those who gave a negative response, 6 said that their training was inadequate because it had not trained them to deal with parents. Other reasons were various, 2 mentioned inadequate teaching on Race as an important issue to their dissatisfaction.

2. All said that they received practical training. The practical element was considerable in all cases, often taking the form of 3 days in the practical placement and two days at college, or vice versa. In some cases alternative weeks at college and placement was the norm. One officer was trained in 1970 when the practical element of training was extremely limited.

3. 11 said there had been some teaching about Race on their courses. 10 had received no teaching about race. Of those who had received some teaching about Race, 5 said it was inadequate and should have been more. 4 felt it had been useful or very useful. 2 were not committal.

4. 16 of those questioned said they had some opportunity, in varying degrees, to express dissatisfaction with their courses. 4 did not have this opportunity. (The remaining interviewee was not asked this question due to an interview error).
Those who had not been given the opportunity to express dissatisfaction said that they would have valued such an opportunity.

5. 12 of those interviewed expressed satisfaction with the training they had received.
7 were dissatisfied.
1 interviewee was not asked this question due to error
1 interview was partially obliterated due to tape recorder malfunction.

Conclusions

The following points appear to be of considerable significance:

i) It is surprising and significant to find that 70% of the sample did not think that their training prepared them adequately for the job they were doing.

ii) Of further importance to this study, is the finding that almost half of the sample said they had received no training whatsoever on their NNEB courses on race, and that of those who said they had received some training, almost half said they thought it was inadequate. Thus around 75% of the total sample had either received no training on race or else found it to be inadequate. Of equal significance is the finding that under 20% had found their training on race to have been positively useful.

iii) In view of the overwhelming belief of the sample that their training had not prepared them adequately for their present jobs, the finding that the majority expressed satisfaction with this training seems anomalous, and possibly needed further questioning to point up the apparent discrepancy.

Opinions of the Nursery Officer.

1. 13 of those interviewed gave "being with the children", "seeing the
children develop", and generally child-centred areas as being what they most liked about their work.
The remaining gave various reasons, with working "in a team" another major reason.
1 interview partially obliterated because of tape malfunction.

2. No clear pattern of responses emerged from this question.
3 said there was nothing they did not like about their work
2 said lack of resources
4 gave parent-centred areas as those they most dislike
2 gave general "frustration"
Others gave individual areas of unhappiness such as problems with management, or having too little time to do so much work, inadequate staff ratio etc.

3. a) 16 nursery officers felt appreciated by the children
   3 did not feel appreciated by them
   1 said "yes and no"

b) 15 nursery officers gave a "yes and no" response to the question of whether they felt appreciated by parents. There were reservations in this group about parents
   3 said they did feel appreciated by parents
   2 said they did not feel appreciated by parents.

c) 9 nursery officers said they felt appreciated by management
   7 did not feel appreciated
   4 had reservations about whether or not they felt appreciated by management and could not give a definite answer.

d) 17 nursery officers felt unappreciated by the general public, and overwhelmingly held the belief that the general public had no idea of the nature of the job of a nursery officer.
   2 had mixed opinions about whether they were appreciated
1 said definitely that she felt appreciated by the general public.

4. All 20 who were asked whether they regarded themselves as "professional" said "yes". This question should however be qualified by the fact that many said that although they regarded themselves as professional, this was not shared by other agencies or the "world outside" generally.

5.

6. 13 said they thought the aims they outlined for the day nursery were achieved within their nurseries.
   4 had mixed feelings about this; that in some areas their nurseries were realizing their aims, but in others not.
   3 thought definitely not.

7. 19 nursery officers said they did not think day nurseries were a privilege, or that it should not be a privilege.
   1 said that it was a privilege.

8. 16 of the sample felt their nurseries provided a good service
   4 thought they provided a good service, to the best of their ability but with more resources they could do better.

9. 16 of the 20 thought children should not be "trained" but "guided".
   4 thought they should be trained.
   However, there was some confusion over this question, and the precise meaning of the word "trained". There was some aversion to the use of the word, although all the respondents did see the need for some routine and guidance to a greater or lesser degree.

Conclusions
Because of the nature of the questions, which were largely subjective, some of the responses were so various as to defy any attempt to draw conclusions from them. However, the following points emerged most
strongly:

i) The responses to Q.3 were interesting in that they highlight the ambivalence nursery officers feel towards the parents, around 85% having either mixed feelings or negative ones about whether or not parents appreciated the work they did. Similarly, there was a far from enthusiastic response to the question about the appreciation of management towards the nursery officers, with under 50% saying they felt valued by management. Perhaps though the most important and almost shocking finding was that around 85% of the nursery officers felt unappreciated by the general public, and also felt very misunderstood, professionally speaking, by them.

These findings are highly relevant to the elusive question of "staff morale" which is often mentioned but hardly ever quantified.

ii) Given the low morale which seems to be indicated by the above responses, it is perhaps very surprising to have found that all respondents considered themselves to be "professional". It must be pointed out strongly, however, that a large proportion of those interviewed qualified their belief by saying or suggesting that others may not see them as being "professional", even though they themselves did.

iii) It was in some ways surprising that the great majority of nursery officers held the opinion that day nurseries should not be seen as a privilege. From the transcripts it will be noticed that in answering this question, the nursery officers frequently expressed the notion that nurseries should be available as a universal right for those who need it. This tends to demonstrate a certain liberalism amongst the nursery officers which accords with wider demands by feminists and others for universal preschool child care facilities.

Attitude to parents.

1. 14 of the twenty respondents thought that it was up to the
individual whether to remain with the child for its first 3 years. 6 thought ideally the mother (or carer) should stay at home with the child (three of whom came from one nursery, Bloomsbury).

2. 15 said they would like more parental involvement in the running of the day nursery.
3 said definitely no.
2 had reservations about it.
It should however be noted that individual nursery officers had differing perceptions on the level of involvement parents might have, and no one in fact foresaw a situation where parents would take part in the actual operation of the day nursery. It was more a case of helping in certain ways and at certain levels.
a) 10 nursery officers said there was some involvement, but again there were variations in what was implied by the question. This could mean anything from helping at fundraising to attending parents' groups. None of the responses suggested parental involvement in the "running of" the day nurseries.
10 said there was no such involvement.
The split here is obviously instructive because nursery officers working at the same nurseries clearly held different perceptions about the level of involvement parents actually had.

3. All 20 nursery officers said they had contact with parents.
a) 15 said it was almost exclusively in the mornings and evenings when the parents dropped and collected their children at the day nursery.
4 said that they did try to have more contact than this, for example in their "keyworker" roles.
1 did not answer this question.

4. 10 nursery officers felt generally unable to help parents with
their problems.

5 nursery officers felt competent in some areas to offer help, but not in others (e.g. financial).

5 said they did feel positively able to help parents with their personal problems.

Conclusions

Several important points came out of this set of questions:

i) Again, there appeared to be a more liberal attitude than was expected in response to Q.1, which asked whether parents should stay at home with their children until the age of three. 70% said it was up to the individual to decide, and this too apparently accords with feminist views concerning the rights of women to choose what is best for them.

ii) Once more, and particularly in view of ambivalence towards parents expressed elsewhere, there was a surprisingly substantial majority of 75% in favour of more parental involvement in the running of the day nurseries. As pointed out in the above analysis of Q.2, however, it must be noted that there were a range of views about the level of input parents may have into the day nurseries, and most stopped short of any suggestion of "democratic" involvement.

iii) The level of contact with parents appears to be very low, and generally confined to times when the parent brings or collects the child. 75% of the sample said their contact was confined to these times.

iv) An important finding is that the vast majority of the sample felt unable to help parents with their problems. If we take away those who felt positively able to help parents in such a way, then 75% said they either felt unable to or only partly able to help parents with their problems. This finding has considerable implications for the day nursery system, given the apparently more expansive role, mentioned
elsewhere, it is meant to be playing in Westminster (for example, the emphasis on home visits and so on).

Attitudes towards Afro-Caribbean People.

1. 11 of the twenty nursery officers thought that Afro-Caribbean children did have particular needs.
   9 did not think Afro-Caribbean children had particular needs (and usually added "I treat all children the same").
   a) of the 11 who felt Afro-Caribbean children did have particular needs:
      5 tended to mention "physical" needs like diet and hair care
      5 tended to mention emotional/psychological needs such as "positive images of black people"
      1 gave a general answer of "cultural awareness".

2. 15 of those questioned said they related to parents of all races equally well.
   3 thought it was not so straightforward. One felt she was not relating to a certain African parent, whilst another felt more able to relate to Afro-Caribbeans. Both of these workers were Afro-Caribbeans themselves.
   1 said she could not comment since she had not been at the nursery long enough
   1 of these interviews became obliterated for the remainder of the interview due to external noise levels.

3. 12 nursery officers had not received any race awareness training
   7 had received some race awareness training (on different levels, and including via NNEB)
   a) of the 7 who had received some training, all said it was positive for them. One of the respondents teaches race awareness.
   b) Of the 12 who had not received any race awareness training, 10
said they would value such training.

2 had mixed feelings about it.

4. 13 nursery officers felt able to answer this question, even though it did not necessarily apply to their own particular day nurseries. Some of the 13 had had experience of nurseries elsewhere where there had been a high proportion of Afro-Caribbean children. 12 of the 13 said they imagined it was "because of the area" where the nurseries were situated that there was a higher proportion of Afro-Caribbean children there. Only 1 respondent thought it was because "black people had to struggle" (referring to their socioeconomic position in society).

5. 9 nursery officers did not have anything more to say about Afro-Caribbean people. 10 people did feel they wanted to say something, at varying length, about Afro-Caribbean people.

The problem with analysing an open question such as this (which equally applies to "Opinions of the Nursery Officer" Q.5) is that each individual has offered her own sets of attitudes, opinions, and points of emphasis. This diversity does not lend itself easily to analysis of the above type, and yet the opinions offered are intrinsically valuable to this research and cannot be left out of the overall picture. It is suggested that the final chapter containing Conclusions for this research shall endeavour to represent some of the many and diverse points raised. Examination of the transcrips will also demonstrate the kind of views expressed in this open question.

Conclusions

Views and experiences of Afro-Caribbean people tended to be fairly
evenly and uniformly divided, with no overall picture emerging from which to draw conclusions about the overall views on race held by the majority of nursery officers. If anything, a more liberal and racially aware group emerges than was initially anticipated, given the fact that they were mostly young, white, and with little or no work experience outside of their present careers. Some points are, however, worth noting:

i) It was quite surprising to find that more than half of those questioned did believe that Afro-Caribbean children had particular needs, even though only 35% had received any training at all in race awareness.

ii) It was also interesting to note the very high proportion of nursery officers who said that even though they had not received any race awareness training, they would positively value such training. About 90% of those who had not received any training said this, and the important point in terms of this particular area of London is that no such training was offered on any regular or extensive basis. This point will be expanded upon elsewhere.

iii) Less surprising was the belief held by those who felt able to answer, that the reason for any over-representation of Afro-Caribbean children in day care was simply a geographical one, rather than anything to do with the position of black people in society. This was based largely upon their experiences either in their own areas or in nurseries where they had previously worked.

Day Nursery Staff: Overall Conclusions.
The important conclusions to be made from the above interviews with nursery staff may be broadly categorised as follows:
Relationship with Parents.

This study has confirmed the findings of others in the field, that day nursery staff tend overwhelmingly to be young, female, white, and lacking in the life experience and training which might equip them for dealing with parents. Neither the nursery managers nor the nursery officers felt the NNEB training had prepared them for working with parents, and there was a very low proportion of nursery officers who said they felt positively able to help parents with their problems. It is interesting to compare this sense of inadequacy expressed by nursery officers, with their manager's belief that relations with parents were "generally good" and to contrast it with the policy papers published by Westminster social services department which clearly state the need for parental involvement in day nurseries, even to the extent of a share in decision-making.

Whilst it was also confirmed that there was little if any parental involvement in the running of the day nurseries, and indeed precious little contact on an organized basis between staff and parents, a substantial majority were in favour of developing such contact. The EPT report referred to below, however, suggests that a failure by senior management may still be hampering progress towards this.

It was clear from these findings that staff were ambivalent as to whether they were appreciated by parents for the work they did. There was the overwhelmingly-held belief by the nursery staff however that they were not appreciated by the general public.

Race.

The great majority of staff said they had had either no training at all on race, or else had found it to be inadequate. In terms of referral, it was surprising to find that nursery staff did not think Afro-Caribbeans were over-represented, even though statistically they
were so in all of the nurseries in this study, and in one particular nursery they formed nearly all the nursery population. In the opinion of the managers, it was clearly considered that the main reason for Afro-Caribbean referral was for socio-economic reasons rather than for any perceived deficiency in the child or the family. This was not considered to be the case for white children.

In view of the lack of training in this area, it was nevertheless the case that over half of the respondents thought that Afro-Caribbeans did have special needs, and that the vast majority of staff said they would positively value more training on race. However, this must be balanced by the near-universal belief that the proportion of Afro-Caribbean children in day nurseries was solely a product of geography rather than the socio-economic position of black people.

Staff Attitudes (General).

In contrast to what might have been expected, given the inadequacies of recruitment and training, the staff emerged on the whole as relatively liberal and "aware" on several important issues:

i) The great majority did not regard day nurseries in any sense as a privilege, but thought that it was a right which should in fact be a universal one for those who need it.

ii) Staff were generally aware of their own inadequacies both in work with parents and in the area of race, and generally declared a desire to undertake more training to rectify this.

iii) There was a considerable majority who thought it was for individual women to decide whether or not to stay at home with their children during the first three years.

iv) Although as mentioned in the analysis of the interviews there was some misunderstanding about the question of "training" children, the impression that emerged was that staff were not in favour of a rigid
regime, but preferred to "guide" rather than "train" children.

Generally, then, it would appear that staff in these day nurseries are far from unwilling to improve the service to day nursery users; for example in terms of becoming more aware of the needs of non-white users, a more constructive relationship with parents, etc. However they consider themselves undervalued by all but the children, unsupported by management, and that they have experienced significant gaps in their training. There is a sense of demoralization, which perhaps is encapsulated in the transcripts of the interviews more than the bald analysis presented above. For example, when asked if they regard themselves as "professionals", whilst the great majority replied positively, there was an equally uniform belief that others might not regard them as such. Perhaps as a result of this demoralization, there was a high staff turnover in the nurseries of this study, and this replicates the findings of other researchers (van der Eyken, 1984 op cit).

The research undertaken by Westminster's Evaluation Project Team (Westminster EPT 1987 op cit) has to a large extent been confirmed by these present findings. The authors concluded from their wide-ranging survey that:

"Staff in our day nurseries are expected to do an impossible job. Staff turnover is high, the staff group is young and female .... and their professional status is not high."

The EPT further concluded that day nursery staff do not receive the same levels of professional supervision as some other social services staff who work directly with clients. And again the conclusion of this present study accords with that of the 1987 study in relation to parents:

"Day nursery staff expressed a need for more training in work with parents."

They further recommended that:
"Partnership with parents is not just a cliche and the EPT recommends that the senior management of the service address the implications of this philosophy, which is clearly departmental policy, for the day nursery service."

It is clear though that at the time of this present study, some three years after the publication of the Westminster EPT report, parents were rarely involved in the life of the day nursery on any level, let alone with the kind of "partnership" hoped for above and within other policy documents issued by City of Westminster social services.

Whilst staff expressed a willingness to undertake more training on race, however, it seems equally clear from these interviews that Afro-Caribbean children in day care was not regarded as a central issue. There was no sense given from the managers or the nursery officers that Afro-Caribbeans were in fact over-represented, and therefore no theories offered as to why this phenomenon existed (other than vague allusions to the geography of the area). There was a similarly apparent lack of concern about the under-representation of Afro-Caribbean nursery officers.

In addition to the above may be added some information gleaned from the training officer for Westminster social services, who made the following points of direct relevance to the day nurseries and staff within them. This interview, like the others, was tape recorded and transcribed verbatim.

1. There are courses for nursery officers in operation four times per year, largely on developmental matters, and these courses have between ten and twelve places. In addition there are other types of courses, for example on nursery organization. Each nursery has just four days per year allocated for training, and a proportion of the fees required to provide agency cover for staff on courses is funded by the Department of Health.
2. The training officer did not know what an anti-racist stance meant, but that if it meant taking into account the different ethnic and cultural backgrounds of the children, he said that his department did attempt to get nursery officers to look at this. He said that because there was no policy on race in Westminster, however, training policy in this regard was haphazard and "up to who the individuals are that are running the places". The training officer further pointed out that there is no commitment to race awareness training programmes. In area 1 however (where the Paddington day nursery is situated) the ADD is introducing such training.

3. The training officer said he was attempting to work with nursery managers to help them to understand the group processes involved within the staff and how this affects children, and also how staff attitudes towards the children might set up certain conflicts within the team. He had not experienced conflict between black and white workers, however, in the day nurseries with which he was involved.

4. The training officer mentioned the problem of staff morale in Westminster, and recruitment problems brought about by unfavourable conditions of service as compared for example with Camden which offers staff less hours for more money. He also said that nursery staff felt they have the lowest status in the social services department, even though in many ways they are doing the most difficult work. "They are the people with the least resources, the least skills, and the least training".

5. Of relevance to this study, and in particular to Afro-Caribbean users of the day nurseries, is the training officer's stated belief that "there aren't any completely normal children in day nurseries" justified by saying that even single mothers who work and who have "no obvious psychopathology" must, by virtue of their having to bring up a
child in stressful circumstances, have a strained relationship with that child which is bound to affect that child. The training officer did not give any evidence to justify this assertion.

6. The training officer said that on the whole he did not believe those in fieldwork and management "had a clue" about what it was like in day nurseries.

Conclusions

a) It was confirmed that there was no specific programme of training in the field of race awareness, or of work with ethnic minorities. The quantity of training does not seem great, considering the inadequacies of the basic NNEB training recognized by many interviewees.

b) The low morale of staff, the poor pay and conditions in Westminster as compared with other boroughs, and the feeling held by nursery staff that they were undervalued, tends to confirm the opinion of the nursery staff.

c) The belief that there are no completely "normal" children in day nurseries is a surprising one, given that there is no evidence to suggest that this is in fact the case. This has implications for all users of the day nurseries, the overwhelming majority of whom use the service because they are lone parents who need to work, since if it is the opinion of the training officer that children of these parents "must" by definition be in some way abnormal, the assumptions on which the training is based might well be very suspect incorporating as it does the notion of stigma.

Interviews with Nursery Managers

These interviews were recorded after having had initial meetings with the nursery managers and spending some time in the nurseries. They were carried out before the interviews with the nursery officers, in a
sense by way of reassurance to the nursery managers of the nature of the questions. Like the interviews with the nursery officers, all three of these interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim (Appendix V).

Analysis of Questionnaires to Nursery Managers.

General
1. All three managers confirm that the department has no stated policy on race.
2. They all knew that there were stated criteria for admission, and that there were six.
3. All three knew that "at risk" children on the child protection register were the highest priority.
4. Childminders and playgroups were the alternatives common to all three day nurseries.
5. a) The waiting list varied from 35 to 60 across these nurseries
   b) Two of the three said that health visitors and social workers would support mothers waiting for a nursery place. At Bloomsbury, the manager was more pessimistic, and said that a child waiting for a place may well end up in residential care.
6. Reaction to this question was mixed, although the consensus seemed to be that many parents viewed a day nursery place as a "right", while on the other hand feeling fortunate to have secured a place for their child when places are scarce.

Conclusions

In general there are no surprising findings to this set of questions, and there was a uniformity of response to all but one of the questions (5b) which dealt with supports for mothers who were waiting
for nursery places. There was confirmation by all three nursery managers that the department has no policy on race.

Race.

1. None could say with certainty exactly how many Afro-Caribbean children were in their day nurseries, but estimates varied widely, as expected, due to the different geographical locations. For Victoria this was "four or five ... but maybe even less". Paddington formerly had around 95% Afro-Caribbean, but this has "changed recently" (i.e. the last 2 years) to reflect other communities within the area. The figure for Marylebone was around "a half to two-thirds".

2. Two of the three managers felt that Afro-Caribbean children were not over-represented. The manager of Marylebone, however, said that whilst they were over-represented in the catchment area, in terms of the areas of worst housing etc. they were not. In other words she felt that the numbers of Afro-Caribbean children fairly represented the poorest social groupings within her area.

3. a) Whilst the department did not have a policy on race, two of the three nursery managers said that within their nurseries, certain policies were developing. These were the nurseries containing significant numbers of Afro-Caribbean children. In the Parkside area this went further by the recent appointment of a black ADD who was committed to developing policies on race within his particular area.

b) Two of the three felt a policy on race was necessary. The third, which did not have significant numbers of Afro-Caribbean children compared with the other two, responded "not applicable" to the question in both parts.

4. The same pattern of responses applies here, with the Victoria
manager responding "not applicable" whilst the others confirming that whilst the department as a whole did not regard Afro-Caribbean children as having "special needs" they themselves definitely took the opposite view and were actively taking steps to advance this.

5. a) All three thought that the primary reason for Afro-Caribbean children being admitted was that of the "mother working".
   b) Two of the nurseries felt it was difficult to make any statements about the differences between admissions of Afro-Caribbean children as opposed to white children, because of lack of statistics to hand. However, the manager of the Maryland nursery said positively that white children tended to be admitted for other social reasons than that of "mother working".

6. Again, the Victoria manager responded "not applicable". The other two managers suggested that race awareness training in the area had been very limited, although one or two voluntary training sessions had at some time been arranged. Both however felt positively that they would like to see race awareness training take place, although the manager of Marylebone held the reservation that it should be "done properly" as opposed to some training that had been done in the past in other areas, which she felt had been counterproductive.

7. Numbers of Afro-Caribbean staff were low in all three nurseries. There were two at Victoria, just one (and the manager herself) at Paddington, plus three or four domestic staff, and at Marylebone there were two nursery officers and one domestic staff.

8. Victoria manager said "neutral to good".
   Paddington and Marylebone both said "good".
   a) None of the managers felt there was any difference in relationships with parents as between Afro-Caribbean and white staff.

9. Section 11 funding not received by any of the three nurseries.
10. All said that Afro-Caribbean parents do approach staff with their problems.
   a) All felt that it was no different to the level of approaches made by white parents.

11. Only the manager of Paddington (who is Afro-Caribbean herself) wished to say anything else about Afro-Caribbean children in day care. She expressed her fear that when going to school, Afro-Caribbean children become labelled from an early age and less is expected of them than from white children. She expressed concern of the cyclical nature that this might tend to create from generation to generation.

Conclusions

Perhaps the most significant conclusions were those which confirmed what appeared to be the case from the analysis of referrals. There were other quite surprising findings though both in terms of perceptions and of attitudes.

i) Generally, the managers confirmed the information gleaned from observation and analysis concerning the proportions of Afro-Caribbean children within their nurseries, and also that of the staff. Most surprising, however, was the belief by the managers of the nursery with by far the highest proportion of Afro-Caribbean children that Afro-Caribbean children were "not over-represented". Only one of the managers offered the opinion that the numbers of Afro-Caribbean children in her nursery fairly reflected the relatively poor socio-economic position of Afro-Caribbean women.

ii) The likelihood that the great majority of Afro-Caribbean women who placed their children in day nurseries because of the necessity for them to work (see above analysis of the referrals) was strongly borne out by all three of the nursery managers. Of additional and signifi-
cant importance is the opinion of the manager of the Paddington nursery that white children were admitted more for "other social reasons" than "mother working". Thus the suspicion that the great majority of Afro-Caribbean children have been placed in day nurseries because of the economic position of their mothers, has been to a large extent confirmed by these interviews.

iii) In terms of policies on race, it was unsurprising to find that the managers of the two nurseries which had significantly high proportions of Afro-Caribbean children were most dismayed by the lack of any policy on race, and most enthusiastic about the possibility of establishing such a policy. The somewhat negative attitude towards this by the manager of the Victoria nursery was however also quite surprising since the nursery did contain some Afro-Caribbean and other ethnic minority children. Again the belief strongly held by the same two nursery managers above that Afro-Caribbean children did have "special needs", was matched by a negative attitude towards this by the manager of the Victoria day nursery.

The development of piecemeal local policies on race was a somewhat surprising finding, given the lack of any policy whatsoever from the local authority. Such a development may be interpreted either positively or negatively; either as a positive response to local needs, or else as the response of local workers to the lack of support they feel from the city council.

Generally the point needs emphasizing here, because if correct it is a very significant one, which is that whereas the overwhelming reason for the admission of Afro-Caribbean children into day care is that their mothers have to go out to work - and apparently do not have access to other forms of childcare such as nursery schools (this confirms the findings of other researchers in this field) - their white
counterparts appear to be admitted for more severe social reasons, such as risk of abuse, developmental delay, and so on. Black children thus become categorized alongside children with such extreme family circumstances therefore, whereas they themselves are in day care through economic necessity.

Staff.

1. The average age of staff was thought to be either late twenties (Victoria) or early twenties.

2. Only Paddington has a male nursery officer (agency worker).

3. Victoria have lost "three or four" staff in last 18 months. Paddington have had a completely new staff team in less than three years (12). Marylebone have lost one nursery officer in the six months the manager has been there.

4. Victoria and Paddington both said absenteeism was low or very low, whereas at Marylebone it was thought to be high.

5. All three confirmed that advertisements do not specifically encourage Afro-Caribbean applicants.
   a) Advertisements, according to the managers, do mention "equal opportunities" in a broad sense but that is all.
   b) The managers of Victoria did not feel it was necessary, whilst the other two expressed concern about black recruitment and would like to see positive action.

6. Two of the three, Victoria and Paddington both seemed to feel that the NNEB whilst basically adequate, needed to concentrate far more on working with parents, which it did not now do. The manager of Marylebone said she was not au fait with present NNEB training, but supported more training on racial matters.

7. All three thought that relationships with parents were good. The manager of Paddington did qualify this by saying that younger
inexperienced staff sometimes found it difficult to communicate with parents.

8. Parents were not involved in the running of the day nursery in any of the three nurseries, although Victoria and Paddington mentioned things like parents' groups, fundraising and so on, which parents could become involved with.

9. None of the nurseries had any "formal structure" for parents and staff to meet. However they each went on to point out that coffee mornings and review meetings do take place.

10. None of the three nurseries provides the means for parents to help shape nursery policy.

Conclusions

Significant points that emerge from this set of questions are:

i) There appears to be a high turnover of staff in at least two of the nurseries, and possibly in the third, although because the manager of Marylebone had only been in post for six months this fact could not be confirmed. If high turnover is an indicator of low morale and stress, then this tends to confirm it. Against this, absenteeism was said to be relatively low in the same two nurseries where there was a high turnover. It may be speculated that because a significant number of agency workers were employed, it is less likely that they would be absent because they are not paid for any absence. This is one possibility, though because it was outside the scope of this research it cannot be substantiated.

ii) The attitude of the manager of Victoria towards policies on race, was confirmed in this section by a negative attitude towards targeting of advertisements towards the black community.

iii) The prevailing attitude towards the NNEB training was similar to
that held by the nursery officers in that it confirmed its inadequacies in terms of training nursery officers to deal with parents. Presumably this perceived lack of training in this area shows up in the performance of the nursery officers, as observed by the managers. This appears to be borne out by the manager of Paddington who felt that inexperienced staff did have difficulty in communicating with parents.

iv) Overall it was found that parents are not involved in the day nursery other than on an ad hoc basis. There was no structure in any of the nurseries to allow for this, and no apparent plans to do so. In view of the perceived problems of nursery officers communicating with parents, this might be seen as somewhat anomalous.

**Area Team.**

1. Victoria manager did not think there had been any general narrowing of criteria over the past five years. The manager of Paddington thought that beyond five years ago there may have been a different category not included now, that of "financial difficulty", but that this had been removed due to the pressure on places. The manager of Marylebone having only been there for 6 months was unsure, but felt that because of the cuts it was likely that criteria had been narrowed.

2. All pointed out that ways of working had taken the heightened awareness of child abuse into account, and the longer serving managers, Victoria and Paddington, specifically pointed to changes in procedure such as more openness with parents and closer cooperation with social workers.

3. Victoria has just started a self-referral system, and Paddington also has more self-referrals than any other. The manager of Marylebone, however, said that social workers and health visitors were the most likely referring agents.
4. At Victoria until four or five years ago it had always been health visitors, but then it was done via the social services. Very recently, however, this changed to a self-referral system. At Paddington the health visitors used to predominate more, but now it is either social workers or self-referrals. The manager of Marylebone did not think there had been changes, although her newness in post should be taken into account here.

5. Victoria manager said speech therapist and doctor. Paddington, speech therapists. Marylebone suggested social workers, speech therapists and psychotherapists - in that order.

a) No change detected by Victoria. Paddington detected more input now by the speech therapist. The manager of Marylebone had not been there long enough to comment.

Conclusions

In this section there was little contention between the three nurseries, the following are the only significant points that appear relevant to this research:

i) In view of the increased pressure for nursery places, it is surprising to find that the nursery managers did not perceive any narrowing of referral criteria during the last five years. It is interesting that the manager with least service (only six months in post) felt impressionistically that because of the cuts there "must have been" such a narrowing, presumably because of the laws of supply and demand.

ii) The perceptions concerning the agents of referral tend to conform to the actual position as found in the analysis of referrals presented above.
General comments by the two long-serving managers, at Victoria and Paddington.

It is interesting to note that whilst the white manager has served 23 of her 25 years service as an officer-in-charge, it took the black worker 23 years to reach that position.

Manager, Victoria Day Nursery

1. In terms of changes, she perceived the following as most significant over the past twenty years.
   a) There were previously more children at the nursery, 60 compared with 48 now.
   b) The nurseries were previously under the Health Department, and social services were not much in evidence. There was consequently a good deal of emphasis on purely health matters e.g. nursery nurses would give cod liver oil to the children, "check their heads" and no on.
   c) In years past, the nursery took babies from 3 months old. There were special "baby rooms" for them, with up to ten babies.
   d) She ascribes the reduction in numbers to the time when the responsibility devolved to the social services department from the health department, and consequently suffered from local authority cutbacks. One result of this was that Westminster did not have students at the nursery employed by them, although students on placement still come to the nursery. The staff cuts also affected child numbers because of the rules concerning staff-child ratios.
   e) She feels that the nursery workers are closer to the parents than was previously the case. Home visits are now part of the practice, whereas before this was unheard of. Now this is part of the referral system. She also notes that whereas previously only
the officer-in-charge, or "matron" knew anything about a family, now she thinks that the nursery workers know more than she does as the manager because they are more involved.

f) In terms of referral, in the past it was not uncommon to take children whose mother was living at home with her own family, and going out to work.

2. Opinion on the effects of separation on mother/child relationships

She said that she used to feel that sending a child to a day nursery did have an adverse affect on the parent-child relationship. She now feels however that for some parents and children it is probably better that the parent be able to go out to work and to have the "space" away from the child. She also reported that whilst some children are at the nursery from 8 in the morning until 4.30 at night, the majority have a 9.30 - 3.30 day, which she feels is not too long. She also regards the benefits of play materials and being with other children as lasting benefits to weigh against the separation.

3. Role in breaking the "cycle of deprivation"

The manager felt very positively that having the child in the nursery helps parents with problems to deal better with those problems and avoid the need for residential care. She also said she had heard so many times that children had settled in well at school as a result of their nursery experience. To this extent she felt positive about the role of the day nursery.
Manager, Paddington Day Nursery.

Questions were put regarding under 3s policy in Westminster.

1. Said that the nursery did take children under three, but that the minimum age was one year old. She referred back to the time when babies were taken into nurseries, and were in "baby rooms". Necessarily this meant a very high staff ratio to deal with quite a different situation from children aged one and above. She points to the fact that maternity leave has been significantly increased now, so that a mother is more able to remain with her child for at least six-eight months.

2. She mentioned that in necessary cases, babies would be more likely to go to a childminder, and probably a "sponsored" childminder, whereby the council would pay a proportion of the childminding fees.

3. She also said that it was far from automatically the case that a child who had been with a childminder would, on reaching the age of two years, transfer to the nursery. The policy was simply for the child to be where it seemed happiest and where the parents felt appropriate for their needs as well. Therefore quite often a child would remain with the childminder if things were going well, irrespective of the child's age.
CHAPTER 9

Summary, Conclusions, and Implications for Practice

Because of the lack of access to the Afro-Caribbean women users of local authority day care, the following conclusions are necessarily incomplete. Insofar as they only offer a partial perspective on several vital areas, it has to be admitted that they may be also flawed. Nevertheless, it is hoped that by making clear which areas are in need of further exploration by interviewing day care users, the conclusions presented, however tentative, are not without validity.

A detailed analysis of the questionnaires has already been presented within the preceding chapters. Here will be given a broader summary and conclusions which can be drawn from this research, as well as the implications for practice.

Central to the study is the issue of the over-representation of Afro-Caribbean children in local authority day nurseries. Questions about the referral process, the factors governing admission, the racial composition of the staff groups, and so on, stem directly from Afro-Caribbean over-representation. Thus the first set of conclusions presented here will focus on this.

From this study, the extent of Afro-Caribbean over-representation is clear. In three contrasting areas of Westminster, Afro-Caribbean children are present in the day nurseries in far greater numbers than indicated by their demographic position in Westminster.

Of considerable significance however is the consistency with which a range of professionals denied the existence of Afro-Caribbean over-representation in the day nurseries. The most stark examples of this were the health visitor manager for the area of the Paddington day
nursery, which is 90% Afro-Caribbean, and the manager of the Paddington
day nursery itself, neither of whom thought that Afro-Caribbean
children were over-represented. However, even in less glaring examples,
the senior professionals, including Assistant Divisional Directors of
social services, uniformly underestimated the true proportions of Afro-
Caribbean children in the day nurseries in their areas. In the case of
the nursery managers, who obviously did know the actual figures, their
belief that their nurseries did not contain disproportionate numbers of
Afro-Caribbean children was most surprising, particularly since their
beliefs were shared by the great majority of their staff.

On a policy level, the beliefs of these professionals may have
implications. If it is not accepted that Afro-Caribbean children are
heavily over-represented in local authority day care, then there may
well be less impetus, less incentive to tailor policies to take this
into account, for example in recruitment.

In the search for possible reasons for the disproportionate Afro-
Caribbean presence in the day nurseries, nothing was found within the
referral process which suggested that the professionals involved were
more likely to advise or manipulate Afro-Caribbean parents towards
placing their children in day nurseries than they did white parents.
This however should be regarded as a tentative conclusion, because
parents - who might well have given a different picture - were not
interviewed. It can only be said here that the representatives of the
two main agencies of referral, the health visitors and social workers,
were largely neutral on the subject of race, and with very few excep-
tions did not regard race as an important issue in referral, or within
their working practices generally.

In examining the available evidence, then, the likeliest explana-
tion for the high numbers of Afro-Caribbeans in day care lies in the
socio-economic position of black women in the City of Westminster.
Although it was not possible because of confidentiality to allocate
reasons for admission to particular individuals, it is clear from the
evidence that the overwhelmingly common reason for Afro-Caribbean
admission into the Westminster day nurseries is that of lone parents
who need to work. This is highlighted most clearly in the Paddington
nursery, where self-referral is possible, and where there is no "gate-
keeping" policy to filter out applicants. In this sense, Paddington is
a perfect "free market"! That so many Afro-Caribbean women referred
themselves because they were heads of household and needed to work,
therefore suggests that day care for Afro-Caribbean children is very
much consumer-led, rather than "profession-led"; black women clearly
want low-cost day care for their children, and many have the initiative
to get it.

The finding that there were few if any alternatives to local
authority day care, certainly in the Paddington area, and that the
limited private/voluntary provision is so costly by comparison, tends
to confirm the conclusion that local authority day care is the only
rational choice for many black women, given that they need to work
full-time.

Underlining this, the evidence from the Police Child Protection
Officer suggested that Afro-Caribbean children were less likely to be
victims of child abuse. Also, both social services and nursery
managers when interviewed said that "single parents wishing to work"
was in their view the commonest reason for Afro-Caribbean use of day
care - to a greater degree than their white counterparts who tended to
be admitted for "social" reasons; "at risk", "problem" children, and so
on.

The implications of this, then will be discussed in the final part
of this chapter. Here, however, it is proposed to present a second set
of conclusions which will focus upon the day nursery itself, and the position of Afro-Caribbean children and parents within it. It is regretted that the most valuable resource of the users' perceptions has created a gap here which is impossible to fill. These conclusions should therefore be regarded in the limited context of interviews with nursery staff.

Many of these conclusions confirm those of other researchers in this field. The most obvious example is that of the staff profile. Afro-Caribbean nursery staff are considerably under-represented in all of the nurseries studies, whereas they are over-represented to an equal degree in the lower-grade, domestic jobs. To this extent the day nursery mirrors the position of black people in British society discussed earlier in this present study.

The study also confirmed nursery staff as overwhelmingly young and female, with very little previous work experience, and who because of this and their inadequate training feel ill-equipped to deal with parents - black or white. Perhaps unsurprisingly, parental involvement in the day nurseries was minimal, in spite of the various policy documents urging such involvement. Nevertheless, the staff did emerge on the whole as being willing to develop in their chosen field, to undertake training on race, and to have a more constructive relationship with parents. That over half of them did think Afro-Caribbean children had certain particular needs is again quite surprising, given the lack of emphasis on race in their previous training, and the lack of any policy on race in their local authority. As a group, however, they feel undervalued, and the high absentee and turnover rate again confirms other research indicating an occupation under stress. This may be one possible reason why they did not appear to regard Afro-Caribbean over-representation in the day nurseries as an issue, nor even as a
reality, and were more concerned with general issues within the nursery than with the specific needs of Afro-Caribbean children and their parents.

In terms of attitudes towards black children and their parents, most were determinedly neutral. Despite the finding that many did think black children had special needs, the "colour blind" approach was almost universal.

What then are the implications of these findings? Firstly, it is that whilst Afro-Caribbean children are admitted into local authority day care because of their mother's need, as head of household, to go to work full-time, local authority day nurseries are widely and increasingly regarded as places of therapeutic intervention for "problem" children. As the Training Officer for Westminster social services put it:

"I don't think there are any completely normal children in day nurseries. They all come from odd backgrounds to say the least"

(Transcript of interview: page 3)

Other interviewees expressed similar sentiments, and it is significant that those who mentioned the increasing "welfare" role of day nurseries had little or no direct contact with the nurseries.

It appears then that there is some truth in the research of others discussed in an earlier chapter that there is considerable stigma attached to local authority day nurseries which arises partly from the kind of image presented in the quote above, but also from the belief, confirmed by this research, that the service is poorly-resourced and run by staff who, despite their best efforts, suffer from low status and poor morale. The finding of this research that Afro-Caribbean children tend on the whole to be referred to local authority day nurseries because of the socio-economic position of the mother as sole breadwinner, to a far greater extent than their white counterparts, is
indicative of the position of black people in British society. For whilst they have far less access to all other forms of child care compared with white families, in local authority day care - as all other studies confirm - they are heavily overrepresented. In this sense therefore the position of poor white families is just not comparable: race is the main variable in this phenomenon. The widely-held belief that day care is for "problem" families, then, attaches itself to Afro-Caribbean families who, according to the referral patterns, are not a "problem" at all: Afro-Caribbean mothers, it would seem, are merely making the only available rational choice which will enable them to support their families, all other possibilities apparently being closed to them.

In the absence of interviews with black parents, it is accepted that such conclusions must remain tentative, however likely they may seem thus far on the available evidence.

A further implication arising from these conclusions is that the lack of input by any parents, black or white, into the day nurseries, and the admitted inability by staff to relate to parents, means that Afro-Caribbean people have no effective say in the type of care which their children receive. Given the large numbers of Afro-Caribbeans in the nurseries in Westminster, and the lack of black nursery officers, this lack of input is highly significant. For if it is true that day nurseries have a tendency to stigmatize, one possible means of tackling this would be by the active participation of parents. As things stand, this simply is not happening; an essentially white institution, the day nursery, has (albeit unwittingly) effectively excluded black participation on every level - management, staff, and parental involvement - whilst at the same time attracting disproportionate numbers of black children into using the service. Thus the marginalization of Afro-
Caribbean people discussed at length elsewhere in this present study, appears to be reflected in the day care system. Whilst on a superficial level it may appear that black parents are indeed gaining access to child care via this system, it has to be asked: 'to what kind of system have they gained access?'. Day nurseries are at present a narrow form of provision, used by a small minority who have to a greater or lesser extent been deemed "deficient". That black children are over-represented in such provision appears symbolic of the wider difficulties they have encountered in white society.

As with the conclusions of other researchers (Cohen 1988), however, the one measure most likely to remove the stigma of local authority day nurseries would be to make childcare provision for working mothers a social priority rather than, as now, either an expensive option for those who can afford private or voluntary sector day nursery places, or else part of a specialized, rag-bag state day nursery system (mainly an arbitrary mixture of "problem" children and (mainly Afro-Caribbean) children of single mothers who need to work. In the absence of any radical changes in the life-chances of Afro-Caribbean women in this country, the provision of such low-cost child care on a large scale would at least alleviate the stigma attaching to the over-representation of Afro-Caribbean children in local authority day care.
As has been demonstrated elsewhere in this study, the demand for preschool childcare facilities is certainly there and the evidence is that it continues to grow (Mastel and Dykins 1986). Equally clearly, however, is the reality that the UK makes the least publicly funded provision for children of preschool years. When it is considered that over half of this provision consists of part-time nursery schools (to which Afro-Caribbean families have disproportionately poor access anyway) then the implications for policy are considerable. It must be wondered for example why there is such an enormous gap between the levels of childcare provision, both for the 0-2s but more spectacularly for the 3-4s in the UK compared with almost every other European country. Why is it, for example, that France, Belgium and Denmark have over 80% of their preschool children in some form of provision, Germany, and even Spain and Greece (which have relatively small economies) can manage 60%, whereas the UK only has 44% of 3-4 year olds in 'some kind' of preschool provision; only 1% of this total in fact representing full-time local authority day care? (Family Policy Studies Centre 1989). The European Commission has consistently argued that unless preschool provision is prioritized in social policy, then the welfare of children might be at risk but also that there are created 'agonizing dilemmas' for those who are trying to make ends meet.

Thus childcare policy in this country should by now be moving away from the long-held notion that full-time childcare is essentially for those families who are
'deficient'. Yet, again uniquely in Europe, working mothers are not specifically accorded priority status when establishing the criteria for entry to day nurseries. Instead, the present administration - though apparently recognizing the role of working women - have turned to the private sector and to workplace nurseries to try to address the problem. This however is to entirely misunderstand both the nature and the scale of the problem. Many women for example work for small employers where such workplace childcare would just not be viable. And the private sector input again raises the issue of cost, which as can be seen from this present research is a determining factor in the kind of childcare Afro-Caribbean women seek in Westminster.

This then is the main policy issue on a national level: expansion of preschool provision to take into account the needs of working mothers would appear to be a social good for a variety of reasons. In the context of this particular study, such an expansion would de-stigmatize the use of local authority day care provision and, because of its wider use, make the issue of Afro-Caribbean over-representation less contentious. It might also be mentioned here the recent interest being taken in so-called 'latch-key' children - those schoolchildren who come into an empty house after school - and the sense of a 'social evil' having been uncovered, publicized heavily by the news media. In many ways the issue is the same; working families need childcare to accommodate the fact that they have to work, and this is particularly true when there is a sole breadwinner in a low-paid job - something
which applies more often to Afro-Caribbean than to white families.

There are a range of other policy measures which might be taken which have specifically to do with the nurseries themselves and with those related services and agencies. For example, recruitment to the NNEB courses ought to be widened in order to be more representative of the communities served by them. This would incorporate the equal opportunities measures outlined in this study. This would also apply to social services departments in general, and to the various associated training courses run by CCETSW. There are signs that this is beginning to happen, although the majority of social services departments and NNEB courses still do not have written policies of equal opportunity.

The content of the various courses, and the text books used, might also take into account to a far greater degree the multiracial communities within the UK. It was also noted that some of the textbooks were downright offensive; surely this is something which could and should be addressed immediately.

The question of the poor status and low morale of nursery workers is an important one since it has added to the generally poor image of day nurseries in this country, and must also spill over on to the children and families who use them. Although it is agreed that resources are finite, as with other aspects of social policy it is surely the case that more resources allocated to this stage of a child's development are likely to save the State a great
deal of money in the long run. To regard nursery workers as a professional, well-trained group who have a vital role to play in the early development and education of the nation's children might be a worthwhile goal in this time of 'moral panics' about crime and family dislocation. Decent preschool childcare has a part to play in the development of a decent society. That is 'the bottom line'.
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Nursery Officer:

Career Background

1. Because I've always loved children that's part of it. But also it was either nursery nursing or general nursing.

2. It you're talking about the borough I'm working for, so far yes. But there could be a lot of improvements.

3. NNEB

4. 18.

5. No. I did two years in Germany before I came down here. I said it was either going into general nursing or nursery nursing. Which I wanted to do midwifery or general nursing then midwifery. Then I did nursery nursing and I decided to stay on.

6. We didn't have A level or O level (in Ghana). Which we had was different from here, because I finished my school in Germany. I finished my further education in Germany so...

Training

1. I don't think NNEB can prepare you. I think NNEB can help you to cope with your job but it comes with experience. The longer you've done it and the more training you have after you are doing your job, the better you are able to provide, that's how I feel.

2. Yes.

We're talking 1970. OK? We just go and visit handicapped unit or hospitals for one day ... old people's homes ... but all these are only a day visit. Compared to the new setting they do now where they spend a week in a practical unit and a week at college, which I think is far better than what we did. So there's been an improve-
ment as far as that's concerned.

3. Yes that's very important when you're doing NNEB, we did, but not as widely as I think they should. We did have some training in that aspect. You need it because of the different kind of family you're going to be dealing with, and also to understand their need. So we did go into that, but not as far as we should. The race issue ... well, working I've found it more working with the people and talking to them, I've learned more since working rather than what I've learned at college.

4. There wasn't much, but it was open to bring anything you wanted to the course, and that was good for that time. Nowadays it's not usual. But in those days, nursery nurses are supposed to be seen and not heard.

5. Not compared with the NNEB they get now, there's better training they go more into the field of childcare than we had. We were more or less used as an assistant nursery nurse rather than be trained so you were learning on the job. You just learned as you go on. If you worked in a place where there was a shortage of staff you were a second year student and just left to go on.

Opinions of the Nursery Officer

1. Job satisfaction I suppose, but what do you mean by job satisfaction? I'm the type of person that's happy among people, and I'm doing what I want to do. I suppose that comes under the job satisfaction.

2. There's a lot more we can do for the family and there is not enough resources for pupils for staff for training. That's frustrating. Also other agencies to work with nursery nurses, and also nursery nurses to feel important within their own field. To be able to approach other agencies.
3. Yes. I think the children even they higher grade you, they call you mummy or auntie, even though they know your name. Or they call you teacher. So we are appreciated for your job by the children. The parents yes, I think the parents a lot. But we're talking about ... less problematic parents if you know what I mean. Not a lot, definitely not a lot. The general public still see nursery nurses as, I won't say Nanny but ... looking after children. They don't see it as a profession.

4. Yes, Nursery nurses are professional in it's own field. But they need to be recognized by other agencies. We need more further training for the care of our clients.

5. To bring happiness to the family, to the children. To educate both children and parents, to be there as a safe home for children, for family with high problem. As a safe home rather than as an institute.

6. I think, yes. A lot of it has been but there's still a lot of work that needs to be done. There's still a lot of group discussion, so that people can bring new ideas, people have ideas of their own but it needs to be brought out, to be shared by all the people. I think if that can happen then it would be fantastic. It's implementing their own ideas and encouraging other staff, and being prepared to let others know how they feel.

7. Day care is a privilege? Day care is a must for every child, it's not a privilege. Day care should be a facility for every single child. Not only for problem family but for all children or all ages, regardless of family background.

8. We do. We provide a good service and it could be improved. We should always be looking how we could improve it.

9. Should be encouraged, the children should be encouraged when
they see you. It's just like the racist thing, if children see you as mixing and getting on, and see you with their parents, and see you helping with language difficulty and all that, they they will role play and they will learn from that.

Attitude to Parents

1. Everybody should do according to how they feel for their family. You can't say that because somebody goes to work that person is more qualified to take their children to day care than someone who is at home. It depends on the family circumstances.

2. Definitely. Parents should be encouraged, because it's their children. It shouldn't be a "problem centre". OK we've got a parent's group working, but then it could be more than just a parent's group. Things that parents can run themselves. But then again you're talking about money, they need a place to run it.

3. Yes, I do have more contact with parents. We as nursery officers, but in some establishments we find that the nursery officer has less contact, and it's usually the management. But here it doesn't happen as far as I know.

On what basis? Talking with their children, encouraging them to come on outings, getting them involved in the running of the nursery, things that need to be done in the nursery. Parents I know. Even if we're busy I always get them to come and I will be there for them, they've got their keyworker, that's what I mean, they've got a safe place for children and parents. And the management always have room for them in the office.

4. I can't say we're able to help them, we can advise them, but we don't have the power ... I don't know if that is the right word. Because if you say you can help them over financial things then you'd need to know more, what it entails and who to contact. You
can encourage them as to what they should do, if it's within our means. If not, then get in touch with the social worker, you know. Personal relationships? Well if they feel comfortable, if you know your parents they can always come to you, as long as you let them know the door is open then they will come to you.

Attitudes towards Afro-Caribbean people
1. I think all children should be treated as individuals, you shouldn't class children, that's my opinion. And if you treat children as individuals, then if somebody comes ... if you treat them as individuals then you see their background. Because if you see someone who's black and you see their culture and think oh maybe they're not allowed ... because some people have stereotyped ideas about black families, how strict they are, and they treat them that way. But if you treat them as individuals you see that child for what that child is rather than Afri-Caribbean, or Chinese, or Indian or American or English, you know. I've never seen children in that context. I don't think you should box them.
2. Parents relate to you because they are comfortable with you, not because you're the same colour or the same religion or whatever. I had a Chinese child, and I get on well with the mother and we talk about a lot of things. Not that we've got the same interests but I was interested in what she was doing - she was into herbal, natural medicine and I was interested in this because my grandmother used to talk about it. So if you have a lot of things in common and you take interest in parents, they don't put you in a box and you don't put them in a box.
3. I haven't been to race awareness training. If I do go it would be to voice my own opinion because I don't think ... because
when people talk about race awareness training then straight away they're talking about black people, rather than white people, and I think that's wrong. They should say race awareness training for all people. So that we all know about each other. That's how I would see race training. If there is one then it should be for us to learn about everyone's individual background and for us to relate to them as a person, rather than these people are from there and therefor... 

4. There were times when there weren't as many as there are now, and I think it depends on as people move to the area. If you have a high level of a certain race of people - Chinese or - if you go to Soho you see more Chinese because of the high level of where those people live. Because of their business or whatever. I don't think there's any reason why, there's not any personal reason why this is.

5. Why Afro-Caribbean? That's difficult, because I don't see anyone as Afro-Caribbean. I've got lots of West Indies friends and I've got lots of West Indies parents, but if you say to me you know who's from West Indies, because I talk to them as that person is. I can't talk to them as Afro-Caribbean group. If you tell me to tell you about someone from the West Indies then I can't ... that's me! (laughs).
Nursery Officer:

Career Background
1. Because it seemed ... I always wanted to work with children, and it seemed within my grasp because I wasn't particularly academic. I felt that I could achieve the nursery nurse qualification. So that's originally why I went for it.
2. I'm not sure what my expectations were, because we're talking about when I was sixteen, when I started the training. What it did was it opened the door, it meant I had a qualification, so it meant I could apply for certain jobs ... it's totally practical why I went for it.
3. NNEB
4. Sixteen
5. No. I had about a year off and I did my training from seventeen to nineteen. I had various jobs until I was 23 and then I started in day nurseries.
6. GCEs in History and English, and that's about it.

Training
1. No, not at all
(a) Because it was very idealistic. And I was not encouraged to discuss, I was encouraged to sit and listen, take it all in, and write it all down. In fact I got a lot of hassle because I did question. I was told I was a troublemaker because I did question the things and I was told were the things that one must do with children. And maybe I was wrong but I thought I was there to learn, and I felt that to discuss something was better than to just be told it's correct. As far as doing this particular job, no it didn't
prepare me and I shouldn't think anyone on my course. As far as my course was concerned I saw children from 3 to 5 and never saw children outside that age range, except for three days I spent at a maternity hospital. So I don't think it prepared me adequately, certainly with regard to work with parents.

2. Well we had placements. I spent my first year two days a week in the nursery unit of a school. And my second year I spent two days a week in a reception class. So the actual age difference was very small.

3. No.

4. Well, yes, at least in my own case it was apparent I was having difficulties and I was asked exactly what my dissatisfaction was. And I chose exactly what I thought they might possibly agree with, which was I couldn't see the point of us doing woodwork. And I was told it would be very handy if I set up my own nursery. Because I assumed the woodwork was geared up so that we could show children how to make things, but no, I was shown how to make a footstool. I really didn't see the relevance, but in fact I got a hostile reaction. (Interviewer points out Training Officer's shock at this kind of course).

We also did PE. I was given a timetable for the first year, and I saw things like PE and naturally thought it was going to be musical movement, things aimed at children, but it wasn't, it was badminton. And I questioned this but having been asked what my problems were with the course, I was told "You're a troublemaker". So I shut up after that, and went and got my qualification which is what I was after.

(a) I would have valued the opportunity to discuss it. If my tutor was able to say "I understand you don't see the point of woodwork, but this is why we do it and I think it is valid" - but I was told
in a very hostile way that this is what I would need if I set up a
day nursery, and I thought, well actually I'd employ a carpenter.
Our training was very Victorian in a way because it was all about,
how to wash clothes, how to sew, how to knit ... and there was very
little actually on social issues as such. It was mainly on how to
be a nice Victorian nanny.
5. No. And even on the academic side of things I can remember
being asked to write an essay on the values of water play, and I
did, and I'd write reams. And I was told that nobody would be
bothered to read it because I wrote too much. And one of my fellow
students put it in a nice pretty folder with lots of pretty
pictures, and got a good mark. I resented that. I admit it looked
nice, but I thought I was asked to write an essay, and I actually
quickly learned that what they wanted on this course was nice
projects in nice folders, with lots of nice pictures, nicely
illustrated with different coloured pens. So I think during my
second year I performed a lot more, I realized I wasn't really
going anywhere having a constant battle! I'd like to go back and
tell them actually. I did tell them at the time actually but it
didn't get me anywhere. In fact, it was detrimental. I felt I
wouldn't pass the course if I didn't toe the line. I've always been
a troublemaker, you see! (laughs).

Opinions of the Nursery Officer
1. What I like most is easy, I like being with children. What I
like is to have a room with the children and to just play, and to do
things that they like and that they enjoy and to just see them
having fun. And that I like more than anything. But it doesn't
actually happen that often.
2. The lack of support. You get very little support. I don't think people are aware of the job that is done here, and it isn't followed through. And I think a lot of us feel quite frustrated. We feel there are things we would like to do but we don't have the power to do it, we don't have the backing to do it. I think we could achieve an awful lot more. If a child continually brings a child in at lunchtime when she's supposed to bring him in at 9.30. The first thing a child has to do is to sit down to eat and then the child has to go to bed because that's what happens after lunch, well that isn't particularly nice. He's missed out on a lot of play in the morning, a lot of activity in here a bit earlier. Now if there are problems, then that's quite different. Often the problem is somebody can't get out of bed, or can't get organized. Well you can say it until you're blue in the face and it doesn't make any difference whatsoever. There's no backup, there's not support. So in the end you don't bother saying anything because you actually lose face and you lose any respect you might have. So it would be nice to have somebody who could maybe come up behind you and say "Could you get your child here a bit earlier in the morning!" - this is if there isn't any problem. Or picking the child up at the end of the day, these children all have set hours and when you see a parent coming in an hour late because they've had their hair done you think, that child's been waiting for an hour, they know that they're late. So it's frustrating.

3. I would say by the children, yes.

That would have to be "some". Some parents are very appreciative, and others take it as a "right". I'm here and I can look after them, but they don't see that I am an individual and have a life outside of here. It's funny because the children don't think we have a life outside this nursery, just as I didn't think my teachers
had a life outside of school. It's amazing how many parents believe
that as well.

Appreciated? No. How can I elaborate on it? No, I'm here, I'm
employed to do a job, and that's it. And make as few waves as
possible. I know I'm not appreciated, I think I would be
appreciated if I kept my mouth shut. I think the general public are
totally unaware of what we do. They think we babysit, and anyone
can do that, can't they? That's why they don't pay us very much
because "anyone can do that". Most people think that they could
work in a day nursery, I think. There are probably a few who are
aware, but most think they could probably do it.

4. Ideally, yes. I would say I was less professional now than I
was when I was younger, because I don't think it is a particularly
nice profession. And although I've always felt terribly profes­
sional, I don't think other people within the service see us as
professionals. I think I've actually lowered my opinion of myself.

(b) I actually see it as a vocation for me. I have worked in shops
and they are just a means to an end really. Whereas this is a job
which I used to really like doing. And then it was very important.
It is not as important now, I get very frustrated because I don't
love my job as I used to love my job, and I can't achieve what I
felt I used to achieve. So I don't know, I really don't know.
Maybe I've seen too much and my enthusiasm and my optimism, which is
continually thrown back at me, I think after five years I can't take
too much more. When I come up with what I think are totally won­
derful ideas I'm told you can't do that because ... it might rain, or
something! After so many years of that then you just don't bother
coming up with the ideas.

5. How would I "personally"? I think the day nursery is so that
local councils can be seen to be doing something for underprivileged children. That's not how I would like to see them, that's how I think it is.

6. I think politically it is. I'm sure when they do the accounts at the end of the year and they look at how many children have been in the nursery, I think they probably give themselves a pat on the back and say, look at how many children we're looking after here, aren't we doing well? I don't think they actually look at the quality of the care. I think they just look at the numbers.

7. Ah! I think day care should be available to everybody. I'm not sure I would say it is their right. I just think it should be there, and if people need it they should be able to call upon it. No, I wouldn't say it was a privilege either.

8. I think the service could be vastly improved if we worked with the parents, and that we did not take over their role, and if we actually had more family centres, day nurseries are fine if we have to care for children because the parents have to work or whatever, but where the parent is maybe at home all day then I think we should be working with them to help them improve their parenting skills to help them solve the problems that they might be having with their families, rather than doing it all for them.

9. No. Potty-training perhaps, but no, not trained, no. I think children up to the age of five should be having a wonderful time, they should be having fun. I mean they've got the rest of their lives when they're going to be trained for one thing or another. It would be nice if just the first few years of their lives they could actually have fun. I suppose they've got to have some sort of social training, but I think that comes. I don't think you just sort of sit down and teach these skills, I think they learn these through experience.
Attitude to Parents

1. Ideally I think the child should have the carer, either the mother or the father, grandmother/grandfather, as long as it was someone who was constant in that child's life. I don't think mothers have to stay at home with their children. But then I don't think they should have a succession of nannies either. Or a succession of carers in the day nursery.

I think we should make provision because this sort of thing does happen. In an ideal world it would be nice if somebody could go to the home, but I don't think we'll ever achieve that. So I think we should make provision for illness etc.

2. Yes. I think they should be more involved, definitely. I'm not sure that is terribly possible considering some of the parents we deal with here. But I think they should be involved. A lot of parents feel this is just somewhere where they literally just dump the children, and that is their sole involvement, just depositing and collecting their child. They don't understand the running, they don't understand that we are actually qualified to do this job and we know what we're doing. So yes, there should be more involvement, although I don't know how much. I wouldn't like to say.

a) No. It certainly doesn't happen here.

3. Yes, a lot.

a) Mainly when they're bringing in the children and collecting them at the end of the day. We actually tried very hard to involve the parents in activities. For example, if we go out with the children we say would you like to come with us? Or we say we have a toy library, would you like to help us run it? And we have a very negative response from parents, they are not interested. I'd say 80-
90% are not interested at all in coming on outings with us and the child, or running the toy library or cake sales. And I think we have to accept some responsibility for that negative attitude. I don't think they are made to feel as welcome as they should be I don't think they are made to feel involved. I think we encourage them to leave their child in the morning and go home, and collect it at the end of the day. Although I'd like to see them more involved, I see why they do just that. Obviously some of them, they are not interested and I don't think there's a lot you can do to change it. I think for some of the parents, maybe they don't feel welcome, maybe they just feel they should leave the child and go - and we should be working more with them.

4. Well that's very difficult because I'm always reluctant to give advice on anything other than child care, because that's my interest. Because if it was the parent having a problem with the spouse, then they make up, what about me! And certainly financially I don't think I have the capability to give financial advice. I would try to refer them to somebody else. But any problem with child care then I would be all right, and if I can't solve it or give adequate advice then I would try to find out or refer them to someone who could give that advice. But not on a personal level. I mean if the parent said "my child is not eating at home, what should I do?" then that's fine. But if they said something about a boyfriend, then to be perfectly honest I wouldn't want to get involved with that.

**Attitudes towards Afro-Caribbean people**

1. Well, I think that all the children have particular needs but I think they will have their own, individual, particular needs. I think it is very important for Afro-Caribbean children that they see
Afro-Caribbeans in a positive way, because they have an awful lot of negative images of Afro-Caribbeans. I mean they actually have them in this nursery! Because one thing that struck me when I walked in was that the domestics are Afro-Caribbean and the nursery staff are all white. So I try to maintain some kind of balance here, though it's very difficult with those odds stacked against you. It wasn't set up that way, it just happened. But that's how the children see it, they must see Afro-Caribbeans as being on the servile level because these are the people that are doing the cleaning, the people that are preparing the food. And I worry very much how the Afro-Caribbean children saw themselves. There are probably very good reasons why the people chose the jobs they do, but the child is not to know that. And we want the child to have a positive image of himself, and my little girl, she's three and she's only just started talking about herself as black. And she points to pictures and says, "that little girl's like me!" And I wonder is she going to look at the other black images she has - that person's like me then I will try to be like that person. Well if you've only got people doing maybe servile jobs, then is that where her expectations are going to lie? We have the same sort of thing with sex as well. Where you have this thing, you can't be a doctor, you're a girl, you've got to be a nurse! So I try to have positive images of females. I was pulled up in my former day nursery for having a winter scene with children from different backgrounds. I had a Japanese child, I had what I thought looked an Asian child, an Afro-Caribbean child and I had a white child. I even had a child with red hair because I think they're underrepresented. And I was told I was making an issue about race, and I shouldn't do it. They said, "besides, we haven't got any Japanese children here". And people
with that attitude it's very difficult. I looked around the nursery and she said we didn't have very many children from ethnic minority groups. Well what difference does that make? Every picture was white. Everything was white. It was also incredibly sexist as well. But then, people aren't aware of it. But I was criticized for doing that. Of making an issue. I wasn't making an issue I was only doing a picture the way I normally do a picture, and I would normally depict different races and that's because I was brought up in a multicultural society and to do people of varying races is second nature to me.

2. I can't say that I've ever noticed. It's very difficult, you'd have to ask them, but up until recently all the staff here were white, so they really didn't have a choice! I'd like to think I had good relationships with all my parents regardless of what their backgrounds were. Whether they would be able to relate to a person who is of the same race as them or not, I really don't know. But I think a lot of the time the issue is the childcare, for example the child I have at the moment is African, her mother says she doesn't believe in all this racism and everything, she says she's just my child and that's it! She doesn't even see her or her child as particularly black. She knows they're black, but so what? People first, and that's her attitude.

3. I've never had it.

b) Yes, I would be very interested.

4. Well my first impression is maybe it's the sort of areas that you have day nurseries in. And you have day nurseries in the inner city areas, where you tend to have more of a cultural mix. I wouldn't say there is a high proportion in this nursery, no, probably because there isn't a high proportion of Afro-Caribbean families in this area. I also know that culturally - certainly in
my last day nursery there were a lot of single parents and West Indian girls who had children at 15 or 16 and they said to me it was cultural, "my mother looks after the child or the child goes into a day nursery". I mean that's why they were telling me that they had a child. They had a child because "that's what we do". You know, if we were back home we would have a child at 15 or 16. I don't know, I don't know where home is! I don't know, maybe it isn't as frowned upon in Afro-Caribbean societies as it is here and one of the reasons for the child being in a day nursery, depending on the area, could be simply because you are a single parent.

5. No. Just that when I went to school it was in a very multicultural area and it wasn't until I moved out of that area that I realized people were different colours. And I think that a lot of the problems between the races is what's inflicted on the child. As far as the child is concerned it isn't my experience, and I think people make too much of an issue out of it, I think you should be aware of it but sometimes I think a lot of damage is done because people are trying too hard to inflict their views on race. Whereas other people maybe didn't give race a second thought but they are now, a second thought in a very negative way. For some reason it's backfired. I think that maybe people should relax a bit more about the issue and not be quite so aggressive. I mean there are a lot of people who are very aggressive about that issue as they are about issues of sex equality. You tend to just hear the militant few. You see the vast majority of people have quite a nice attitude towards race and sex, and people just have different views and different orientation, but because it tends to be the militant ones that you hear then the rest of society just look at them that think "Oh my God no". Then it's negative. It's backfiring. Because people have
become racist and discriminating, whereas before they wouldn't have done. My friend was taken before the race relations board, and was trying very hard not to be racist. She said "I wasn't before, but I'm now really worried about the things that I say". I have had incidents in my former borough where we were not allowed to ask for black coffee, because it was racist. We ask for coffee without milk. So that everybody's saying "this is ridiculous". Everyone's heard of the one, you can't say Baa Baa Blacksheep, you can't ask for black sacks because it's equating black culture with rubbish. And I'm sure people think "Oh, I hadn't thought of that, but now you've put the idea into my mind". So there's an awful lot of people who mean well who are actually doing a lot of damage.

I just wish that people wouldn't see it as an issue, if they could just see people for what they are. Or just say well you can have this job because you're good at this job. But no, sometimes it's because we haven't got our quota of this ethnic group so we therefore have to find someone who looks good on paper. Maybe by not asking people to fill in forms before they apply for a job stating their ethnic culture. Although they tell you we are simply doing this for our books or whatever, I don't think it really is.

I just think it's terrible that you've got to state that you are an equal opportunity employer. Surely, you are - isn't everybody! And when people state it you think, Ohh, what does this mean? And I think a lot of people interpret it as meaning Oh you're going to favour if you're black, gay, disabled person! It sounds as though we should employ more black nursery workers, but no we shouldn't. We should employ people who are best for that job. I do know though of other boroughs who would employ a black nursery worker because she's black. Because it then reflects the surrounding community. No, I don't think you should have to do that. I think you should
employ the best person for the job and if everybody's doing their job correctly then hopefully these children aren't going to get a low opinion of themselves, they are going to see themselves in a positive way. I think here we have got our work cut out because as I say we have got the old situation where a lot of the domestics are black, but I think we can do a lot in helping that situation. And they could do a lot themselves.

The domestics are not "part" of the nursery, and that's where they could help. I've had this very discussion last week! Where I said I would like to see more involvement, I would like to see them as more part of the community in the nursery. But they're not, they're very separate. And not only that, but one of them doesn't talk to any of the children and one talks only to blacks. I'm sure she must have spoken to white children but I've only ever seen her talking to black. And I've noticed that on the odd occasion when she's made a fuss of a child, that child has always been black. So I think we've actually got a lot of work to do within this establishment to improve that. But no, they're very separate, very very separate. They remain aloof. I mean as far as the children are concerned they've had children talk to them and they've been ignored. And if this is the child's image of black people ... so they could actually do something to help. But you're not going to change somebody's character are you? Not overnight anyhow. I think they could be helping a bit more. The food standard is very low. I mean you could make a big positive thing out of a black person cooking the food, but here it is so low that it doesn't work. And the food is boring and it's all very negative. And we have children who have eating difficulties and it's a case here's the food, and here's the person who is bringing it, whose bottom looks morose! And I'm trying to do
these multi-cultural pictures to show a positive image, I mean, we're actually not making the most of them.

I think it's great now to have a black woman nursery staff so that is good, and any parents that do find it hard to relate to us being white, then at least now there's somebody perhaps they can relate to better.

I hope the black person does not see herself as being responsible for all the "black issues". I hope not. It depends how she sees herself. Because you do get people who say "you're only doing this because I'm this or because I'm that" and she isn't like that at all. But you do have people who say you only said that because ... which is really their problem not yours. But no, she seems quite well-balanced. I don't know what she will be like a year from now!

I personally find it very difficult when people aren't doing their job. Because I think I'm doing my job and you make my job more difficult if you are not doing your job. And if I think food is very important, and if I have children with feeding difficulties, I want it to be relaxed. I want it to be sociable, and I don't want any hassle. So when I'm sitting down to dinner and I'm nice and relaxed, you know what happened today? The child didn't have any pudding! I'm outraged you see, and then I've got to remain calm and quiet because I don't want these children to be upset. It's increasingly difficult but I hadn't actually realized that that child was sitting there all that time without any pudding. And what happens in the past I get up and sort it out. But now I no longer sort it out, I let somebody else sort it out. But it doesn't matter, that child was still sitting there for however long, I don't know, without a pudding - that's wrong. That pudding should have been there with everyone else's, it's bad enough that he can't eat the food as everyone else, you don't want him to feel he is being
punished, or he didn't have a pudding because somebody forgot. This person forgot immediately after she was told. She just brings the pudding in and says "can this child have it?" and we say no. Now really and truly she should have known beforehand that he couldn't have it, not wait and bring it into the room and then the child's sitting there and thinks that "they're talking about me". And he didn't get anything! Now luckily the child doesn't have any eating difficulties, but if he did have eating difficulties, you're only going to make them worse. So that sort of thing totally enrages me, so there they are sitting down, expecting - not dinner so much as tea, tea is a lovely, sociable event, there's less pressure on them to eat - and there's something missing, and then there's something else missing, or you find you've cut into something which is black on the outside, and I mean black, and inside it's runny because it's not cooked. And I think I'm not dishing this out, I wouldn't give this to anybody to eat. So then I'm in a rage and what would have been a really nice event is traumatic, and not just for the children, but for me. And I'm only human and I have feelings, and I don't want to be enraged but I am enraged. But I have to suppress it because I don't want it to come out on the children. But then I did have this discussion recently and I said I've been complaining about the same things here for four years, why haven't you done anything about it? And I don't think I can be more blunt than that. People would find it very difficult to be in the same room as the person I've been complaining about. Yes, I can say it but I wouldn't want to say it direct to the people I am complaining about, but obviously that's what needs to be done.

On our recent training day we were told that the kitchen staff were going to come in and tell us how they felt, and one of their
grievances, rightly or wrongly, was they felt they weren't appreciated. Another one was that we didn't put the cutlery in the jug with the washing up liquid in, at the end of dinner. So what happened was that the cutlery then got chucked into the bin with the dinners. Fair enough. Well we all now put our cutlery in the little jugs. But do you know, the standard of food hasn't improved. So we're all now putting our cutlery in the right place, but we weren't allowed to talk back, we were told to listen to what these people said. I don't think the training officer wanted a slanging match. We were told to hold back on what we wanted to say and listen to the grievances of the kitchen staff, which is what we did. Whereas really and truly maybe we should have had the whole lot out. But one of their major issues was that we should do this with cutlery, well that's great for them! But the food is still crap. But we were told not to say that, we were told not to say it. I don't know why, I imagine because they didn't want a fight. I imagine it's going to be followed through on our next training day. I think he must have felt that it would be beneficial for us to hear their side, because we all know our side, we know what we're annoyed about but we've never heard what theirs was, so it was beneficial but all I see now is that we're all doing what they wanted us to do but in fact we've got nothing back. I'm not saying that I want decent food, because I don't care whether there is a meal for me or not, because I'm a very fussy eater anyway, most of the time I don't eat the stuff anyway even if it was edible. But I do object to the food not to be a reasonable standard for the children, and where there are things missing, when you have got a child sitting there. And I think what's the effect on this child? Already the child is obviously different from everybody else. As an example, the children sometimes have croissants, which are very high
in fat. Children on a low fat diet can't have them. I really felt it was wrong for them to be given a piece of bread when everyone else had croissants, because it's a novelty. I went out, and I was a martyr and I got some wholemeal muffins. And the other children couldn't have these wholemeal muffins, only the children on the low fat diet. They are different but they're just as special. And I went to the kitchen and I said "have you taken them out the freezer?" and they said "oh, we haven't taken them out the freezer". Now I was supposed to be doing my job, and I want to make sure these children have got food to eat. And I said "you have to cut them in half and you have to toast them". When they came down to us - they'd bunged them in the oven - so when they came down to us they were dried out. So I am furious, I'm enraged. Because I think a) it's not my job and b) the food should come down here and we should get on with the tea. But no, I have to go down there and say "did you toast these like I asked you to?" and they say "Oh, did we have to toast them?". Actually, I don't need this, I just want to do the job. The children probably didn't notice, although they weren't as nice as they should have been, but I just think it's important that we are actually here for the children and that we should all be aiming at making it a nice happy environment for the children to be in. It can't be if you've got all these adults at each other's throats.

What happens is, somebody will go down there, then there's a shouting match, and there are all these children going down the corridor and they hear people shouting at each other.
Nursery Officer: Marie

Career Background
1. When I was a young girl I did lots of babysitting and all that so I think it's ever since I was doing babysitting. Ever since I was a teenager I wanted to do it. I think it's just with the neighbours and all that, they'd drop the children and I got my interest doing that.
2. Yes, down here it's different day nurseries from up in Scotland. It's run differently.
3. NNEB
4. Sixteen and a half.
5. Yes.
6. Secretarial studies, English, maths, arithmetic, German - that's all.

Training
1. It doesn't tell you about going to (obliterated) it doesn't tell you about things like that, but everything else it does.
2. You went to college two days a week and the nursery three days a week. At that was every week.
3. No there wasn't any separate thing it was all in together, no.
   (Sound very bad: words unintelligible at times)
4. Yes once a week they would all get together and
   (unintelligible). (Sound totally obliterated up to Q.8)

8. Yes, I would.
9. Children, in what way? Oh yes, the child will then learn how to mix and how to share. Also at dinner time they will learn table manners.
Attitude to Parents

1. I think they should stay with their children and go to the nursery when they are about three. I think they should stay with their children until then.

2. I wouldn't like to have them around all of the time, but I mean fair enough if they came in for half an hour a day or help out or something like that. I wouldn't like to have them around all day.

3. Yes.

Well when they come in in the morning they tell you how the child has been over the evening or in the morning or whatever, so you do have quite a bit of talking when you have reviews, and you're involved with them there as well.

4. If they ask for your help then fair enough but I wouldn't really ask them. I mean, if they want to tell me fair enough and maybe you could give them a bit of help. Or even refer them to the manager.

Attitudes towards Afro-Caribbean people

1. I wouldn't say no, not the ones we've got here I mean, I'd say they're all the same. I don't think it makes any difference.

2. Again, there is no difference, just exactly the same. It all depends what the nature of the person is like. We're both the same world so there's no difference.

3. No I've not.

4. I'd say there were quite a few actually, maybe it's just the area or whatever. I don't really know very much about it, but maybe it's just the area they come from or whatever. From the housing estates and all that, and I suppose London has quite a high black
population.

5. No as I say I don't treat them any different or whatever, and I've not been on any courses so I mean ...

She has been qualified almost four years.
Nursery Officer: Dina

Career Background
1. I think it's when I done a child development lesson at school, and just from then I thought I wanted to work with kids and that's all I wanted to do. I've got lots of brothers as well, three are younger and I thought ...
2. Yes, because hopefully in years to come I want to set my own nursery up and like being in a day nursery it's really a lot of experience.
3. NNEB
4. Sixteen and then I went to college for two years. Then I done two years NNEB after college.
5. Yes
6. Mostly CSEs and then I went to college and done some O levels, English, Child Development, Maths, Social Studies.

Training
1. No not really, not in a day nursery I don't think because they don't tell you about reports, and children on the at risk register, parents you've got to deal with and things like that. When I was at college they didn't really prepare you for that. It was more or less the nursery school sort of atmosphere.
2. What at college? Yeah.
Erm, you done four days at nursery then a week at college. So you'd have four days every two weeks at the nursery doing the practical side of it.
3. Not really, no.
4. Erm ... sometimes some of the tutors I didn't get on well with,
and I thought some of the lessons like science wasn't really nursery nursing, it was just to make up the hours when you were at college.

Yeah.

5. No I think that bits to do with day nursery, race, and child abuse we could have done things like that.

Opinions of the Nursery Officer

1. The children! (laughs). Well in this particular nursery you can go into your room and you can do whatever you want, you can do messy activities and there's nobody to tell you not to do it, and you can always try out new things with the children.

2. I can't think off my head.

3. Yes.

Yes, some of them.

Yes.

Emm no because I talk to some people and say I'm a nursery nurse and they think I'm just sitting there all day with the children. And especially in a day nursery there's much more to it than that: there's reports, actually doing things with the children they are learning, you're teaching them.

4. Yeah.

5. To have a warm environment for the child so the child is comfortable coming to nursery, to attach a relationship with the nursery officers - we do a keyworker system. And for the parents to be satisfied with our work as well. And of course for us to be satisfied.

6. Yes.

7. Privilege? I think all children should have a nursery place.

8. Yes.

9. No, no.
Attitudes to Parents

1. If I had a child I would stay home with the child for the first five years, failing that, a lot of parents, mothers/fathers, can't afford to and they've got to go back to work. So I think it depends on the individual really.

2. Yes, at times we do involve some mothers or dads to come in and spend time with the children in the room.

3. Yeah, a lot

They come in every morning and they see your face in the morning knowing you are going to look after their child until night as well.

4. No. We're not here ... I don't think ... either the social worker or some of the others ... we're here for the parents but we're here for the children mainly.

Attitudes towards Afro-Caribbean people

1. No ... no, personally I think every child is the same.

(noise begins again and drowns out all sound for the rest of this interview).
Nursery Officer:

Career Background

1. Something from school, I always wanted to work with children. From school I just went to the careers office to find out what courses there were, and they told me about the NNEB, so that's where I went.

2. Yes it has. The actual course, they don't cover what you actually come across in a day nursery. The problems and ... you know? It's sort of laid out that it's so easy and you don't meet up with any problems, they don't teach you how to cope with problems either.

3. I have the NNEB

4. Sixteen

5. No, I took a year off. I went to sixth form college to do some retakes, and I went to college from there for the NNEB.

6. Four O levels.

Training

1. I wouldn't say it did, in some parts it didn't. As a student on the course they don't give you a lot of responsibility. So when you do start work it's hard to get in really, because you think "I'm still a student". Until you get used to - I'm actually qualified and I'm equal with the other staff. It's hard to get used to ... and that's about all really.

2. They sent us to day nurseries, that was for a year. And they sent us on special experiences; disabled and special needs children. And I've done a bit of nannying and ... that's it; nannying, day nursery, children with special needs, hospital. The baby unit,
children's wards - that was special experience, that was just three weeks we were there. I would have liked to have done that a bit longer, but we only did the three weeks.

3. No, no, we didn't cover that. If we did talk about race it was touched, we didn't really go into it. Even in health lessons when they'd talk about skin, they wouldn't even tell you how you cared for a black child's skin, a black child's hair - it was based on white children. On my course there was only three black trainee nursery nurses and two left so I was the only one left on the course. They just couldn't cope with it. Some left they couldn't pass, they couldn't keep up with the work. I found myself to be the only black trainee nursery officer on the whole course.

Yes, well they didn't cover the cultural backgrounds very well, even in home economics, like, food, they didn't cover West Indian food or Chinese food or Indian food, they just covered English food. Which I wasn't too happy about. Even the creative side, like, if we were doing "babies" as a topic it would be just white babies. Even in skin care of babies, it wasn't covered. Black children have different skin to white children but it wasn't covered at all.

4. No, not really.
   a) Yes, I would have very much.

5. One the whole, yes.

Opinions of the Nursery Officer

1. I like the togetherness of the staff, they're very friendly. I like the atmosphere, a friendly happy atmosphere.

2. I haven't really found anything I dislike yet! (laughs)

3. Yes.

The parents, well they just bring in their children and run out again, so I don't really... You get the odd parent who will stay and
chat and everything but ... most of the parents are always in a hurry so you never see them to speak to them, they're just hurrying by.

Yes.

I don't think they understand what it involves, the general public. When you say "I'm a nursery nurse" they say "Oh you just play with children all day" - that's their first reaction. But they don't realize there's more to it than that. I don't think they appreciate nursery nurses very much.

4. Yes, I do, yes.

5. Well, to stimulate the children, and to further their development.

6. Yes, I think so.

7. Yes I would say so.

8. Yes I feel that we provide a good service, in the child's best interests.

9. No (laughs). No, you can guide them but you can't train them.

Attitudes to Parents

1. Not that old, not until three. I'd agree with that up until about one and a half. After that I feel they should be with other children but until then it's too young.

Yes, yes that's special circumstances isn't it? They should be able to leave it.

2. Yes, much more.

a) Well it's better than it was but it could be better. I know that parents are working and don't get involved as much as they'd like, but I'd like to see more parents get involved in what their children are doing, you know? And their progress.
3. Well er ... not really. Only when they're coming and going, that's about it.

b) Yes, we ought to get to know each other more. I'd like that.

4. To an extent, I'm not really around ... where the family's concerned I don't think I could help in that way because I'm not actually around to know what's going on. But financially, from my own experience, yes I could give advice if they've got financial problems, yes. Where the relations at home, I could be sympathetic and listen but that's about it really. I can't really get involved in that.

**Attitudes towards Afro-Caribbean people**

1. Yes, they do have particular needs. For a start I'd like to see more black nursery officers around, because I've noticed even here there's not a lot - there's none, actually apart from one. And I feel they have to have more black nursery officers in nurseries so that the black children have somebody to relate to. And that's about it really.

They need oils for their hair and cream because their skin gets dry.

2. I haven't really had a chance to actually get to know the parents yet. So I couldn't really answer that. Because I've just started so I couldn't really say.

3. No.

b) Yes I would, I think it would be of great value wouldn't it? It makes you more aware doesn't it?

4. Probably the area. This area, there's quite a lot of black people in this area, the majority of them are black.

5. No, not really, no.

(changes her mind)

Yes, I'd just like to see more black people taking up the profession
of nursery officers because I think it's a shame there's not more
black nursery officers around, so that's what I'd like to see, more
black nursery officers. They'd be able to make black children more
aware of their culture, more than a white nursery officer could.
Plus a child would have more in common with a black nursery officer
and be able to relate to the black nursery officer more than that
child would a white nursery officer. That's why I would like to see
more black nursery officers in the field, but I don't know why ... I
mean when I was training I didn't see many. On my course there
weren't many, and I thought that was a shame you know. I don't know
why they're not interested in this field of work. When I was on the
course they were talking about lowering the pass standards so that
black people could get on to the course easier, and I was very upset
about that and I made them aware of it. Plus there was only three
black people on the course and it was actually a tutor that
suggested it, to lower the standard of pass - because you know you
have tests before you can go on the course, they were thinking of
lowering the way it's graded or whatever. So there'd be more black
applicants. Them saying that is saying black people aren't
intelligent enough to get on the course. That's why they have to
lower the standard so they can pass, to get on it. In my college
you had to get four O levels to get on the course, plus you had to
take an English test, a written essay or whatever, and comprehension
test, and they were thinking of lowering the standard or scrapping
it, just to get more black people on the course. That was at my
college, Harrow College of Higher Education.
The tutors at my college, they weren't supportive. There were only
about two you could approach because the others were just so
unapproachable. That's probably why a lot left. I mean a lot of
people left the course because they couldn't really talk to the tutors. There's only a few you could approach and say I've got this problem and that problem. When some of the girls on the course were ready to take the exam. The day before they were going to take the exam they were taken into a room and told they were all going to fail, by a particular tutor. I mean you don't need that when you're going to take a particular exam the next day. She took quite a few into a room and said "You are all going to fail" and you don't really need that. A tutor has even said that to me, she said am I sure that it's really what I want to do? I mean, and I'd done one and half years and I was ready to take my exam, and she turned round and said am I sure it's what I want to do? And I said yes I'm sure. In that way she pushed me really and she made me say I'll show them I can really do it. She done me a favour really, because she made me work harder to pass. But they never gave you any moral support at all. It just wasn't there. You just had to have strong willpower. And you had to be determined to get through it, so I'm going to get through this, because you just didn't get any help from the tutors. If you actually get through the NNEB it's an achievement in itself, because there's so much pressure.

It's too much pressure. I mean, the exam. There was a lot of girls who were very good on placement, very good in the actual practical side, but when it came to writing essays they just couldn't do it, or they found it really hard. Then it's based on whether you pass or fail in your exam. I mean you could pass in all the practical side, all your nursery work or whatever, and then in the exam you fail because you're not as good at writing essays. So I feel it shouldn't be just based on the essays, pass or fail. Half of the marks should be from your placement where they place you. And if you get a good report from your placement, the marks from that
should be carried over and compensated in your exam, in the actual written exam. But at the moment it's pass or fail. You can pass your placement, pass all your practical work, pass all your projects and everything, then you sit your exam and you fail that. Or you fail by a couple of marks, you have to go back for a term or whatever. I think it's too strict in that way. I think they should carry the marks over. Because after all when you're out there working it's the practical side that matters more . . . most. Because if you are good at writing essays it doesn't mean you are a good nursery nurse.

I want to see the NNEB changed. I don't agree with it being just pass or fail on your exam. I don't agree with that. I think you should have 50% or even 10% of the marks for your practical training, to be added on to the exam mark. Because I think a lot more people would pass that way because it's not everybody that's good at writing essays. I mean I had trouble with essay writing. I was good at practical and had no trouble with my placements, but found the problems with essays. I just had to get better at essays to get through it, that's all!
Afro-Caribbean Children in Local Authority Day Care 0 - 3 years
Questionnaire/Interview Guide for Nursery Officers

Career Background

1. Why did you choose to become a nursery nurse?

2. So far, has it met your expectations?
   a) if not, why not?

3. What training have you have (e.g. NNEB)?

4. What age did you leave school?

5. Did you come into this work directly?
   a) if not, what did you do before?

6. What qualifications did you obtain at school?

Training (If completed NNEB or equivalent)

1. Did the training course prepare you adequately for your present work?
   a) if not, can you say why?

2. Was there a practical element to your work?
   a) if so, where and for how long?

3. Did you learn anything about race on your course?
   a) if so, how useful have you found this in your work?

4. When in training, where there opportunities to express dissatisfaction with the course?
   a) if not, would you personally have valued such an opportunity?

5. On the whole, were you satisfied with the training you received?

Opinions of the Nursery Officer

1. What do you like most about your work?

2. What do you most dislike?

3. Do you feel appreciated for the job you do by:
   a) the children
   b) the parents
   c) management
   d) the general public

4. Do you regard yourself as a "professional"?
   a) if not, how would you describe your work (for example in comparison with other jobs)?

5. How would you describe the aim of the day nursery?
6. Do you think this is being achieved in your nursery?

7. Would you say that day care is a privilege?

8. Would you say that in general you provided a good service?  
   a) if not, how would you improve it?

9. Do you think children should be "trained"?

Attitude to Parents

1. Ideally, do you think mothers should stay at home with their children until the child is three years old? Or mothers should be able to leave their children in special circumstances, e.g. illness? Or mothers should be able to leave their children on a regular basis for all the time. Agree/Disagree?

2. Would you like to involve parents in the running of the day nursery?  
   a) Does this happen at all now?

3. Do you have much contact with parents?  
   a) if so, on what basis?  
   b) if not, would you like to have more?

4. Do you feel able to help parents with their personal problems?  
   Examples? Financial? Personal?

Attitudes toward Afro-Caribbean people

1. Do you think Afro-Caribbean children have particular needs?  
   a) if so, what do you think they are?

2. Do Afro-Caribbean parents relate to you better than:  
   a) white parents  
   b) parents of other ethnic groups?  
   c) if not, why do you think this is?

3. Have you had any race awareness training?  
   a) if so, what opinion do you have of it?  
   b) if not, would you value doing it?

4. (If appropriate) There are a high proportion of Afro-Caribbean children in your nursery, why do you think this is?

5. Is there anything else you would like to say about Afro-Caribbean people?

Thank you for your valuable help with this research. Please feel free to say anything else you think is relevant.
1. Race is mentioned in our policy of children and families, we have a policy of children and families in which race is stated, do you wish me to quote the passage for you? (Yes) This is the only place where race is mentioned, and it says:

"It should be regarded as the birthright of every child to grow up in a stable family for it is this that provides the means by which the child may develop the sense of security and identity that derive not solely from the parents but also from the wider familial, social and cultural environment within which the child grows to maturity."

It then goes on to say

"Children need to be aware that these positive aspects of identity that are based upon a cultural, religious, or racial background or upon established family relationship. In providing services a high priority will be given to the need to respect these aspects of identity so long as this is consistent with the overall welfare of the child, which must be the overriding consideration in every case."

So that is the only reference on our policy for children and families to race specifically. In our adoption policy we have a phrase which says that in making family placements the placement should respect, reflect and reinforce the racial background of the child.

2. I can't reel them off actually without them in front of me, but the highest category are the children on the child protection register, where reception into care might be avoided. After that it is where the child has special needs in terms of health and development. After that it is where it will assist the family where one of the parents is ill or needs the respite from the child because of sickness or something of that sort. And after that comes the criterion of where the parent needs to go out to work, the one-parent family where the parent needs to work. Now there may be something else in there that I've forgotten because I'm not sufficiently familiar because I don't go into the panel meetings where these decisions are made actually.

3. Children at risk.

4. Alternatives, yes. We have a system where the placements panel, the admissions panel actually give consideration to childminding, playgroups, nursery school, ... depending obviously on the age of the child and the needs of the child. And the idea is to provide best for the needs of the child.

5. Yes, I think it's got about 25 children on it at the moment. (b) what do they do? I don't know, I'm not sufficiently familiar.

6. No, from what I understand probably not I think maybe it's 50-50. I think there is a very substantial group that regard it as a right and not a privilege. And it's quite hard to explain to people that actually there is a waiting list and it isn't a "right", unfortunately, it isn't a "right". I think very few would go as far as to say it's a privilege, though I think many might be highly appreciative and value
it in that respect. I certainly wouldn't like to say that parents don't value the resource. You are talking about day nurseries? I do think they regard it as a valuable resource, yes.

RACE

1. Yes, I think a very small number, five or six at Bessborough Street, I think.

2. I wouldn't like to say, no, probably within the statistical limits it is such small numbers that it probably is not over-represented. I should think it's probably a reasonable reflection.

3. In terms of services reflecting and respecting the culture and the race of the child then there is some emphasis, at the very least, on play materials which don't solely reflect a white culture. I've seen pictures and books and play materials, and dolls and those sort of things where the people in those are black as well as white.

4. Well, yes, children of all races have special needs according to their race, which is that they may have special needs in terms of their skin care and hair care and diet which should be known about and considered and responded to appropriately. But they also, because most of these children come from fairly poor backgrounds on the whole, have run the risk of developing a poor self-image really, in terms of their attitude towards black people in a white society. Therefore there needs to be some kind of counterbalancing of that and a kind of bending over backwards to give positive images of black children and black adults. Ideally you need to have black adult positive role-models around and so you should pay attention to the racial profile of the staff group by positively attempting to recruit a staffing group which reflects the racial and cultural background of the children.

5. No, I'm not aware that there are any predominant reasons. Or not aware that as group they have needs which are any different from the other group of children. I don't know the answer to this because I've not studied it, but I'm not aware of any generalizations that anybody's given me around that.

6. I am not aware that there are any programmes that you call race awareness that have been organized on a regular basis by our central training section. What tends to happen is that individual staff groups identify this as a training need and organize the training for themsevles. I have organized some race awareness training in one staff group that I am responsible for. People are eligible for race aware­ness training that may be organized by the London boroughs training committee, but there has been no concerted effort to organize race awareness training.

7. There are none at Bessborough Street. Bloomfield Terrace at the present time is very depleted, and they certainly had one there at a recent time and I think they have just appointed another one. I think that's right, I'm not absolutely sure about that. I don't think I've ever seen an Afro-Caribbean worker at Basset Street.

a) I'm afraid not (no figures to hand). Oh, lots of domestic workers (laughs) Oh yes, this is the patter of course. The domestic workers are often black but the nursery workers not.
8. (not asked?)

9. I think we've got about 3 section 11 posts, none of them in Victoria. This Department doesn't make good use of Section 11 funding.

10. I don't know the answer to that one. I have no reason to think they wouldn't but I can't answer it.

11. I have lots of strong views in relation to adoption and fostering because I manage that service also, you see. But there is nothing more that I can add to that in terms of day nurseries.

STAFF

1. Yes, the average is early twenties.

2. Not in my day nurseries, no.

3. In these two nurseries ... it's been quite low at Bessborough Street, it's not been too bad at all. I think probably in the region of 25-30% at Bessborough Street and probably higher than that at the other one in the past year, nearly 50% actually. But there are quite a few workers at Bessborough Street that have been there quite a long time actually, it's quite stable. That's because of the area really. People like working in Pimlico.

4. Absenteeism? Oh, not very high. It's quite low absenteeism rate I would have said. From my understanding it's not been thought of as a great problem.

5. (not asked?)

6. Well, it's all right as far as it goes - but you want to know what the shortfalls are? I think the problem as I understand NNEB training, it might have changed recently, and certainly the more advanced post-qualifying course does cover these subjects, is that it is quite deficient on actually working with parents and family units, and working with the child as a member of a family. It is too concentrated on the physical care of the child rather than looking at the child in the emotional context of its family, working on those needs. And it has been quite deficient on issues to do with race and culture. So I think in those respects we would be wanting to see a qualification for nursery workers that took account of those issues and enabled nursery workers to have a much better understanding of the backgrounds that the children come from, and of the problems that their parents have, and have a much better attitude really towards parents so that they can have a partnership with parents. That's the move that we are trying to encourage with the present group of nursery workers through training.

7. No, I think it can be quite problematic. I think the more mature and experienced workers are able to work very well with parents but the problem with quite young, immature nursery workers is that they often have a tendency to be quite judgemental of parents. And this can cause enormous friction and competition and a sense for the parents of feeling undermined and undervalued, and actually being unhelpful in terms of their self-image because they see these young nursery nurses as being better able to take care of their children than they are themselves. I think this throws into question the value of the service at all if that is what it does. And that is something that we've got to
get to grips with because it's not actually helping parents at all, taking children away from them and colluding with their own poor self-image and sense of worth is not doing them any favours at all.

8. I think that parents are often encouraged to stay with their children, obviously particularly through the introductory stages. That is the policy in fact, and it is quite difficult to work in a way which actually does encourage the parents to do that. Whether that is to do with the way the offer is presented or the value of the service to the child, I don't know, but parents are certainly encouraged to stay and be ... I mean in my experience, I don't know if this happens everywhere and with every (unintelligible) that you work with that parents are encouraged to stay and help. The problem about this is that the nursery worker often feels that they are caring for the parent and the child ends up by not being cared for by either of them. And of course staffing ratios are very tight and the nursery workers feel very torn by that kind of demand. So it's another kind of problematic area that we want to work on I think. Because it tends to be the needy parents rather than the helping parents that avail themselves of that service.

9. There have been groups of parents running at both nurseries, with different levels of success. I mean, this is something we are going to embark upon now but groups have run successfully, which are groups for parents, which are led by a nursery worker and a social worker from the area office.

10. No, I've not been aware of that at all. No, we don't have parent governors (laughs) it'll come one day I'm sure.

AREA TEAM

1. I can't answer that because I've only been responsible for day care since the middle of last year, and I'd been out of day care for five years before that. I guess the answer must be "yes", because children who are at risk are seen to have a much higher priority but I'm not sure if that's within the last five years, I'm quite sure it was true five years ago actually. So I wouldn't like to say there's been a narrowing of criteria over the last five years. I couldn't be sure of that.

2. You see, here again I can't actually say that there has been a change. What we say we do is to acknowledge the needs of the parent and the child in that situation, and do more than just care for the child in the day nursery, as a means of monitoring. That we should be assisting parents in their relationships with their children, and helping them with management problems with their children. And I do know from my experience of chairing child protection case conferences that on an individual and case-by-case basis I've certainly got evidence that that work does go on between parents and nursery workers because the nursery workers are able to comment on things that parents have said and how things, relationships between children and parents might have improved, and how this has been communicated and discussed between the parent and the nursery worker. So to that extent I think there is good evidence that the child abuse aspect is given quite a lot of focus in terms of what goes on within the day nursery. That it isn't simply about caring for children and monitoring them. So I've seen what I would consider to be quite good work actually in terms of developing relationships. Certainly in Bessborough Street Nursery.
Appendix III

Afro-Caribbean Children in local Authority Day Care, 0-3 years

Questionnaire/Interview Guide

GENERAL

i) Does your department have a stated policy on race? If so, what is it (or may I be given a copy of it in print?)

ii) What criteria are necessary for referral of under 3s into day care?

iii) Within this criteria, who are given highest priority (e.g. lone parents, "at risk", etc)?

iv) Are alternatives offered to mothers when day care is being considered?
   a) What are they?

v) Is there a waiting list?
   a) How long is it?
   b) What do mothers do in the meantime, in terms of having family support?

vi) In your opinion, do mothers regard day nurseries as a privilege and value them accordingly?

RACE

i) Can you tell me either in numbers or as a percentage, how many Afro-Caribbean children presently use your day nursery(s)?

ii) Do you know if this means they are over-represented in terms of the population of your area?
   a) If so, do you have any views on why this is the case?

iii) a) (if department has policy on race) Can you tell me in what practical ways this policy on race is manifested in practice within the day nursery(s)?
   b) (if department has no policy on race) Do you think your department should have a clear policy on race (Why/why not?)

iv) Does your department regard Afro-Caribbean children as having special needs?
   a) if so, what are they?

v) Are you able to tell me what are the predominant reasons for admission for Afro-Caribbean children?
   a) are these reasons any different from those which predominate for their white counterparts/other ethnic groups?
vi) Does your department offer race awareness training for staff?
   a) if so, how successful do you think it has been?
   b) if not, why not and would you personally like to see it happen?

vii) Are you able to tell me how many Afro-Caribbean workers there are in the day nursery(s)?
   a) (if to Assistant Director or Principal) Are you able to supply me with figures, now or at a later date, giving an occupational breakdown of Afro-Caribbean workers in your day nurseries (Officer-in-charge, nursery workers, domestic workers?)

viii) Would you describe the relationship between the nursery(s) and Afro-Caribbean parents as generally good, poor, or neutral? (or if none of these, please feel free to expand).
   a) Are relationships between the nursery and Afro-Caribbean parents any different, on the whole, than those between the nursery and white parents or parents from other ethnic groups?

ix) Does your department receive Section 11 funding?
   a) is any of this spent within the day care system?

x) Do Afro-Caribbean parents approach your staff with their problems?
   a) is this to a greater or lesser degree, generally, than do their white counterparts or other parents from different ethnic groups?

xi) Is there anything else you would like to say concerning Afro-Caribbean users of your service?

STAFF

i) Do you know the approximate age group of your nursery workers? (or if not, could you find out for me at a later date please?)

ii) Are there any male workers in your day nursery(s)?

iii) On an annual basis, are you able to indicate what your staff turnover might be? (if not, then may I have this information at a later date please?)

iv) Can you also tell me on the same basis what staff absenteeism rates are? (if not now, then later?)

v) In terms of recruitment, does your department specifically encourage Afro-Caribbean applicants?
   a) if so, then how is this done?
   b) if not, why not and would you personally like to see this happen?

vi) Are you generally satisfied with the NNEB training your staff have received?
   a) if not, how could it be improved?
vii) In terms of staff relationships with parents generally, do you find that communication between them is generally good, poor, or fair/neutral? (or if none of these, how could you describe it?)

viii) Do parents become involved in the running of the day nursery(s)?

ix) Is there any formal structure for staff and parents to meet?

x) Do parents have any means to help shape nursery policy? (if so, what?)

AREA TEAM

i) Have you detected a narrowing of referral criteria during the past five years?
   a) if so, in what specific ways?

ii) In recent years, child abuse has become more of a public issue. Have you made any conscious changes in methods of work to take this into account?
   a) if so, what are they?

iii) Can you tell me which agencies are most likely to refer children to your day nurseries?

iv) Has this changed over the past five years? How?

v) Which outside agencies are most involved with the day nursery generally? (e.g. psychologists, speech therapists?)
   a) Has this changed in the last five years?

Finally, many thanks for your help with this research, and please feel free to say anything else which you feel is relevant.
Appendix IV

Team Leader: Team Leader and Chair of the Admission Panel, Area 2.

1. I should say that I have only been here for two years and in those two years the criteria have remained exactly the same but as Chair of the day care panel, the panel has a certain amount of leeway about how the criteria are interpreted. Especially there are one of two which maybe we will come on to later. There's one for example, criterion five, is and I quote "family live in poor or overcrowded housing or in stressful conditions". Now, we interpret that in various ways. So there is a certain amount of flexibility and I've tried to be flexible, as flexible as possible, but within constraints of trying to be fair across the board. But the real answer to your question I think is that over these two years since I've been doing it - in fact it's only a year really but I've been involved for two years - and there's not been any narrowing of the criteria as such.

2. Well the criteria. The first criteria. The one that guarantees that your child will get a place at a nursery, is if you child is on the child protection register, and that's very clear and the council obviously expects ... these are criteria laid down by the council, and they expect places to be offered to those families and to those children. Beyond that, being a team leader in the area so more often than not I know the cases - for instance a child may not be on the register but I know there is some concern about what's happening with the family. There would normally be a report from a social worker if the case was allocated to a social worker, about the background to the family. So all of that would be taken into account when we're discussing the places. It's also worth saying that beyond and outside the day care panel when we're discussing applications procedure as well, I might get a call from a social worker saying they urgently need a place for a child that day or tomorrow. And if there is a vacancy and it seems right, and if it's possible to get a place that way as well. So we can be a bit flexible.

3. I think normally it's parents themselves, who refer themselves to us and ask for places in day nurseries. But we do get quite a lot of contact with health visitors who in any case are involved with the process. And they can give a background report which will be supplementary to the basic assessment report of the social worker and goes to the panel. So it's health visitors, through us, doctors occasionally, not very often - it would be people in the health field really. I think probably that's it actually, not many other agencies get involved in referral of kids, it's usually the social workers, usually social services.

4. No, not really. As I say my real experience has been over the past one year and it hasn't really changed. I don't know, this isn't related to your question directly but we've recently changed the way we are going to do the assessment. Social workers used to do the assessment reports for the day care panel. We've stopped that and the reports are now going to be done by the day nursery managers. Except in cases where there is a social worker allocated, where they will still do a report,
possibly in conjunction with the day nursery manager. So that's going to be quite a change actually, the way that they're done. And also in the way that they are seen by parents, which is important because I think that the view that we took, which has been taken in Westminster generally now I think, is that it is a stigmatizing process to be seen by a social worker because you want a day care place. If I had a social worker knocking at my door because I wanted a place for my child then I'd tell them to "go away" (I won't swear because we're on tape!). Any way, so we've changed that.

5. Yes, speech therapists very involved. Health visitors. The Marlborough Unit up the road, they've got one or two workers who run groups for parents in both Carlton Hill and in Portland, so they're involved. I think anyone really who's involved with the child or the parent or both, would potentially be involved with the nursery, and we'd want to see the nursery having those sorts of links, really, with other professionals when it's necessary. But certainly the speech therapists have quite a lot of input to the day nurseries. And perhaps the speech therapists, the health visitors and the social workers are the groups which have the most contact.

a) Again, my experience over the last year, no. But we are continuing to encourage contact and the changes have been such that I haven't noticed. Ros may be able to tell you that.

In terms of the basis of your research, the race issues and the way that Westminster addresses them, as I said to you before, there is no policy, no equal opportunities policy. And because we have no criteria to do otherwise we tend to treat cases on an individual basis, but there is some flexibility in that. But none of this takes account of questions of race as such, so it's something that's interesting to ... I don't know if I've counted the number of heads in Portland for example, how many black or ethnic minority kids there are there, in terms of percentages I really don't know. But as I say there is a significant number of ethnic minorities in both nurseries. But there are a lot of ethnic minority families living in Area 2 and in Marylebone who live in very poor housing and are on a very low income, so I think if there is a correlation to be made then that's the correlation. That's my view. It's not based on any research that I've done, it's based on an impression really but I'm sure it's true.
Appendix V

Manager Manager of Marylebone Daycare Centre

GENERAL

i) No it doesn't, does it, I mean, it doesn't accept that they have any race problems, OK.

ii) What criteria, do you want me to read it out of a book, the absolute criteria, for you or the one that you have given me the one to six categories?

iii) The highest priority would be children who are on the At Risk Register or who are in danger of being At Risk and are about to go on to the Register.

iv) a) Child minders, play group. In this particular area there are two full day nurseries, that is mine at Carlton Hill and Portman, which is up at Church Street, a play group and then child minders, but unfortunately I think there is a freeze on child minder places and subsidual child minder places and so that particular service has been very low.

v) Yes

a) For us, about forty

b) Either look for alternatives in the private sector or else family support - go crazy - the children end up in care, possibly, instead of the cheaper solution being found an expensive solution not only when the rates get to society in general but if the respite in a day nursery can't be found then children very often end up in care.

vi) Not necessary, I think a lot of people consider it their right, they don't hopefully are made to feel grateful. I wouldn't want people to feel grateful for the place. However, in terms of being lucky and getting into the day nursery they are lucky because there are so few places. I'm not sure, I mean people often value the service they are getting, they value the work that is done with them by the key workers, the atmosphere, the happy environment the children are in. Compared with what might happen to their friend's children, I suppose they are happy about the fact that their children are in a day nursery.

RACE

i) No, I haven't counted. I can find out that information for you. I would say probably we are talking about at least a half or two thirds.

ii) They are over represented in the area, they are not over represented, I suspect, in families who are living in the worse accommodation areas who might become eligible for a day nursery place. They represent a section of this particular area they would at the very least be better off, or they wouldn't meet the criteria.
iii) a) They don't have a policy on race, as I have already said, they
don't acknowledge that there is any racism in Westminster. In the
day nursery itself we have not a written policy, but a policy that
is worked on in the day nursery where positive images of white
cultures are represented. Children are encouraged with parents to
celebrate Whit Festivals, Dvale, El-Ada, Honica at the Jewish
Temple, etc. etc. We actually work within the day nursery ....

b) Yes, definitely, I think they should.

iv) They don't because they don't acknowledge ethnic differences or
that there are problems. This nursery does and I think most of the
girls who have trained and done the NNEB, if there has been any
race teaching on the NNEB's course that they have done and once
they are in post it is then discussed. I discuss their work with
them. It seems to me that most of them seem to be aware and con­
scious of their ethnic needs, and discussion on race, but it is
slow coming. I don't think the education they are getting on the
NNEB is nearly enough and very often this schooling throw onto
these sorts of projects, as we discussed the other day about these
girls seeing shortages of day nursery places or education facili­
ties or housing for everybody so therefore why was it more of a
problem for black people, which is why we have decided we defin­
itely need some more education within this nursery on those issues.

v) I think the mother working. She falls more into category six as a
single parent or a women who has taken the responsibility for
raising her children, rather than some of the other reasons, that's
not to say that she is not admitted sometimes because of really bad
housing, but I think that predominately as a single woman wanting
to work or go to College.

a) We are getting into statistics which is difficult. I can only
talk about observations. I would say from any white counterparts,
local white working class girls are more likely to have parental
support in this country, where grannies and aunties and so on can
be there with sensitive support and childcare within the family.
Often, that isn't the case with some of the other families. This
is an observation: we don't get very many Asian children in because
of the culture because the woman is more likely to stay at home,
and the likelihood of being a single parent are very rare, at least
to my knowledge, but there also might be statistics to prove me
wrong there. I would say that I can't really reply on statistical.

vi) Racial awareness training. I don't know if they actually call it
that, there have been some things offered like two day course,
although I haven't had experience yet of anyone who has been on
one. One of the other districts, Area 4, that is Michael O'Connor,
who is black himself, is actually starting race awareness courses
in that area in Paddington, and I think if that is sucessful they
are going continue that idea. I would certainly like to see it and
like to see it done properly as well. I think there are some quite
dangerous race awareness courses going back into the old ones that
we know about; RAPU training, can actually end up being quite
dangerous and harmful and confrontational so I think we need to be
clear about the content of RAPU training.

vii) Two, nursery officers. And one of the domestic staff, our cook an
Afro-Caribbean and that is it, the other few domestics are white. C. who is working here at the moment is black, but she doesn’t really work here.

viii) No. I have never said that (it’s as bad with all of them - followed by laughter)

8. Good

xi) No, I don’t know. I must ask my ADD.

x) Yes, in as much as the white ones would.

a) I think no different. I can only speak for myself in the sense that it depends on the relationship with the other parents and how that affects the staff group I am not sure.

x) Not particularly, no.

STAFF

i) Average, around 23-24.

ii) No.

iii) We have only been here six months but have had one girl leave who we are about to replace. She wasn’t happy in her job, she took a job as a peripatetic but she hadn’t understood what it meant. But otherwise there is no one. People are looking to further themselves if they can, one of our workers is actually applying at the moment for a Deputy post which she may or may not get and apart from that we can’t talk of there being a turnover of staff here.

iv) I’d say it’s higher than others. There are stress factors in nurseries, I see it more and more recently, in "commitment" to training them. I misunderstood to me that if you sent someone out on a course you could get agency staff to cover for it. So if it is not their commitment is really to say "Oh yes, we are encouraging you to go and train but the rest of the staff within this building have to cover the work of the person who is out of the building". This is additional stress on staff and children, because on that day of training for example, you get one person off sick, one person on leave, one person taking time owing to them so therefore it is a very stressful job and most of that stress is due to understaffing.

v) No, they claim to be an equal opportunities employer. They claim, that is a statement they make at the bottom of their .... It was interesting, I went to a first line manager’s day last week. There must have been fifty people sitting around the room and not one of them was black. And they were first line managers of Westminster regions and not one black person among them. We drew attention to it, to the people who ran the course and they said they were conscious of it but that actually one of the tutors missing was black and hoped he wouldn’t mind. It was very obvious in the top posts, but on the other hand it is just so obvious that being a white male helps in the top posts.
vi) I'm not very au fait at the moment with content of the courses. When I was working in my last post which was very committed to community relations, etc. there was input being made by CCCR to have some sort of affect on the course within the council on anti-racist training. I don't know how far that went or even if they stopped fighting or whatever to do anything about it.

vii) In this nursery it is good. We make a conscious effort of that thought by having events like a Christmas disco and barbecue during the summer and inviting parents to social evenings with us. We make a conscious effort to do that for that reason.

viii) Not really, no not at all I would say.

iv) We have recently set up a parent group, but this tends to be more of a consultative group and we have coffee mornings in the rooms where parents are invited to come and chat. And something we are working on. (mumbles)

x) No, apart from those above, at the moment there is no parent/teacher organization.

xi) I think anything they had to say, would be listened to. That is a start in a sense that it would be listened to and we would take it wherever we could. For example, if there was something a parent or a member of staff felt strongly about, I would either invite them or take it myself along to a staff meeting which we have bi-monthly and discuss it. But at the moment we don't have a formal organisation of parent-worker involvement. I think this is very much because of the nature of the day nursery, it doesn't, as past experience tells me that some of the past parents who generally want to get involved in their children's schools and nurseries, unless they are people that bring their children here under terrible pressure, emotional, financial, stretching themselves to their limits, and so their idea of actually involving themselves in a sensitive parent organisation. I don't think it is something I better**** start it, but it is certainly something I would like to think about, and if it was ever brought to me by parents wanting to do this I would be very happy to encourage it.

AREA TEAM

i) It is difficult for me because I have only been in this job for six months and I am sure since the cuts there must be in our area of the criteria since purses were frozen that meant that places were cut and so there must be a narrowing, but in a sense that may be none of it points six of the criteria that is the criteria of being a single parent and wanting to go back to work or to college, has never been enough of the admissions procedure meetings that I have been to. You need probably two parts of the criteria, i.e. that and the fact that you live in a very poor area for housing or that you have emotional stress, etc. so I am sure that the cuts must have led to a narrowing of the criteria.

ii) I think it has heightened people's awareness very often, to guard ourselves as professional workers, it has heightened our awareness looking for the signs. It has also one of the most sought after training areas, something which we make quite sure that most of the
girls have had plenty of training in that subject.

iii) Social services. Health and Clinics. Doctors may refer to either of those two agencies.

iv) I don't think so.

v) Social workers, speech therapists and psychotherapists in that order. Tavistock or Bloomsbury.
The Metropolitan Police is committed to a multi-agency approach with regard to child protection. Though clearly our roles are separate from social services, we have a purely investigative role and to some extent child protection though obviously the main protection plans are carried out by social services. Each of the 8 Metropolitan Police areas obviously has got a certain number of borough councils on their areas, and for each of those areas, each of the boroughs, there will be a corresponding child abuse team, child protection team. They are a dedicated team of police officers that deal solely with the investigation aspects of child abuse; be it physical, emotional, or sexual. And they deal solely with that, and in conjunction with the social services. So what really happens is that if we get an allegation of physical or sexual abuse from a member of the public or perhaps a police officer in the street, the matter is referred to us and we correspondingly inform social services. And the idea obviously is that we do have indices of children and families that have come to our notice. Conversely social services do, so if we get together we can pool the information we have both got.

That being done, what usually happens then is that we have a strategy meeting with the social services and decide on how we are going to investigate the matter. If there is a need for the child to be examined for sexual abuse then we like to do a joint examination with the paediatrician, and the divisional surgeon. The reason for that is that the paediatrician is obviously an expert in his own right with respect to kiddies. The divisional surgeon, who is a GP actually, employed by the police, but has had training in the forensic aspects, and is aware of what samples could be of evidential value, and he also
knows how to take those samples and has access to the equipment for taking them. So, that's how we do a medical examination, should it become necessary.

With regard to interviewing suspects, i.e. the parents, that is normally carried out by police. Although we don't have any objections if it is appropriate for a social worker to be present, although personally I've never conducted an interview with a social worker. Initially, where there is some suggestion that a parent may be responsible for some physical or sexual abuse, I personally don't like doing a joint visit with the social worker. And the reason for that is the Police and Criminal Evidence Act. There are very strict guidelines and rules imposed upon police, with regard to interviewing suspects. And I also feel that if I were to go round there and start interviewing those suspects in a formal manner, as I am obliged to do by law, I don't think perhaps I would get the full picture. I think possibly a social worker would get perhaps a little bit more information than I would because it would be a lot more, hopefully, relaxed. Having said that, he or she will get a story which may not be consistent with medical opinion, and it's at that point that I would come in and do a formal interview, possibly arresting the parents or the suspects, sometimes it's not necessary, we can do it by appointment.

Depending on the amount of evidence that does ensue, the wishes of the child, depending obviously on his or her age, will be taken into consideration. And also what is best for the family. You will appreciate that obviously a kid will not want to give evidence in court against it's mum or dad, in assault cases. So those factors are taken into consideration, and also in quite a few cases we would put the matter before the Crown Prosecution Service for them to decide whether a prosecution could ensue. One of the great problems that we do have
is incorrect chastisement by parents. I am sure you will appreciate that perhaps is a problem that is more apparent with the ethnic people than perhaps the Europeans, though I'm not saying it doesn't occur with Europeans, it's just more apparent with that sector. And it's very difficult to get through to them that what may be acceptable in their own country just isn't acceptable over here. But even so in those cases, provided the amount of injury isn't excessive or over the top, then I would suggest that a prosecution isn't really in the interests of the child or anybody.

As you'll appreciate, because of the age of the child it's very very difficult in the majority of cases to obtain sufficient evidence for a criminal prosecution. Nevertheless there may be evidence for care proceedings in the civil courts and you're obviously aware that the rules of evidence there are slightly different to the criminal court, and a lot more opinion and hearsay evidence can be given. So if it's not possible to take the parent away from the child, then it is possible to take the child away from the parent or impose strict super­vision and those sort of things, should a care order be made.

We always get invited to case conferences, whether we have had any involvement with the family or not. And obviously those case conferences are confidential and we do impart information that is relevant to considering whether the child is in need of protection.
Q. In your experience, what percentage of the children are under 5s?

A. With regard to both physical and sexual? Just going on the figures that we've had here, I would say probably about 40%.

Q. What percentage of this group would be Afro-Caribbean or other ethnic minorities?

A. Of that particular group, very small I think.

Q. Which ethnic group have got the highest?

A. I honestly couldn't say from our figures.

Q. What age group would the parents be?

A. The ones that I've come across would be round about 20s, or just over. The problems do seem to be apparent. Characteristically, under deprived families, you know, the bed and breakfast type situations. Overcrowding, that sort of thing. Physical abuse also, where the male in the household isn't the natural father. I can only say with conjecture that it's probably due to the lack of bonding. But that does seem to be quite apparent, from what I've seen. But I really wouldn't like to say that any particular ethnic group stand out in any way.

Q. When did this team start?

A. This one here started on 28th November 88. And gradually across the Metropolitan Police area they have been set up. In fact I think there are teams now for most of the boroughs. We're fortunate inasmuch as the police area, which is called the Central Area 8, we are the Central Area, the whole of that area is coterminus with the Westminster social services. So there is only a need for one child protection team. In some of the other police areas, take for example 1 Area, which would cover King's Cross, Islington, Tottenham, Haringay, right out to Waltham Forest - there are I think probably 3 different boroughs and I believe there are 3 different police teams to service each borough.

If our criteria for investigation are abuse by any members of the family or any carer, so that could obviously extend to aunts and uncles, next door neighbours, babysitters. I'm sure that you'll appreciate in ordinary crime that the matter is investigated by the police station on whose area the incident occurs. That's not the case with us. We, the child protection team, would investigate the matter where the child resides. So if I have a family living on my area, and say for example the kiddie went to stay with auntie and uncle living in Kilburn, and in Kilburn the kiddie was assaulted, it would not be the Kilburn police or the Kilburn child abuse team that would deal with the matter, it's us. And the reason being, as I say, is the social services where the child resides, are going to be involved, rather than the social services elsewhere who know nothing about the family and have no responsibility for them any way. So that's why it works that way.

Q. Could you explain the Police and Criminal Evidence Act to me?

A. You're joking! (laughs). A tiny bit? Let me clear one thing -
that Act that I've just mentioned, deals with the treatment of people in police detention. And also the manner in which suspects are interviewed and treated.

Q. If a neighbour reported an incident of this kind to you, would you go to social services or would you get in touch with social services?

A. No, I wouldn't go and do it on my own.

Q. If the mother was ill-treating the child, where does the criminal act come into this?

A. Well, if it was found that the mother was ill-treating the child, then obviously the investigation of that would be a police matter. Having said that, social services do have a statutory duty to investigate child abuse don't they? But obviously the responsibility for taking proceedings against the mother, depends on, rests on the police. Although we do have a statutory power to institute care proceedings, we would very very rarely implement that, it would usually be done by social services. Although obviously we would provide them with whatever evidence we had, and would assist them.

Q. The criminal law, I know very little about it.

A. Well, the fundamental principle is that everyone is innocent until proved guilty. And the only way to find a person guilty of a specific offence is by presenting factual evidence to a court of law. A person would normally be put before the court, having been arrested or summoned, and charged for a specific offence which was contrary to the law. There are lots of acts and parts of acts which would relate to child abuse, and GBH, Actual Bodily Harm - but there are also specific offences which were designed specifically. For example section 1 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1969 deals with a situation where a person who is over 16 and has the custody, care or control of a child or young person under that age, who willfully assaults, ill treats, neglects, abandons, or exposes them in a manner likely to cause unnecessary suffering or injury to health. I mean that one is designed specifically for the protection of children. And that carries 10 years imprisonment. But there's also other offences that cross over that as well, and you will charge the person with the most specific offence that you could find.

I mean to talk on the law, it's a completely different .. it would take ages and ages .. I could waffle on for ages! I still don't know it all. I think that a lot of things with this child protection thing does get muddled. You've got to remember that both the police and social services have got separate functions to fulfil. That does cause some area for concern. I think sometimes social services feel that we ought to get more involved with a case, but obviously they are there to provide the counselling and backup after the incident. We fundamentally are there to investigate it and to bring an offender to justice should that be necessary. And then once we've fulfilled our role, then we can step out. Once we've completed our investigation, we are not responsible for any after-care at all. That is down to the social services. They are the experts in that.
Q. Would the various teams be aware when a child is in care?

A. In care? The police certainly would. We wouldn't know until we are notified of an incident which was suspected to be against the law or appeared to be against the law. So we wouldn't know what was going on inside those centres. I would guess that what does go on is communicated to those other agencies by the principal of those establishments. Obviously individual social workers who have responsibility for a particular client would know perhaps to some extent what was happening there.

I personally couldn't say whether the care of that child was being fulfilled because I don't know what goes on in there, I don't know how they are cared for. I mean, all I would say is not establishment is as good as the family situation is it? And no matter how you can try and create a family situation within that sort of establishment, it's never ever going to be the same. And you are also going to get perhaps a lot of unruly kids that are going to influence the "goodies" for want of a better word. I should think that no matter how you try there's going to be an unstable influence there.
I don't think they (Westminster) are going to appoint any race relations advisor, nor in the future. But what you have got is Westminster Community Relations Council, which ceased functioning about April last year because of various reasons. What you have got in that place is a committee, four of whom, the committee members, are nominated by the commission, four by the City Council, and the Chair nominated jointly by the Council and by the Commission. So it's a nine-member Committee, who has got a new constitution and who is named Westminster Community Relations Forum. We have just appointed a Director, starting 1st March. The Forum will be doing basically the same work as the old CRC used to do, but one of the most important things they will be doing over the next year or so is to establish a broad base for the CRC involving the whole community in Westminster. That will be the most immediate important job for them to do. Of course the Director and also additional officers when they are appointed will be working on equal opportunity and racial equality as the strategy board on racial equality of the CRCs do. So that's the position now.

It's looking for an office base, it's old office is closed down, the rent has gone up sky high, they can't afford to pay the rent. They are looking for an office base somewhere in the City, they don't know where it will be. But they don't want a shopfront type of thing but with a couple of rooms with typing support. The intention is that within a period of not less than 18 months and three years, it will be not an appointed committee any more but it will be a democratically elected management committee, having wide membership from the Westminster community. So that's the plan.

(Q) But as a whole the Council has not race policies?

(A) Well, the Council declares itself to be an equal opportunities employer, but hasn't got an equal opportunity policy, it's just on paper. There is no implementation of the policy. For example, there is no ethnic monitoring. There is no monitoring of staff or of other things. So one of the jobs the forum has got to do is to tackle that bit, but as of now the Council has nothing.

(Q) Can you convince them?

(A) You see one of the things that happened in the past that we were not satisfied with the old CRC, they did very little work with the City Council, about the City Council's service delivery. And also its policy as probably one of the largest employers in the City. And because of the lack of policy or push by the CRC it never happened. The Commission has done some work with the City Council, in fact I must say this is not a great deal. We had an investigation against the City Council's employment of, at a very low level, the refuse collectors. Because we got some information that the refuse collectors are operating a bar that no blacks should be employed. Again, they didn't produce anything. So in answer to your question, can we persuade them? I think that what is happening is that perhaps because of a lack of political will on behalf of the elected councillors, nothing or very little is happening. The Council declares that they are an equal opportunities employer on the basis of merit and that sort of thing,
but that has got to be seen, you know. We expect that will be done but we have to see what that produces. There has to be a plan of action on various fronts and that has to be decided by the new forum.

(Q) But does the CRE, in the absence of any race adviser, and so on, have the power to influence the social services department?

(A) We have no legal power, apart from the legal, formal investigation, forcing any council to adopt an equal opportunities policy - particularly in the service delivery front. All we have got is the persuasion part of the solution. That we do in various ways, mostly through the CRCs. We publish research reports, survey reports, policy papers, and so on on service deliveries, and we send them to the CRCs and is up to them to take it up with the local council, to implement those good practices.

Employment is rather different in the sense that there is a code of practice in employment, you've got a semi-legal basis. If someone complains that she or he has been discriminated against on the grounds of colour or race, and if that case goes to the industrial tribunal, one of the questions that industrial tribunal asks is that - to the employer -, have you adopted a code of practice? And if the answer is no, that they have done very little on the recommendations of the code of practice, then that is a point against the employer. But in Westminster's case there was never ever any complaint, you seen, not that we were aware of. Not through our complaints commission. If there was a complaint against Westminster City Council that I have been discriminated against on grounds of race or colour, and that is challenged and taken to an industrial tribunal, we can follow it up. But Westminster will probably say, but there is no complaint against us.

But as you can understand it's very difficult not only for existing employees but also for prospective employees to complain. People can be discriminated against not know that they are discriminated against. And that's the case all the time. A black person can go for a job, and he or she may not get the job because of race or colour, but how the hell is he going to know? And again an existing employee even if he/she sees that person is being bypassed for promotion or being treated differently, to complain against the employer takes a lot of courage and guts because you immediately become a marked person. So people do complain, they take courage and do complain. our complaints section do receive hundreds of complaints annually. But as far as I know no substantial complaint has ever been made against Westminster City Council.

(Q) Does the Commission have any knowledge of the percentage of children in care or day care?

(A) We don't collect any statistics. Simply because it would be impossible to collect the statistics, neither do we have the resources. We can't collect the statistics ourselves, you know. What we do encourage, as I say, is for the CRCs to actually push the local authorities to collect statistics. But if a local authority has got a policy of not collecting any statistics, there's no way of knowing that black children in care or children leaving care, how many blacks are leaving care or what happens to them when they're leaving care, or fostering of black children. There is no figure available to us on that basis. It is difficult for us know whether Westminster City Council
collects those figures. I'd be surprised if they do collect those figures on black children in care. But they will be required to collect the figures on black teachers. That's a requirement now by the Secretary of State. The Education Department has got to tell them how many black teachers they've got, and also probably later the proportion of school children. But children in care, I don't think there are any statistics available. At least not to us. But if the City collects the statistics, I don't think they do.

(Q) What is the CRE's position on that?

(A) Nationally? Our position is quite clear. That every level of the service delivery there should be ... statistics should be kept, to be monitored. How many black children are in care, not only in care but in suspension from school. Is the black children disproportionately in suspension from school, and disproportion of children in care? Disproportion in relation to the population within the borough boundary. And what happens to them, you know. And what happens to the black children when they leave care. So our policy is consistent all along that it should be monitored and statistics should be kept. But the difficulty is that it's got no legal force behind it. It is all voluntary because the act as it stands now, which is not satisfactory, because there is a lot to be improved - but unless and until that's a legal requirement, requiring each borough and each local authority to keep statistics, and to monitor its service delivery in all areas - on homelessness, how many black families are homeless and what happens to them. Allocation of homes, for example. All that the Commission can do and is doing is to use its persuasion to do that. Sometimes it produces results, other times it doesn't. If a council knows that there is no legal enforcement powers, the council can totally ignore it.

(Q) People think they should come to you with problems in the race area, for example in the area of day nurseries?

(A) That's news to me. They may come to our social services section, I don't know, but I would be very surprised. The City Council coming to us for advice ... there is no financial help, the financial help should be provided by the City anyway. But on advice, it depends on what sort of advice they are seeking. And that will be provided by our social services section. But I personally have never received any phone calls from Westminster City Council, or any letter seeking advice. So it is difficult to answer that question. On the question of nursery provisions, we do not see that is the Commission's responsibility to provide nursery provisions, or day care provisions. The Commission has not the funding for that, and if we do give funding that means you are letting the local authority off the hook, which it is the local authority's duty to provide the services, any social services - whether it is nursery, homelessness, or whatever, it's the local authority provision. On the other hand if it can be shown that the black children are not being cared for, whereas in a similar situation white children are being cared for, then there is a prima facie case for discrimination. I don't think we are getting that kind of information where - my child is not given day care whereas a white child is being given day care facilities. What we have to weigh out is if ethnic minority families or black families are less favourably treated on similar grounds.

That's a different issue, whether there could be more black nursery nurses. If the nurseries have more black nursery nurses then the
children could identify with that. That's an issue which should be
looked at by the City Council. But the issue boils down to black
women, whether black women are going to nursery nurse training or not.

The statistics that we have got - not the nursery nurses but the
teachers - very few black people are going into teaching. So it's not
a question of what is happening now. What is going to happen in three
to four years time, when all the teachers are coming out of teacher
training college? Again, it doesn't start at the top, it starts at the
school leaving age. Our statistics show that there are not enough
black teachers even training, I think it's only about 2% of the
teachers currently at the teacher training colleges are blacks. So the
problem will not go away. It will be there that there are not enough
black teachers.

The question that one needs to ask is twofold: is it because -
this is one of the studies that is currently going on - is it because
young black people are not going into the teaching profession because
it's not attractive? Or, even if they attempt to go into the teaching
profession, they're not getting the places. In the current climate
when there is a terrible shortage of teachers, one would have thought
that more black people would go into the teaching profession, but again
if you look at it overall, teachers are leaving the teaching profession
because of salary, because of pressure of the new curriculum and so on,
they are leaving in droves. So it is not an attractive profession to go
to. Even those who have been in the profession for years, even the
white teachers are leaving - because maybe it is easier for them to
find some alternative job or whatever. But it's not so easy for black
people to leave the teaching profession. They are in there because it
isn't easy for them to find alternative jobs, but when you find a
profession that is not very attractive, it is not only the blacks who
want to go. And there is also a perception in the black community that
probably they won't be welcome in the teacher training colleges so the
whole thing is like a vicious circle.

Whether there is anything could be done, other than - because there
is no law, you see. The difficulty is, being a law enforcement agency,
which is also defined by the Act very clearly in which area the
Commission can enforce law, the Commission is actually disadvantaged
because the law is so inadequate. And as the law itself has changed
because the Commission submitted a proposal to the Home Office five
years ago, it's time for a change. But there is no response from the
Home Secretary as of yet, what is going to happen to the Commission's
proposal? But the law as it is now, there is very little power the
Commission has got to force changes in those areas. The alternative to
that is to force the persuasion, and the force of persuasion can only
work when it is backed up by statistics, backed up by facts, backed up
by evidence. That we do.

To give you an example, we know from talking to the community that
the criminal justice system is adversely effective to the black
community. But there are no statistics. That is only the perception
the community has got. So what we have done now is to commission
research from somebody in Oxford University do do that, to look into
the whole area of the criminal justice system. I think it is just over
a year-long study. When you get that, then there is some positive
element to look at. And again another difficulty to look at is the
criminal justice system is not covered by the Act. So the sentencing
policy and the Crown Prosecution Service is not part of the CRE.
I cannot talk in great detail about the under 5s, the Commission's work that has been done. As I said it would be looked at by the education section, what they are doing with under 5s. There is an under 5s working group I know, they meet here at the commission, and this is for under 5s and they meet regularly - I think Jane services that group. There is also Racism in Children's books or something, that we supported. I think the funding expires this March. I don't know what support they get because they're not supported from the London budget but from the national budget. It has been going on for three or four years, racism in children's books, mostly to do with books for under 5s and also for over 5s. There is also a project based I think in South London but if you want to know what work has been done for under 5s I think it's best you talk to our social services or education people. I think you are right when you say the CRCs nationally, I mean I can only talk about the CRCs in London, not a great deal of work is being done for under 5s, and it is one of the areas which is overlooked. Not neglected, but overlooked in a sense because ... which is a priority? When the CRC sets the priority, and given the resources - the CRC may have two officers, if they are lucky they may have three officers - which is the priority? Is it racial harrassment or racial attacks the priority? Or homelessness of young black kids a priority? Or unemployment is the priority? Or decent housing is the priority? Or how the education system is meeting the needs of the black child the priority? Within these priorities the under 5s are being pushed back and back and back. It's a case of - this is an issue but we cannot tackle that because there are other crying needs and priorities. I mean, yes, this is an area which has not been properly looked at. But what the Commission is doing, I cannot tell you a great deal about that. The Commission has got a policy on under 5s, there was a policy paper issued several years ago. I don't know what stage it's at.